

Quick Reference Chart for **Devil** (OT & NT)



Old Testament

Devils H8163 saiyr

Verse	Snippet of the Verse	Meaning	Why?
Leviticus 17:7	"They shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils (H8163 saiyr)"	'Devils' refers to idols , specifically goat-like images worshiped in false religion.	Israel was warned against idolatry , as worshipping these ' devils ' was a rejection of Yahweh (Leviticus 19:4, 2Kings 17:16).
Deuteronomy 32:17	"They sacrificed unto devils (H7700 shed), not to God"	' Devils ' means ' a nothing ,' emphasizing the powerless nature of idols .	These were false gods newly introduced, leading Israel astray (Psalm 106:37-38, 1Corinthians 10:20).
2Chronicles 11:15	"Jeroboam ordained priests for the devils (H8163 saiyr)"	' Devils ' represents false gods worshiped in Jeroboam's idolatrous system .	The golden calf worship was a distortion of true worship, leading to national apostasy (1Kings 12:28-31, Hosea 8:4-6).
Psalms 106:37	"They sacrificed their sons and daughters unto devils (H7700 shed)"	' Devils ' refers to Canaanite idols associated with child sacrifice.	Israel's idolatry led to moral corruption and divine judgment (Jeremiah 7:31, Ezekiel 16:20-21).



Devils in the Old Testament (OT) are nothing more than idols and false gods. They are not supernatural fallen beings but rather **worthless, powerless entities** worshiped by Israel and surrounding nations in acts of apostasy. The Hebrew words used—**saiyr (H8163)** and **shed (H7700)**—confirm this understanding:

Key Observations About 'Devils' in the OT:

1. Devils = Idols (False Gods)

- **Leviticus 17:7** – "They shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils (saiyr)."
→ 'Saiyr' means 'he-goat,' referencing goat idols or false gods associated with paganism.
- **2Chronicles 11:15** – "Jeroboam ordained priests for the devils (saiyr)."
→ Again, 'devils' refers to idols, particularly in the false worship system Jeroboam established.

2. Devils = 'A Nothing' (Powerless Entities)

- **Deuteronomy 32:17** – "They sacrificed unto devils (shed), not to God."
→ 'Shed' means 'a nothing' or 'empty entity,' reinforcing that these devils were not real supernatural beings but lifeless idols.
- **Psalms 106:37** – "They sacrificed their sons and daughters unto devils (shed)."
→ This verse equates 'devils' with Canaanite idols linked to child sacrifice, showing the extreme corruption of idol worship.

Conclusion:

- The OT never describes devils as **fallen angels, supernatural rebels, or personal demonic entities**.
- Instead, '**devils**' = **idols**—false gods created by human imagination and worshiped in apostasy.
- These so-called "devils" **had no real power**—they were simply **vain, powerless objects** that led Israel away from the true God.



Exodus 20:3-7 **Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.** Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness *of any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate Me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.



New Testament Devil G1228 diabolos

Verse	Snippet of the Verse	Meaning	Why?
Matthew 4:1 (Luke 4:1-13; Mark 1:13)	"...Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil (G1228)"	The ' devil ' symbolizes the temptations of the flesh and the trials of humanity. Jesus is tested by an adversary .	<i>Diabolos</i> means "slanderer" or "accuser," aligning with the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians who tested Jesus throughout His ministry (Matt 16:1, 19:3, 22:18). The term emphasizes opposition, not a supernatural being.
Matthew 4:3	"...the tempter (G3985) came to Him..."	The tempter challenges Jesus' identity and reliance on God.	The Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians are often called <i>peirazo</i> (G3985), meaning "to test or trap" (Matt 16:1, 22:35, Mark 8:11). The temptation represents pressure to use divine power for self-gain, mirroring Matthew 16:23 , where Peter is called <i>Satan</i> for opposing God's plan.
Matthew 4:5-6	"...the devil (G1228) taketh Him up into the holy city, and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple..."	The adversary uses Scripture to challenge Jesus.	The adversary (<i>diabolos</i>) urges Jesus to prove His divine status through spectacle, mirroring Matthew 12:38 where the Pharisees demand a sign. This test echoes Psalms 91:12 but distorts its meaning, much like how false teachers misuse Scripture. The religious rulers played a role in trying to trap Jesus. (Matt 16:1, 22:35)
Matthew 4:8	"...the devil (G1228) took Him up into a high mountain..."	A trial of faith and loyalty.	Jesus was pressured to compromise His mission. (Deuteronomy 6:16, Ephesians 6:11)
Matthew 4:10	"...Get thee hence, Satan (G4567)..."	Jesus rejects the adversary's offer and reaffirms worship of God alone.	<i>Satanas</i> (G4567) means "adversary," here referring to those seeking to divert Jesus from His mission. This aligns with Matthew 16:23 , where Jesus calls Peter "Satan" when Peter opposes His path to the cross.
Matthew 4:11	"...the devil (G1228) leaveth Him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto Him."	The testing ends, and Jesus is strengthened.	The adversary (<i>diabolos</i>) departs, showing that the testing was temporary. Luke 4:13 states the adversary left "for a season"

Verse	Snippet of the Verse	Meaning	Why?
Matthew 13:39 (Mark 4:15; Luke 8:12)	"The enemy (G2190) that sowed them is the devil (G1228)"	The ' devil ' represents those who plant false teachings among the righteous.	The parable emphasizes the coexistence of good and evil until judgment (Luke 3:17, Matthew 25:31-33). Corrupt religious rulers mislead the people. (Matthew 23:15, Acts 13:10)
Matthew 25:41 (Luke 10:18)	"Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil (G1228)"	The ' devil ' represents disobedient sinners who oppose God.	Eternal fire symbolizes divine judgment on the wicked (Revelation 20:15, 21:8, Isaiah 66:24).
Verse	Snippet of the Verse	Meaning	Why?
Luke 4:2-6, 13	"...being forty days tempted of the devil (G1228)..."	Religious and political opposition.	Jesus' entire ministry faced challenges from adversaries . (Luke 20:23, John 8:44)
Luke 8:12	"...then cometh the devil (G1228), and taketh away the word..."	Opposition to God's message.	Religious leaders actively resisted the Gospel. (Acts 13:10, Matthew 23:13)
John 6:70	"One of you is a devil (G1228)"	Judas is metaphorically called a ' devil ' due to his deceitful nature.	' Devil ' here refers to betrayal and treachery, not a supernatural being (John 6:71, John 12:6, Matthew 26:14-16).
John 8:44	"Ye are of your father the devil (G1228)"	The Pharisees' deceptive actions align them with false teachers and their influence as adversaries of truth.	'Father' is metaphorical, indicating spiritual alignment rather than biological descent (Isaiah 1:4, Matthew 23:31, 1John 3:10).
John 13:2	"...the devil (G1228) put into the heart of Judas..."	Deception and betrayal.	Judas' actions mirrored those of false accusers . (John 6:70, Matthew 26:14-16)
Verse	Snippet of the Verse	Meaning	Why?
Acts 10:38	"...healing all that were oppressed of the devil (G1228)"	The ' devil ' represents unjust rulers and oppressive systems burdening people.	Oppression (G2616) refers to social and legal persecution (James 2:6, Isaiah 10:1-2, Revelation 2:10).
Acts 13:10	"You child of the devil (G1228)"	Paul rebukes Elymas as a deceiver and adversary corrupting truth.	'Child of the devil ' refers to Elymas' deceitful nature (Exodus 7:11, 2Timothy 3:8).
Ephesians 4:27	"Neither give place to the devil (G1228)"	The ' devil ' represents unchecked anger, resentment, and harmful emotions.	Allowing anger to fester creates division and strife (Psalm 37:8, Matthew 5:25, 1Peter 5:9).
Ephesians 6:11	"Stand against the wiles of the devil (G1228)"	The ' devil ' symbolizes corrupt rulers, political systems, and oppressive institutions.	Paul describes spiritual warfare as resisting human power structures (John 12:31, Revelation 16:10).
Verse	Snippet of the Verse	Meaning	Why?
1Timothy 3:6	"...condemnation of the devil (G1228)..."	Avoiding pride and corruption .	Religious leaders' pride led to their downfall. (Matthew 23:6-7, 2Timothy 3:2)
1Timothy 3:7	"...snare of the devil (G1228)..."	Avoiding the traps of false teachings.	A warning against the deception of religious leaders. (Matthew 7:15, 2Timothy 2:26)
1Timothy 3:11	"...not slanderers (G1228)..."	False accusations and gossip.	Women in leadership must avoid the behavior of false accusers . (Titus 2:3, Proverbs 11:13)
2Timothy 2:26	"...snare of the devil (G1228)..."	Deception by false teachers.	Those in error are trapped by deceitful teachings. (Matthew 24:11, James 1:14)
2Timothy 3:3	"... false accusers (G1228)..."	Slanderers in the last days.	A sign of corrupt religious leadership. (Revelation 2:9, Jude 1:10)

Verse	Snippet of the Verse	Meaning	Why?
Titus 2:3	"...not false accusers (G1228)..."	Avoiding deceitful speech.	Gossip and lies are a form of slander and false accusation . (James 1:26, Proverbs 6:19)
Hebrews 2:14	"...destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil (G1228)..."	Sin and the power of death.	The carnal mind apart from God leads to destruction . (Romans 6:23, 1Corinthians 15:26)
James 4:7	"...resist the devil (G1228)..."	Reject sinful influence.	Avoid deception and remain faithful. (1Peter 5:8-9, Ephesians 6:13)
1Peter 5:8	"...your adversary the devil (G1228)..."	Human persecutors and slanderers .	False teachers and corrupt leaders oppose believers. (Revelation 2:10, John 8:44)
Verse	Snippet of the Verse	Meaning	Why?
1John 3:8	"...he that committeth sin is of the devil (G1228)...For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil (G1228)."	A lifestyle of rebellion . The devil (G1228 - diabolos) symbolizes those who oppose God and persist in sin. Christ came to break the power of sin and deception.	This passage shows that a sinful lifestyle is incompatible with the transformative power of Christ (John 8:44, Hebrews 2:14). "From the beginning" connects this adversarial nature to deception , rebellion , and opposition to God's righteousness (Genesis 3:1-6, 2Thess 2:7-10). Jesus' mission was to destroy these works (Col 2:15, Rom 6:6-7). Those who live in sin align with deception . (1John 3:10, James 1:14-15)
1John 3:9	"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him..."	The "seed" represents God's nature within believers, making a lifestyle of habitual sin incompatible with their new identity.	This aligns with prophecies like Ezekiel 36:26-27 (a new heart and spirit) and Jeremiah 31:33 (God's law written on the heart). The new birth produces righteousness in the believer (Romans 6:4-7, Galatians 5:16-25). Sin is no longer the ruling power in their life, though they may still struggle (Romans 7:22-25).
1John 3:10	"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil (G1228)..."	A clear distinction is made between those who practice righteousness (of God) and those who persist in sin (aligned with the adversary).	This passage emphasizes that righteousness and love identify true believers (Matthew 7:16-20, John 13:35). "Children of the devil " does not mean literal offspring, but rather those who align with deception and rebellion (John 8:44, Ephesians 2:2-3).
1John 3:12	"Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother..."	Cain's actions reflected a rebellious and envious nature, making him a follower of the adversarial way .	The phrase "of that wicked one" does not indicate Cain was literally Satan's son, but that he followed the path of rebellion (Jude 1:11). Similar biblical language includes: "I am of Paul" or "I am of Apollos" (1Cor 3:3-4) and Eli's sons being called "sons of Belial" (1Sam 2:12). Cain's story parallels Esau's rejection due to disobedience (Gen 4:3-7, Heb 12:16-17).
Verse	Snippet of the Verse	Meaning	Why?
Jude 1:9	"...contending with the devil (G1228)..."	Dispute over authority.	False teachers challenge the truth. (Zechariah 3:2, John 5:46-47)
Revelation 2:10	"...the devil (G1228) shall cast some of you into prison..."	Human persecution of believers.	Religious and political authorities imprisoning Christians. (Acts 5:18, Luke 21:12)
Revelation 12:9	"...the great dragon, called the devil (G1228)..."	Symbolic of human enemies .	Opposing forces deceiving the world. (Revelation 12:12, 20:2)
Revelation 12:12	"...the devil (G1228) is come down unto you..."	Increased opposition to truth.	The adversarial systems at war with believers. (Daniel 7:25, Matthew 24:24)

Verse	Snippet of the Verse	Meaning	Why?
Revelation 20:2	"And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil (G1228), and Satan (G4567), and bound him a thousand years."	The binding represents Christian dominion. The restriction of adversarial forces.	The restriction of adversarial forces happened when Christian kingdoms enacted laws limiting Jewish economic power (Rev 20:7-10, Isa 14:12-15).
Revelation 20:10	"...the devil (G1228) that deceived them..."	The final judgment of deceitful forces .	The destruction of corrupt institutions and oppression. (Revelation 19:20, 20:14)

'Devil' (G1228 - *diabolos*) in the New Testament (NT) is not a supernatural fallen angel but a metaphor for human adversaries, false accusers, deceivers, corrupt rulers, and sinful inclinations. The term *diabolos* is consistently used to describe people or systems that oppose righteousness, rather than an independent, supernatural being.

Key Observations About 'Devil(s)' in the NT:

'Devil' = False Accusers & Human Opponents

- **John 6:70** – "One of you is a devil (*diabolos* G1228)."
→ *Judas Iscariot is called a 'devil' for his betrayal, not because he was a supernatural being.*
- **1Timothy 3:11, 2Timothy 3:3, Titus 2:3** – Warnings against being '*diabolos*' (false accusers).
→ *These verses use 'devil' to describe slanderous people, showing that the term applies to humans, not supernatural entities.*
- **1Peter 5:8** – "Your adversary (*antidikos*) the devil (*diabolos*) as a roaring lion."
→ *The 'devil' here represents human persecutors, likely corrupt religious and political leaders.*

'Devil' = Corrupt Political & Religious Systems

- **Ephesians 6:11-12** – "Stand against the wiles of the devil... we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, powers, and rulers of darkness."
→ *Paul describes the 'devil' as oppressive worldly powers and false religious leaders, not a supernatural demon.*
- **Acts 13:10** – Paul calls Elymas a "child of the devil (*diabolos*)," referring to his deceptive nature.
→ *A 'child of the devil' means someone aligned with corruption and deception, not a literal offspring of Satan.*

'Devil' = The Power of Sin & Death

- **Hebrews 2:14** – "Through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil (*diabolos*)."
→ *The 'devil' here represents sin and its consequences—death, which Jesus overcame.*
- **1John 3:8** – "The devil sinneth from the beginning... the Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil."
→ *The 'devil' here represents sin and rebellion against God, not a specific fallen angel.*

'Devil' in Revelation = Human & Political Adversaries

- **Revelation 2:10** – "The devil shall cast some of you into prison."
→ *The 'devil' is the oppressive Roman authorities and religious leaders persecuting Christians.*
- **Revelation 12:9, 20:2** – "The dragon... the Devil and Satan."
→ *These passages use symbolic imagery to describe human adversaries and corrupt systems, not a literal fallen angel.*
- **Revelation 20:10** – "The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire."
→ *Represents the final destruction of oppressive, corrupt forces—not a supernatural being suffering eternal torment.*

Conclusion:

- **The NT never describes 'the devil' as an independent supernatural entity battling God.**
- **Instead, 'devil' (G1228 - *diabolos*) means 'false accuser, slanderer, deceiver,' and is consistently applied to human adversaries, corrupt rulers, and the power of sin.**
- **In symbolic passages (like Revelation), the 'devil' represents oppressive regimes, false religious leaders, and deceptive influences—not a literal fallen angel.**



The Metaphorical Nature of Devil (G1228)

Devil (G1228): A Metaphor for Wicked Characteristics

The analysis of verses containing *devil* (G1228) reveals a consistent pattern: it is not a literal being but a metaphor for specific **wicked characteristics** exhibited by **human adversaries** (such as religious leaders) and the **carnal mind**.

Key Characteristics Represented by Devil (G1228):

- **Deception:** False teachings, misleading doctrines, and twisting of Scripture (e.g., Matthew 4:1, John 8:44).
- **Slander:** False accusations and attempts to discredit believers (e.g., 1Timothy 3:11, Titus 2:3).
- **Oppression and Persecution:** Legalism and religious persecution by corrupt authorities (e.g., Acts 10:38, Revelation 2:10).
- **Pride and Rebellion:** Self-exaltation and rejection of God's truth (e.g., 1Timothy 3:6, Hebrews 2:14).
- **Spiritual Bondage:** Influence of false doctrines causing spiritual captivity (e.g., 2Timothy 2:26).

Primary Sources of Wicked Characteristics:

1. **Religious Leaders:** Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, and corrupt Temple authorities who spread deception, legalism, and false doctrines.
2. **The Carnal Mind:** Symbolized by desires of the flesh, pride, and self-righteousness that oppose God's will.

Conclusion for G1228:

- *Devil* (G1228) serves as a **metaphor for the wicked characteristics** of deception, slander, pride, and spiritual bondage — primarily manifested through **corrupt religious leaders and the carnal mind**.

Link to Full Study

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