

Doctrinal Summary of  
Satan & Company: An Organized Army Against the God of the Universe

In Ephesians 6:12 Paul identifies that believers are fighting spiritually against the devil and his host of fallen angels.

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

The word “struggle” is translated from the Koine Greek word πάλη (“pah-lae”) which literally means, “engagement in battle or contest between individual combatants, based on response.” It is used to identify that individual believers fight against the schemes of the devil (cf. Eph. 6:11) who has an organized military employed in the world to spiritually attack God and His children. Each believer plays a role in the army of God as a part of his placement as an adult in God’s family (cf. Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5). Thus, believers engage every moment in spiritual combat against the devil and his fallen angels based on response to their attack against God and His righteous kingdom.

The word “devil” in Ephesians 6:11 is translated from the Koine Greek διαβόλου (“di-ah-bo-lou”) which literally means, “one who separates and divides through false accusations or slander against the character of another, based on initiation.” This is a reference to Satan who deceived a third of the angels to follow him in rebellion against God (cf. Ezek. 28:18; Rev. 12:4) and who acts as the commander in chief of his fallen angelic army. The army he leads is organized by him into various battalions with different rankings. Ephesians 6:12 identifies that there are four different ranks in the fallen angelic army of Satan.

The four ranks are identified by their corresponding translations from the Koine Greek of the New Testament:

1. Rulers (τὰς ἀρχάς – “tas ar-kas”): the principals, based on response; indicates the first in a series of others which follow in authority, time, or manner. These are the highest-ranking fallen angels in Satan’s army (Generals).
2. Powers (τὰς ἐξουσίας – “tas ex-ou-see-ahs”): the authorities, based on response; indicates fallen angels who have been commissioned specific authority in Satan’s army (commissioned officers).
3. World forces (τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας – “tous kos-mo-krah-tor-ahs”): the world rulers, based on initiation; indicates fallen angels who have taken authority in the world and rule over it by direct leadership (special forces).
4. Spiritual forces (τὰ πνευματικὰ - “tah pneu-mah-tee-kah”): the spiritual instruments used to accomplish something; indicates the rank and file fallen angels in Satan’s army (infantry).

These different ranks are employed by Lucifer who has trained them for their specific roles in his army with various methods (cf. Eph. 6:11) of attack against God and His army. The believer is commanded to put on the armor of God so that by it he may be victorious against Satan & Company in individual combat. However, Satan & Company have been very successful in attacking God’s character against humanity starting in the garden of Eden (cf. Gen. 3:4-5) and continuing to the present in “the sons of disobedience” (cf. Eph. 2:3). Satan & Company have one objective: overthrow God from His throne before being cast into the lake of fire because of their rebellion. To accomplish this, they are fighting relentlessly to distract, deceive, and persuade man away from God in this world (cf. Eph. 2:2).