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**Adversary  
in the  
Old and New  
Testament.**

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

## Adversary in the Old Testament.

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### Topics.

- Lest in the battle he be an adversary to us.
- There is neither adversary nor evil.
- God raised up an adversary to Rezon.
- The Angel of the Lord stood as an adversary to Balaam.
- Hannah's adversary greatly provoked her.
- The LORD will be an adversary to Israel's enemies.
- Haman the wicked enemy and adversary.
- The adversary blasphemes the name of the LORD.
- The LORD has bent his bow like an adversary.
- The adversary entered into the gates of Jerusalem.
- An adversary will surround Israel.
- Job prays he had the indictment of his adversary.
- Isaiah prays, "Who is my adversary?"
- Agree with your adversary, lest the adversary deliver you to the judge.
- When you go with the adversary make peace to be delivered from him.
- Give me justice against my adversary.
- Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion.
- Give the adversary no occasion for slander.

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## INTRODUCTION

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The following study looks at the eighteen Scriptures in the Old and New Testament of the King James Bible that uses the word adversary and explores the meaning of the Hebrew word Satan that our English word adversary has been translated from in many verses. This study shines a spotlight on two truths, firstly, that Satan is not some kind of invisible evil spiritual creature who has almost as much power as God, and secondly, that the Hebrew word Satan translated in English in many verses as adversary can apply in many context to the Angel of the LORD, God Himself, the devil, baal, Gentile nations and to anyone who acts as an adversary to what is right and good and especially to whoever acts as an adversary toward God, the Lord Jesus Christ and those who faithfully follow him.

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## ADVERSARY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

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In the following four verses the word adversary is from the Hebrew word (satan) (saw-tawn) which means opponent and withstand. It carries the idea of one who opposes and withstands against another and especially against what is good and right.

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## LEST IN THE BATTLE HE BE AN ADVERSARY TO US

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- **1 Samuel 29:4:** But the commanders (princes in KJV) of the Philistines were angry with him. And the commanders of the Philistines said to him, “Send the man back, that he may return to the place to which you have assigned him. He shall not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he become an adversary (satan/saw-tawn) to us. For how could this fellow reconcile himself to his lord? Would it not be with the heads of the men here?”

David at this time had deserted King Saul and been living with the Philistines. The commanders of the Philistines would not allow David and his men to go to battle with them against Israel for fear David would turn against them in the midst of the battle. In these verses’ adversary refers to David and his men becoming enemies to the Philistines. The adversary (satan/saw-tawn) is King David and his armies.

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## THERE IS NEITHER ADVERSARY NOR EVIL

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- **1 Kings 5:4:** But now the LORD my (Solomon) God has given me rest on every side. There is neither adversary (satan/saw-tawn) nor misfortune.

The adversary (satan/saw-tawn) is all the enemies of Solomon and the nations of Israel.

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## GOD RAISED UP AN ADVERSARY TO REZON

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- **1 Kings 11:23-25:** God also raised up as an adversary (satan/saw-tawn) to him, Rezon the son of Eliada, who had fled from his master Hadadezer king of Zobah ---- NOW GO TO VERSE TWENTY FIVE ----<sup>25</sup> Rezon was an adversary (satan) (saw-tawn) of Israel all the days of Solomon, doing harm as Hadad did. And he loathed Israel and reigned over Syria.

The adversary (satan/saw-tawn) is Rezon who hated and despised Israel and brought havoc and injury upon them.

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## THE ANGEL OF THE LORD STOOD AS AN ADVERSARY TO BALAAM

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- **Numbers 22:22:** But God’s anger was kindled because he (Balaam) went, and the angel of the LORD took his stand in the way as his adversary (satan/saw-tawn). Now he was riding on the donkey, and his two servants were with him.

The adversary (satan/saw-tawn) in this verse is the Angel of the LORD.

The LORD is acting as an adversary against Balaam because his way was perverse before the LORD (v32). Balaam’s way before the LORD was most likely perverse because he had intended to speak what Balak wanted to hear (that Israel would be defeated in battle) (v6) so that he would gain the favour of king Balak and be paid the reward, but God dramatically uses the Angel of the LORD and Balaam’s donkey to convince Balaam he must only speak the words the LORD gives him to speak. The adversary (satan/saw-tawn) is the Angel of the LORD and the LORD Himself.

**SUMMARY:** from these verses we see that the Hebrew word satan (saw-tawn) which has been translated to our English word adversary applies to:

- King David and his armies.
- All the enemies of Solomon and the nations of Israel.
- Rezon who hated and despised Israel

- The Angel of the LORD and the LORD Himself.

For further information see the title:

- Satan in, Satan and his Family (ON WESITE MENU).

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## HANNAH'S ADVERSARY GREATLY PROVOKED HER

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- **1 Samuel 1:4-6:** On the day when Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and daughters.<sup>5</sup> But to Hannah he gave a double portion (of food), because he loved her, though the LORD had closed her womb.<sup>6</sup> And her adversary (tsarah) also provoked her sore to irritate her, because the LORD had closed her womb.

In these verses the word adversary is from the Hebrew word (tsarah) which means adversity, affliction, anguish, distress, tribulation and trouble. For a Jewish woman to be barren was considered an infliction and caused great sorrow and grief. Elkanah's wife Peninnah had two children, but he loved Hannah even though she was barren. It is most likely that Peninnah was jealous of Elkanah's love for Hannah and was acting as her adversary by tormented her because she was barren. From these verses we see that the Hebrew word (tsarah) which has been translated to our English word adversary applies to Peninnah the wife of Elkanah.

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## THE LORD WILL BE AN ADVERSARY TO ISRAEL'S ENEMIES

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- **Exodus 23:22-23:** "But if you (Israel) carefully obey his (the Angel of the LORD) voice and do all that I say, then I (the LORD) will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary (tsarar) to your adversaries.<sup>23</sup> "When my angel goes before you and brings you to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, and I blot them out,

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In these verses the word adversary is from the Hebrew word (tsarar) which means distress and affliction to besiege and bind up. It carries the idea of an enemy who oppresses, vexes, torments, confuses and troubles another. If Israel obeyed the Angel of the LORD that God sent before them and obey him then the LORD would be an enemy and adversary to Israel's enemies that dwelt in the land of Canaan (v22-24). From this verse we see that the Hebrew word (tsarar) which has been translated to our English word adversary applies to the LORD. In the following five verses the word adversary is from the Hebrew word (tsar) which means trouble, an opponent, adversary, affliction, anguish, distress. It carries the idea of an enemy who inflicts tribulation and trouble upon others.

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## HAMAN THE WICKED ENEMY AND ADVERSARY

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- **Esther 7:6:** And Esther said, The adversary (tsar) and enemy *is* this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen.

The adversary (tsar) is Haman the enemy of Esther.

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## THE ADVERSARY BLASPHEMES THE NAME OF THE LORD

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- **Psalm 74:10:** O God, how long shall the adversary (tsar) reproach? shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever?

The adversary (tsar) is all the enemies of Israel.

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## THE LORD HAS BENT HIS BOW LIKE AN ADVERSARY

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- **Lamentations 2:4:** He (the LORD) hath bent his bow like an enemy: he stood with his right hand as an adversary (tsar), and slew all *that were* pleasant to the eye in the tabernacle of the daughter of Zion: he poured out his fury like fire.

The adversary (tsar) is the LORD God Himself.

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## THE ADVERSARY ENTERED INTO THE GATES OF JERUSALEM

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- **Lamentations 4:12:** The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary (tsar) and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem.

The adversary (tsar) is all the enemies of Israel who entered the city of Jerusalem.

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## AN ADVERSARY WILL SURROUND ISRAEL

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- **Amos 3:11:** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: “An adversary (tsar) shall surround the land and bring down your defenses from you, and your strongholds shall be plundered.”

Adversary in this verse is heathen nations that God uses to judge and punish Israel for all their gross iniquities. From these five verses we see that the Hebrew word (tsar) which has been translated to our English word adversary applies to:

- Haman, the enemy of Esther and all the enemies of Israel.
- The LORD God Himself.
- All the enemies of Israel who entered the city of Jerusalem.
- Heathen nations that God uses to judge and punish Israel for all their gross iniquities.

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## JOB PRAYS HE HAD THE INDICTMENT OF HIS ADVERSARY

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- **Job 31:35-40:** Oh, that I had one to hear me! (Here is my signature! Let the Almighty answer me!) Oh, that I had the indictment written by my adversary! ('iysh)<sup>36</sup> Surely I would carry it on my shoulder; I would bind it on me as a crown;<sup>37</sup> I would give him an account of all my steps; like a prince I would approach him.<sup>38</sup> “If my land has cried out against me and its furrows have wept together,<sup>39</sup> if I have eaten its yield without payment and made its owners breathe their last,<sup>40</sup> let thorns grow instead of wheat, and foul weeds instead of barley.” The words of Job are ended.

From these verses the word adversary is from the Hebrew word ('iysh) which means a champion, a good, great or mighty man, a kind and worthy person. Job is saying: “If only someone would listen to me! Here is my signature I will sign my name to my defense. My desire is that the Almighty would answer me and that my adversary would write the charges (indictment) against me in a book.” The idea is, that Job was ready for a trial and ready to plead his case and waiting for his adversary to come to the trial. The adversary in this context could apply to the following:

- Job’s enemies who mocked and ridiculed him.
- Job’s wife who scorned him.
- Job’s three friends or some or one of them.
- God Himself, who acted toward Job as an adversary (in a providential way).

Though all of these acted as an adversary to Job it is most likely that the adversary refers to God Himself since Job is already pleading his case with his three friends. Added to this Job had previously said that he will say to God:

- Do not condemn me; let me know why you contend against me (Job 10:2).

And God said to Job:

- Will you even put me in the wrong? Will you condemn me that you may be in the right? (Job 40:8).

Clearly Job saw God as his adversary and the one who had the power over his life (for better or for worse). Job respected God as a just judge and seems to wish that God Himself would hear, try, and judge his cause and answer him which of course God does in the last few chapters of Job. Perhaps the vagueness, of who the adversary might be is deliberate since it allows it to embrace everyone who acted as an adversary to Job. It appears Job desired his adversary would write all the charges he had against him in book so that he could examine them and make his defense believing he would be fully able to vindicate himself. It seems that Job would be very glad to have a book written that revealed to him any sin he had been guilty of which he did not yet see so that he might repent of it and get it pardoned.

He would not hide such a book under his arm, but take it upon his shoulder and wear it as a crown to be seen and read by everyone. Jobs wish at the end of all his conversations with his three friends who basically told him that his suffering was a result of his lack of moral and religious character was that he desired to appeal to God and state his defence since he is so confident of his integrity that as a prince to be crowned, rather than a prisoner to be tried, he would go near to the Almighty to hear his charge and plead his innocence. In chapter forty Job does stand before the Almighty and rather than state his case stands speechless and humbled by the questions God presents to him and repents. From this verse we see that the Hebrew word ('iysh) which has been translated to our English word adversary most likely applies to the LORD God the Almighty who allowed the faith of Job to be tested through many trials, hardships and sufferings.

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### ISAIAH PRAYS, "WHO IS MY ADVERSARY?"

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- **Isaiah 50:8-9:** He who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who is my adversary? (ba`al) Let him come near to me. <sup>9</sup> Behold, the Lord GOD helps me; who will declare me guilty? Behold, all of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.

In these verses the word adversary is from the Hebrew word (ba`al) which means to be master; to marry to have dominion over it carries the idea of a husband having dominion of a wife. The words, "Who is my adversary?" (ba`al) that declares me guilty?" could read, "Who has dominion over me that they can declare me guilty?" Though the prophet Isaiah in this chapter is speaking of himself the following words of this chapter:

- I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting, but the Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame (v6-7).

Show that Isaiah as a prophet is echoing the Lord Jesus Christ. The adversary in this Psalm refers to those who whipped Jesus, pulled out his beard and spat in his face. adversary here refers to the enemies of the lord Jesus Christ who are violently and aggressively against him and his faithful followers. From this verse we see that the Hebrew word (ba`al)

which carries the idea of having dominion over another that has been translated to our English word adversary applies to the enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ who are violently and aggressively against him and his faithful followers.

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## ADVERSARY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

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In the following four verses the word adversary is from the Greek word (antidikos) and from the Greek (anti) which means an opponent (i.e., one who opposes and withstands against another) especially to one who opposes and withstands God and what is good and right. It carries the idea of being set over and against and being contrary, opposite and adverse to a thing, especially to one acting as an enemy toward God.

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### AGREE WITH YOUR ADVERSARY, LEST THE ADVERSARY DELIVER YOU TO THE JUDGE

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- **Matthew 5:25:** Agree with thine adversary (antidikos) quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

The adversary in this context can refer to a brother or sister in Christ or to anyone who has been offended or cheated in some manner and is seeking recompense through the courts.

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### WHEN YOU GO WITH THE ADVERSARY MAKE PEACE TO BE DELIVERED FROM HIM

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- **Luke 12:58:** When thou goest with thine adversary (antidikos) to the magistrate, *as thou art* in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

The adversary in this context can refer to a brother or sister in Christ or to anyone who has been offended or cheated in some manner and is seeking recompense through the courts.

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### GIVE ME JUSTICE AGAINST MY ADVERSARY

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- **Luke 18:3:** And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.' (antidikos).

The adversary in this verse refers to the enemy of a widow lady and by extension anyone who acts as an enemy against the poor and those who are less fortunate.

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### YOUR ADVERSARY THE DEVIL PROWLs AROUND LIKE A ROARING LION

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- **1 Peter 5:8:** Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary (antidikos) the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

Here Peter describes the devil as a roaring lion prowling and seeking someone to devour. The LORD in the book of Genesis said to Cain:

- If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, SIN is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it (Gen 4:7).

The LORD in Genesis pictures sin as a creature hiding behind a door waiting to devour its victims as they enter into the room. The Old Testament picture of sin is the same as the New Testament picture of the

devil therefore resisting the devil and resisting sin are the same thing. When the devil and sin are personified, they can both be seen as the same entity because they both have the same desire, the same character and the same motivation which is to lead a person away from Christ and into ungodly behaviour.

### **James in his letter wrote:**

- Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. (James 4:7).

James in this chapter is explaining to his listeners that there are passions in the human heart that are at war with each other and then explains that these passions arise from a person wanting something, but not being able to have it. James says it is these craving passions that desire to have the things of this world that causes a person to commit murder, fight and quarrel because they do not have the ability or the means to obtain what they desire and crave legitimately, honestly or legally. The devil in this context refers to the desire in the human heart that craves to have something that it cannot obtain.

This Old Testament picture of sin is the same as the New Testament picture of the devil they are the same entity the devil is simply a personification of sin dwelling in the human heart. One is pictured as a roaring lion while the other is pictured a creature couching behind a door, but both are waiting for their opportunity to devour their victims. Resisting the devil and resisting sin is the same thing. We overcome sin and the devil by doing what is right and good and being watchful and submitting to God and standing firm in our faith rather than doing what is wrong and doing those things that brings a bad testimony to God, the Lord Jesus Christ and the Christian faith. The adversary in this context refers to any person who has the potential to cause a brother or sister in Christ fall away from their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

From this verse we see that the Greek word (antidikos) which has been translated to our English word adversary applies to:

- A brother or sister in Christ who is intending to seek justice in a court of law against another.
- Anyone who acts as an enemy against the poor and against those who are less fortunate.
- Any person who has the potential to cause a brother or sister in Christ to fall away from their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

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### **GIVE THE ADVERSARY NO OCCASION FOR SLANDER**

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- **1 Timothy 5:14:** So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary (antikeimai) no occasion for slander.

In this verse the word adversary is from the Hebrew word (antikeimai) which means to lie opposite, to be adverse, contrary to and oppose. Figuratively it carries the idea of being repugnant, offensive, distasteful, unacceptable, obnoxious and disgusting. This verse means don't give anyone any reason to speak badly of you or of God, or of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Christian faith. From this verse we see that the Greek word (antikeimai) which has been translated to our English word adversary applies to any person who is an enemy of God and an enemy of Christ who will take any opportunity to slander and speak against Christians, God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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### **SUMMARY**

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Summary from this study we see that the word adversary applies to:

- King David and his armies.
- All the enemies of Solomon and the nations of Israel.
- Rezon who hated and despised Israel
- The Angel of the LORD and the LORD HIMSELF.
- Peninnah the wife of Elkanah.
- Haman the enemy of Esther.
- All the enemies of Israel.
- All the enemies of Israel who entered the city of Jerusalem.
- Heathen nations God used to judge and punish Israel for their gross iniquities.
- Job's enemies who mocked and ridiculed him.
- Job's wife who scorned him.
- Job's three friends or some or one of them.
- God Himself, who acted toward Job as an adversary (in a providential way).
- The enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ who are violently and aggressively against him and his faithful followers.
- A brother or sister in Christ who is intending to seek justice in a court of law against another.
- Anyone who acts as an enemy against the poor and against those who are less fortunate.
- Any person who has the potential to cause a brother or sister in Christ to fall away from their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Any person who is an enemy of God and an enemy of Christ who will take any opportunity to slander and speak against Christians, God and the Lord Jesus Christ.