

Sermon to the Saints of God which are at Topeka – Sunday, November 29, 2015

My hope today beloved, in continuation of what we talked about last Sunday, is to get to what we can say, for sure, in the current light of the Scripture in which we walk, about the origin, first (apparent) nature of Satan, and his fall; and to also get to whatever we can say on these topics with perhaps less certainty or clarity, although partially supported or pointed to by Scripture. Finally, in the midst of this investigation, there are other questions that come to light that perhaps we can provide some edifying thoughts concerning. My desire is to provide clarity where it can be given, and not to speak beyond what the scripture and our current expositional light can offer. We are warned, through God's reproof and enjoinder toward Job:

Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? – Job 38:1-2

I think Barnes has some good words on this passage: *Words that did not contain a true explanation of the difficulty. They conveyed no light about his dealings; they did not tend to satisfy the mind, or to make the subject more clear than it was before. There is much of this kind of speaking in the world; much that is written, and much that fails from the lips in debate, in preaching, and in conversation, that explains nothing, and that even leaves the subject more perplexed than it was before. We see from this verse that God does not and cannot approve of such "words." If his friends speak, they should vindicate his government; they should at least express their conviction that he is right; they should aim to explain his doings, and to show to the world that they are reasonable. If they cannot do this, they should adore in silence. The Savior never spoke of God in such a way as to leave any doubt that his ways could be vindicated, never so as to leave the impression that he was harsh or severe in his administration, or so as to lend the least countenance to a spirit of murmuring and complaining.*

How and when was Satan created?

Although it is a somewhat sophomoric point to us, there are many in the world who question the very notion that God created Satan. But they ignore very clear scripture in doing so – even so-called 'Christians' asking foolish and unlearned questions that gender strife and contention. Consider the scripture:

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. – Col. 1:12-17

1. By God were all things created (formal cause)
2. God is before all things (in space/time)
3. By God all things consist (both in their creation and in their continued existence)

Beyond the bedrock truth that God is the Creator of all things seen and unseen, we have little to nothing to go on, from a scriptural standpoint, to know any detail about the creation of Satan. There are those who point to

Ezekiel 28, demanding that this passage speaks specifically to Satan in terms of: his creation, his 'prefall' nature and the motivation and evidence of his 'fall.' Consider the scripture:

The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God: Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee: With thy wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures: By thy great wisdom and by thy traffick hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches: Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God; Behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness. They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas. Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou shalt be a man, and no God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee. Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD. Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. – Eze. 28:1-19

Nearly every mainline expositor out there opens this passage of scripture up as a prophesy delivered by Ezekiel to either an actual king of Tyre, as in Ethbaal (the father of Jezebel), or the cluster of kingships in Tyre (beginning with Hiram, for instance). Indeed, the very next chapter, 29, shows God commanding Ezekiel to prophesy against Zidon – those two great port cities being grouped together several places in scripture. And although few seem to equate this passage of scripture as describing Satan, either in terms of a former 'nature' that was found lacking at a point, or changed in perversion, or discovered to be flawed, there are those who allow for it to contain inferred, metaphorically-introduced characteristics of Satan. One of the obvious problems that we see is that, in verses 2 and 12, the Lord seems to be specifically commanding the prophet Ezekiel to speak the words that follow the commandment to the king of Tyrus, as a lamentation, or funeral ditty, to be taken up and said for him – both to prophecy of his destruction:

Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD... (v. 2)

Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD(v.12)

Perhaps most obviously, in terms of anyone thinking that this passage of scripture properly belongs to the description of a 'pre-fall' nature of who we now refer to as Satan, are the following elements:

1. ***Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; (v. 2)***
2. ***Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; (v. 13)***
3. ***Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; (v. 14)***
4. ***thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; (v. 14)***
5. ***and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. (v. 16)***

At first, my inclination was to offer competing expositions of each verse of this chapter of prophecy – but it is readily available to all who need further filling in of any gaps in the understanding. For the current purpose, I will deal with the aforementioned 5 points.

1. ***Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; (v. 2)***

Henry: *These were the expressions of his pride. He had a great conceit of himself, was puffed up with an opinion of his own sufficiency, and looked with disdain upon all about him. Out of the abundance of the pride of his heart he said, I am a god; he did not only say it in his heart, but had the impudence to speak it out. God has said of princes, They are gods (Ps. 82:6); but it does not become them to say so of themselves; it is a high affront to him who is God alone, and will not give his glory to another. He thought that the city of Tyre had as necessary a dependence upon him as the world has upon the God that made it, and that he was himself independent as God and unaccountable to any. He thought himself to have as much wisdom and strength as God himself, and as incontestable an authority, and that his prerogatives were as absolute and his word as much a law as the word of God. He expected to be praised and admired as a god, and doubted not to be deified, among other heroes, after his death as a great benefactor to the world. He thinks to himself: 'I am the strong God, and therefore will not be contradicted, because I cannot be controlled. I sit in the seat of God; I sit as high as God, my throne equal with his. I sit as safely as God, as safely in the heart of the seas, and as far out of the reach of danger, as he in the height of heaven.'* He thinks his guards of men of war about his throne as pompous and potent as the hosts of angels that are about the throne of God. The king of Tyre, though he has such a mighty influence upon all about him, and with the help of his riches bears a mighty sway, though he has tribute and presents brought to his court with as much devotion as if they were sacrifices to his altar, though he is flattered by his courtiers and made a god of by his poets, yet, after all, he is but a man; he knows it; he fears it. But he sets his heart as the heart of God;

"Thou hast conceited thyself to be a god, hast compared thyself with God, thinking thyself as wise and strong, and as fit to govern the world, as he."

It was the ruin of our first parents, and ours in them, that they would be as gods, (Gen. 3:5). And still that corrupt nature which inclines men to set up themselves as their own masters, to do what they will, and their own carvers, to have what they will, their own end, to live to themselves, and their own felicity, to enjoy themselves, sets their hearts as the heart of God, invades his (God's) prerogatives, and catches at the flowers of his crown — a presumption that cannot go unpunished.

- *He attributed the increase of his wealth to himself and not to the providence of God, forgetting him who gave him power to get wealth, (De 8:17-18).*

- *He thought himself a wise man because he was a rich man; whereas a fool may have an estate (Ec. 2:19), yea, and a fool may get an estate, for the world has been often observed to favour such, when bread is not to the wise, (Ec. 9:11).*
- *His heart was lifted up because of his riches, because of the increase of his wealth, which made him so haughty and secure, so insolent and imperious, and which set his heart as the heart of God.*

Since pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall, he must tell him of that destruction, of that fall, which was now hastening on as the just punishment of his presumption in setting up himself a rival with God. "Because thou hast pretended to be a god (Eze. 28:6), therefore thou shalt not be long a man."

2. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; (v. 13)

Henry here suggests that the king of Tyre thought of his enjoyment and dominion over his realm as being on par with Adam in his, prior to his fall. And that in fact such enjoyment and dominion was a reality – but the king, as a man, did not give God the glory for all such:

Henry: He far exceeded other men. Hiram and other kings of Tyre had done so in their time; and the reigning king perhaps had not come short of any of them: Thou sealest up the sum full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. But the powers of human nature and the prosperity of human life seemed in him to be at the highest pitch. He was looked upon to be as wise as the reason of men could make him, and as happy as the wealth of this world and the enjoyment of it could make him; in him you might see the utmost that both could do; and therefore seal up the sum, for nothing can be added; he is a complete man, perfect — in his kind. He seemed to be as wise and happy as Adam was in his innocency (Eze. 28:13): "Thou hast been in Eden, even in the garden of God; thou hast lived as it were in paradise all thy days, hast had a full enjoyment of every thing that is good for food or pleasant to the eyes, and an uncontroverted dominion over all about thee, as Adam had."

3. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; (v. 14)

Henry: That is, he looked upon himself as a guardian angel to his people, so bright, so strong, so faithful, appointed to this office and qualified for it. Anointed kings should be to their subjects as anointed cherubim, that cover them with the wings of their power; and, when they are such, God will own them. Their advancement was from him: I have set thee so. Some think, because mention was made of Eden, that it refers to the cherub set on the east of Eden to cover it, (Gen. 3:24). He thought himself as able to guard his city from all invaders as that angel was for his charge. Or it may refer to the cherubim in the most holy place, whose wings covered the ark; he thought himself as bright (and inviolable) as one of them.

4. thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; (v. 14)

Henry: He appeared in as much splendour as the high priest when he was clothed with his garments for glory and beauty: "Thou wast upon the holy mountain of God, as president of the temple built on that holy mountain; thou didst look as great, and with as much majesty and authority, as ever the high priest did when he walked in the temple, which was garnished with precious stones (2Chr. 3:6), and had his habit on, which had precious stones both in the breast and on the shoulders; in that he seemed to walk in the midst of the stones of fire

(because of the volume and splendor of his riches, as if he walked in the midst of stones of fire – all brilliant and dazzling in great piles all around him)." Thus glorious is the king of Tyre; at least he thinks himself so.

5. and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. (v. 16)

Henry: *"Thy heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou wast in love with thyself, and thy own shadow. And thus thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of the brightness, the pomp and splendour, wherein thou livedst." He gazed so much upon this that it dazzled his eyes and prevented him from seeing his way. He appeared so puffed up with his greatness that it bereaved him both of his wisdom and of the reputation of it. He really became a fool in glorying. Those make a bad bargain for themselves that part with their wisdom for the gratifying of their gaiety, and, to please a vain humour, lose a real excellency. He was thrown out of his dignity and dislodged from his palace, which he took to be his paradise and temple (Eze. 28:16): His kingly power was high as a mountain, setting him above others; it was a mountain of God, for the powers that be are ordained of God, and have something in them that is sacred; but, having abused his power (and not having given glory to God), he is reckoned profane, and is therefore deposed and expelled. He disgraces the crown he wears, and so has forfeited it, and shall be destroyed from the midst of the stones of fire, the precious stones with which his palace was garnished (in so great number and quality as to dazzle as stones of fire); and they shall be no protection to him.*

Still further problems exist in applying the prophecy of Ezekiel 28 to the fall, pre-fall nature and cause of Satan's fall. Consider the scripture at verse 2:

Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; YET THOU ART A MAN, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God: (caps mine)

And in verse 9:

Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou shalt be A MAN, and no God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee. (caps mine)

It seems pretty clear that this passage of scripture isn't talking to our about a spirit or an angel, but a man. And while there are several characteristics that spring forth from these verses that we can ascribe to Satan as paralleled elsewhere, that is hardly evidence of any weight; as all men, when they sin in their pride and folly (especially at a high level of societal authority), bear such characteristics. The conclusion I draw is that there is not sufficient evidence to use this passage of scripture to answer either questions about Satan's 'pre-fall' nature or his creation. We do, however, have some scripture that might speak, in generic terms, to 'when.' Consider the brilliant word picture painted by God in one of his responses to Job:

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? – Job 38:4-7

It's pretty clear that 'sons of God' is put here for 'angels' (not as in messengers, that can be men, but spiritual beings). We know that the devil is an 'angel' – an evil, spiritual being, as chief of the 'fallen' angels (we will get to the actual fall soon): There are other places where this phrase 'sons of God' is used (even in the same book of Job, in the first chapter), that ultimately comes to bear on what we can know about angels – but this is topic for another day. Of this, in terms of the current purposes, Clarke suggests: *This must refer to some intelligent beings who existed before the creation of the visible heavens and earth: and it is supposed that this and the following clause refer to the same beings; that by the sons of God, and the morning stars, the angelic host is meant; as they are supposed to be first, though perhaps not chief, in the order of creation. For the latter clause the Chaldee has, "All the troops of angels." These witnessed the progress of the creation; and, when God had finished his work, celebrated his wisdom and power in the highest strains.*

So if we believe that the phrase 'sons of God' here refers to the whole host of angels, rather than either the holy or evil factions alone, which are separated out from each other after the fall of Satan (which I do), then this passage in Job gives us a pretty clear road to say that angels were created before fastening or laying the foundations of the earth. How much more before we cannot say, but at some point before, I think we are safe in saying. There are those who point to a verse in Exodus, in the delivery of the Decalogue, as evidence that the angels were created inside the six day window of Genesis 1:

For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. – Ex. 20:11

We have no way of knowing for sure what sense of 'heaven' is being spoken of here. As supported by the Genesis account of the creation, we would be on pretty solid ground to assume that 'heaven' here means first heaven (or the earth's atmosphere) and second heaven (all of the firmament wherein the celestial bodies – planets, stars, etc. exist), but the third heaven (where the Lord and his host reside, beyond all celestial bodies), it would seem is not meant here. Further, what is stated is that 'all that in them is' (first and second heaven, earth and the sea) was made in six days. If the estate of holy angels, and the first estate of fallen angels, is third heaven, then both would be excluded from the manifest of what was created in those six days. Beyond this, I don't see any further scriptural evidence that would shed light on either how or when Satan (or any of the other angels, for that matter), were created. I don't think there is anything earth-shattering there (no pun intended), but it is one thing to say that things are thus and such, and quite another to have the scriptural support for the claim, so therein I derive some comfort.

What was Satan's 'nature' and 'station' at the time of his creation?

We have already looked at the Ezekiel 28 prophecy – if it can't yield us anything about the 'how' and 'when' (as it is a prophecy about the pride and destruction of an earthly king), then it really can't give us much here, either. This is somewhat problematic, though, as much of what mainline 'Christians' believe about the 'pre-fall' nature of Satan, they extract from Ezekiel 28. Scripture does give us glimpses, but nothing very substantial or specific. For instance, we already know that, at the laying of the foundation of the earth, that ***the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. – Job 38:7***

That joy and glorification of God's holy name at the witnessing of some of his marvelous works without number is a testimony of obedience, submission, and humility. We can also deduce those same angelic qualities in Jude:

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. – Jude 3-8

If we know that the habitation and estate of the holy angels, and the first estate and habitation of the fallen, or unholy angels, is heaven (third heaven, where God and his host reside), then we can deduce that the 'pre-fall' nature of Satan (and the other angels that were cast out with him) would have to have been one of obedience and service unto God, or else he (and they) would have never *had a habitation, or first estate*, in heaven. The notion that any of those not having kept their first estate, Satan included, indicates a punishment. Gods' punishment is on account of sin – so we must conclude that the 'pre-fall' nature of those angels was not sinful, but that great sin occurred at or over a certain time, and then Satan and his accomplices were thrust out. Beyond such scriptural evidence (Including the verses we looked at in Job 38), we really don't have any more specificity to bring to bear on the 'pre-fall' nature of these (as both the Ezekiel 28 and the Isaiah 14 prophecies seem to be talking of earthly kings – Tyre and Babylon, respectively):

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the MAN that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms – Isa. 14:12-16 (caps mine)

What was the nature of Satan's 'fall'?

I think it's safe to say that Satan's fall was speedily executed, inglorious and eternal. Consider the scripture:

And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. – Luke 10:17-18

This is Christ talking here: eyewitness to and cause of the thing. What is that nature of lightning? Bright? Why not the sun? or a star? Lightning moves so swiftly, like a powerful flash – it was how quickly and decisively and authoritatively Satan was thrown down – his relative power, being that of a flea to the overwhelming force of

God's will. For by willing the whole universe into being at his word, certainly one of his creation would fly from his sight like a bolt of lightning, should God but will it.

Gill: *Meaning, that this was no news to him, nor any surprising event, that devils should be cast out of men, and be in a state of subjection; for as he existed as the eternal Son of God before his incarnation, he was present, and saw him and his angels fall from heaven, from their first estate, their habitation of bliss and glory, down to hell, upon their sin and rebellion, as violently, swiftly, and suddenly, as the lightning falls from heaven to earth... so that what they related (the 70), as it was what he knew before, it was but little in comparison of what he himself had seen long ago, and of what he foresaw would be; and even he would give them power to do other miraculous works besides these.*

If we believe that Rev. 12 is speaking of the original event of casting down Satan and the unholy angels, which I believe we have pretty good authority to do, then we know that his casting out was preceded by war:

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. – Rev. 12:7-9

I must admit that, in all the years that I have spent looking at the expositors in their attempts to open up the scriptures for us, I have never seen such a seemingly wide range of 'takes' on the meaning of a cluster of verses. Again, I know that that is not dispositive of anything, in that all of them can be wrong, and the Lord gives us, as he did these learned men, the light to amply walk according to the good pleasure of his will. Nevertheless, it is through the framework of diligent study of the scripture, and seeing what others who have walked before us have gleaned, that we ask the Lord to give us more light. Just by way of amplifying the point, here are a few of the 'mainline' takes.

Barnes: He doesn't even think that this was a real transaction, war or conflict, but as a symbolical representation of the contest between good and evil — as if there was a war waged in heaven between Satan and the leader of the heavenly hosts.

Clarke: Roman Empire

Gill: *not in third heaven, the habitation of God, the seat of the angels and glorified saints, there is no discord, jars, and contentions there, nothing but peace, love, and joy; but in the church below, which is militant, and has in it as it were a company of two armies; or rather in the Roman empire, which was the heaven of Satan, the god of this world, and of his angels; and this war refers not to the dispute between Michael the archangel and the devil about the body of Moses, (Jude 1:9); nor to the fall of the angels when they rebelled against God, left their first estate, and were cast down to hell, (Jude 1:6); nor to that ancient and stated enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, (Gen. 3:15), which has appeared in all ages of time, more or less, since the fall of Adam; nor to the combats which Christ personally had with Satan and his powers when here on earth, as in the wilderness, immediately after his baptism, and in the garden, a little before his death, and on the cross, when he spoiled principalities and powers, and destroyed him that had the power of death, the devil; but rather to the conflict which Christ and his people had with the rulers of the darkness of this world, with the Roman*

powers, and with false teachers during the three first centuries; though it seems best to understand it of the war commenced by Constantine against Paganism, and which was finished by Theodosius, by whom Heathenism received its death wound.

JFB: — *It was fittingly ordered that, as the rebellion arose from unfaithful angels and their leader, so they should be encountered and overcome by faithful angels and their archangel, in heaven. On earth they are fittingly encountered, and shall be overcome, as represented by the beast and false prophet, by the Son of man and His armies of human saints (Rev. 19:14-21). The conflict on earth, as in (Da 10:13), has its correspondent conflict of angels in heaven. Michael is peculiarly the prince, or presiding angel, of the Jewish nation. The conflict in heaven, though judicially decided already against Satan from the time of Christ's resurrection and ascension, receives its actual completion in the execution of judgment by the angels who cast out Satan from heaven...That Satan is not yet actually and finally cast out of heaven, though the judicial sentence to that effect received its ratification at Christ's ascension, appears from (Eph. 6:12), "spiritual wickedness in high (Greek, 'heavenly') places." This is the primary Church-historical sense here.*

Beyond the evidence of Jude 6 (***they kept not their first estate***, past tense) and Christ at Luke 10 (***And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven*** – again, past tense), we also have this adjacent passage from Rev. 12:

Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the DRAGON SAW THAT HE WAS CAST UNTO THE EARTH, HE PERSECUTED THE WOMAN which brought forth the man child. - Rev. 12:10-12 (caps mine)

This is ongoing persecution of the church after he was cast down: as in past, present and future.

When and where did Satan's fall occur?

As we can see from the above, the war that resulted in Satan being cast down occurred in 'heaven'. Given that most of the other references to 'heaven' in and around the events described in Rev. 12 clearly refer to 'third heaven' (or God's habitation, along with the holy angels), I think we can be fairly sure that is what is meant in this case – although some expositors point to the idea of that great, open rebellion and war happening in the holy habitation of God as problematic. While I understand their position, I don't think it to have much merit, given the clear words of scripture in Rev. 12.

As to when it happened, we can add what we've already gleaned from Rev. 12 to this:

For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; - 2Pet. 2:4

This is clearly the Holy Spirit, speaking through Peter – counting this fall of Satan and his angels amongst the landmark events of great sin – in the past tense. So we have that it is in the past nailed – but how far in the past? We see the devil tempting Eve at Genesis 3, so we know that his 'post fall' open rebellion rears its head *at least* this far back. And we know that the war spoken of at Rev. 12 occurred in heaven (which, by the way, would show that at least some of that which was revealed to John, post Revelation 4, were revelations of events which

had already occurred, rather than exclusively revealing to him events which are yet to occur – or at least were yet to occur at the time they were revealed to John). We will return in a moment to other considerations about the timing of this fall.

Where is Satan now?

Several places in the word that seem more to be about the nature, character and motivations of Satan also give us good evidence here. Consider the scripture:

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: - 1Pe 5:8

He has no access to heaven, and he has access to whom he may devour (men, on earth).

And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, - Job 1:7

Self-explanatory.

Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. – Matt. 4:8-10

Satan is cast down to earth – he has no access to heaven, and has been as of yet been given neither his millennial reign banishment to darkness, nor his final estate in the lake of fire.

I hope something that I've said on this subject today, and last Sunday, is edifying – if by nothing else, at least by way of clarification. There is a lot out there that, at least, to my scriptural analysis of things, tends to miss the mark and confuse - by way of limited light given to solid bible scholars in the past, (what at least to my mind is) somewhat careless scholarship and downright mystical mixing of inapplicable scripture with unscriptural lore. We are called to, and must, carefully examine the scripture – the revealed will of God Almighty to his people, and glean all we can about the important matter of the spiritual realm, both as to that which is Holy and to spiritual wickedness in high places - and how we interplay with and in it in our hearts, minds and spirits.

I would like to return our attention briefly back to the timing of the fall of Satan and his accomplices again, to introduce an important topic that is closely related to what we have put in front of us already. We are able to determine that the fall of Satan had to have happened before tempting Eve in Genesis 3, as his rebellion would not have been manifest prior to the war in heaven which had him thrust out. We can say without a doubt that everything that physically exists in this world was created in the 6 days of the Genesis 1 account. Including all of the spiritual beings in the Genesis 1 creation account is problematic, as the sons of God (or angels) sang and shouted for joy at the laying of the foundation of the earth:

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the

foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? – Job 38:4-7

This piece of scripture not only shows that the Lord God did not inhabit eternity alone in those days when he first formed earth. This piece of scripture would also seem to take away both the six day window of the Genesis 1 creation account and whatever period of time passed between the end of this six day creation and the temptation of Eve by Satan at Genesis 3 as a logically acceptable timeframe for the creation of the angels. They witnessed the laying of the foundation of the earth and shouted for joy, so any time after that has them already in existence.

There is some pretty solid bible scholarship out there that I have been looking into for some time that suggests: that rightly dividing the literal words of the bible shows that the seven days of Genesis that begin at Genesis 1:2 are not a description of the earth's original creation, nor are they some enigmatic description of the earth's geologic history. They are the Holy Spirit's inspired scriptural account of how the Lord God Almighty regenerated the heavens and Earth after a previous universal order was corrupted by Satan's fall in the ancient past. In short, that there is a vast time-gap between the first two verses of Genesis. Consider the scripture:

(Gen. 1:1) In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

(Gen. 1:2) And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

The bible clearly says that the earth was already created by God prior to the six day work of the Lord God that began in Genesis 1:2. The Genesis Gap Doctrine, commonly called 'Gap Theory' or 'Ruin-Reconstruction' interpretation of Genesis, is a theological teaching that was first espoused by fundamentalist Protestants – in the early part of the nineteenth century – during some early progress into what we now know as modern geology - long before Darwin's theory of evolution was published, or even in the wind (and it has nothing to do with Evolutionism, but rather a taking account of God's geologic record, which he has left us - this earth and these heavens - in rightly dividing his literal word of truth on the matter of his creation of all things). The Ruin-Reconstruction or Gap Theory interpretation of the Genesis narrative is this: The seven days of Genesis were indeed seven literal 24 hour days, but they are not a description of the original creation of all things (Genesis 1:1). Rather, they are a Divine regeneration of the cosmos made from what already was here (created by God) before the present world of man. In other words, there are two (2) creation events in Genesis. The first is described in a one-sentence statement at Genesis 1:1 and it occurred a very long ago. The second occurred relatively recently and was accomplished in 7 days, and very detailed, beginning at Genesis 1:3. This might explain why the Bible at Genesis 2:4 says:

These are the generations [plural] of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens," - Gen. 2:4

This bible scholarship suggests that the time-gap in Genesis is obscurely declared but not detailed in the book of Genesis. It is the very first "mystery" found in the Holy Scripture. Seeing that there is a time-gap between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2, and WHY there is a time-gap, may open a more perfect understanding of what the Creation narrative is actually saying. Getting a better bead on the soundness of this scholarship may help cut a clear path through the confusion of conflicting theories and interpretations that have occupied the ongoing Creation vs. Science debate. I feel strongly, at this point, that this scholarship is important to look at as a closely

related topic both as to filling in gaps in our understanding going back and in possibly opening the eyes of our understanding further in looking at eschatology, or studies into the end of this current age, the end of the world and the nature of the kingdom of God. I have been digging in here, and asking the Lord to show us a thing – to help me, and all of us, to ***prove all things and hold fast that which is good (1Th. 5:21)*** For current purposes, both because of time and because I don't feel that I've been thoroughgoing enough in my investigation as of yet, I would just ask for your patience and that you consider the following analysis as part and parcel of the type of scriptural scholarship that is out there on the subject. Consider the scripture:

For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. – 2Pet. 3:5-7

Proponents of this scholarship preach that this passage of scripture is not a reference to the flood of Noah. And there are only two places in scripture where the earth was covered in waters – the flood of Noah and Genesis 1:2. The ramifications, if true, are obvious: the literal wording of the Bible itself reveals that the 'heavens and the earth, which are now' (our current form of the earth, made during the seven days) was not the first-time creation of all things, as is traditionally assumed. This suggests there were previous worlds (the Greek is aeon: or age, realm or reality) on the face of this old Earth before God formed the present world of Adam and his descendants. Consider the scripture:

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. – Heb. 11:3

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; - Heb. 1:2

Consider the following scriptural argument as an exemplar, or brief glimpse, into the scholarship of Gap Theory (returning to 2Pet. 3:5-7):

First, compare the phrase: 'the heavens and earth, which are now' to the phrase 'the heavens were of old': What does this mean? When the flood of Noah happened, did it change anything in the upper heavens? That is, would a flood on the Earth's surface have any effect on the sun, moon, or stars high above? The obvious answer is 'no'. The heavens of Noah's day were the same heavens as in Adam's day; same sun, same moon, same stars, same planets. The fact is that Noah's flood would have had no effect on the upper heavens. All of the effects of Noah's flood were confined to the Earth's surface and its atmosphere. And although the Bible speaks about the 'windows of heaven' being opened and water coming down (Gen. 7:11), the context of that reference is the First Heaven, which is the Earth's atmosphere. That is where the rain comes from. Keep in mind that the Bible says there are three heavens. (2Cor. 12:2 is a good reference for this). Again, note the comparison between the phrases the 'heavens were of old' (before the waters of 2Pet. 3:5-7) and the 'heavens and earth which are now' (after the waters of 2Pet. 3:5-7). If the effects of Noah's flood were confined to the Earth's surface and atmosphere, then Noah's flood did not affect or alter anything in the upper heavens, so logic demands that this verse must be speaking about an event other than Noah's flood, as the 'heavens (were) of old' are being contrasted with the 'heavens (and earth) which are now.' And Genesis 1:2 is our only other Biblical alternative.

Second, notice that in the 2Pet. 3:5-7 passage the earth is said to be 'standing out' of the water and 'in' the water. In our English language, these descriptive terms suggest that these particular waters were not confined

to the surface of the planet; they overflowed the entire planetary system. The Bible says that part of the planet was 'standing out' from these waters. That is to say, the sphere of the planet was partially 'overflowed' and the location of the bulk of the waters was external to the Earth itself. The scripture says the planet was 'in the water' of this particular flood (think of a round fishing float bobbing in a lake). In other words, part of the Earth is protruding from the waters and not simply just covered by waters on its surface. The literal English wording of this passage does not describe a flood event confined to the Earth's surface. This passage describes a deluge that raged across the solar system, and beyond. Our solar system and outer space are the Second Heaven of the Bible's three heavens. So, by way of review:

And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. – Gen. 1:2

At Genesis 1:2 the heaven and the Earth are in darkness and great waters are upon the deep. If we interpret the deep to include everything in the physical universe, which included everything below God's heavenly realm far above (see John 8:23), then the situation becomes more clear. Before any reconstruction of the heavens and Earth could begin, God moved, or organized, all that water scattered across space. That is why the Bible says that God 'divided the waters' (Genesis 1:6-7). And this verse does not say that this division was between the waters on the Earth's surface and the clouds up in the sky, nor does it describe the construction of some imagined 'water canopy' above the Earth that later was the water source for the flood of Noah. That is NOT what the Bible says. Consider the scripture:

And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. – Gen. 1:7-8

By carefully looking at the literal word of God here, it would seem as though God established a three-heaven structure between the Earth and the heavenly abode of the Ancient of Days. The firmament is the abode of the sun, moon and stars, and the galaxies. In other words, it is speaking of the entire physical universe. And the Bible says that God placed waters above that firmament. In doing so He placed a 'Sea' between the footstool of His heavenly throne and the less than pure physical universe down below. Please refer to the little diagram on the last page of the sermon outline.

In summary:

I. The scholarship that I have presented seems to assume a careful, literal account of each word of scripture, going back frequently to the original Hebrew and Greek words to be as exhaustive and amplifying as possible as to meaning. This scholarship also assumes the inerrancy of the word of God, and the rightly-divided scripture as the ultimate authority on all things – though not a science book, it is ALWAYS right as it relates to science. This view also provides a scriptural argument for the notion that: 1) the earth held its original form at its creation in the beginning (Gen. 1:1); 2) that it was or had become void and without form (Gen. 1:2); 3) that it existed in a restored, or reformed state in the creation account (Gen. 1:3-2:3); 4) that a new earth will be formed (Rev. 21:1 - ***And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.***); and 5) that the elements of this current restored or reformed state of earth will, at the final dispensation of the judgment of God, melt with fervent heat and be dissolved (2Pe. 3:10, - ***But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.***)

II. In looking into the timeframe of the fall of Satan and his unholy angels, we can see that there is a need to at least cull the scriptures for logical options as to when it could have, in principle, happened.

III. There is no doubt but that scriptures bear out that the world of Adam (and us) was created in six days, and that we can count, through the generations of Adam, and get nailed down pretty soundly that from Adam forward is roughly six thousand years. What I don't think we can do is ignore a literal reading of the scripture and come away from it with a lead-pipe lock that the earth, and all the physical universe is merely six thousand years old. The scripture doesn't lock that down for us, and may turn out to say something far different. I don't know how many of you strongly equate the age of the earth, and the vast physical universe, with the age of Adam – assuming no gap of time between the creation of the earth as expressed in Gen. 1:1 and the creation of the 'heavens and the earth, which are now' (2Pet. 3:5-7) that seem to begin at Gen. 1:3. What I do know is that there seems to be some evidence in scripture that this may not be the case – and it may turn out to be really important in our overall understanding of things going forward to have a better understanding of the record God has left us, both in his wholly inerrant word and through the geologic record he has left us. As I dig in more, Lord willing he will show his servants a thing, I will bring to you that which seems sound and useful.

We recently had 2 dear, wise, humble servants of God allude to such things as this. Brother Samuel recently preached that, while continually looking to the source and governor of it all, using science to describe the means of God's creation is a good thing...that we always humbly view science (or our understanding of the natural world) in light of the Creator of all things. Meanwhile, brother Timotheus recently tweeted: *Without a working understanding of God's creation, and His working in that creation, you cannot have a full and working grasp of the gospel! - AND - The mystery of the gospel is necessarily and eternally wrapped up with the subject matters of astronomy, geology, and anthropology.*

Thank you and thank God for the privilege and opportunity to speak to you on this day. I hope that something said here may be edifying unto the hearer.

I love you all. Amen.

God's Throne
(Third Heaven)



Waters above Firmament

And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. (Genesis 1:7-8)

Vacuum of
Outer Space
(Second Heaven)

The "Firmament"

The Earth's Atmosphere
(First Heaven)

Waters on Earth's surface