

Satan Cast Out

Introduction

Most Christians think that this issue is straightforward: that Satan was cast out of heaven with his fallen angels. In fact it is not clear at all when, how and why this occurred. Theologians have disagreed on the details of this for centuries. I first saw the issues as a young believer and questioned my pastor, who did not have an answer. Though I have understood much more over subsequent decades, I am still grappling with the details. This paper is an attempt to lay out my own investigation on this matter.

Part One: generalities about Satan

Satan is a person

Many false religions claim that the Devil is only the personification of a spiritual force and is not a real personality. Some of these actually deny the personality of the Holy Spirit as well. This position is false and denies a mass of Scriptural evidence.

In the same way that the Bible teaches that good angels have personalities, functions and even proper names, so fallen angels are also possessors of personality.

In the case of Satan we can see that;

- He has proper names (see next).
- He has a soul; that is: A) he reasons and plans [i.e. intellect] (2 Cor 2:11, 11:14; Eph 6:11). B) He shows emotion, e.g. hatred, wrath, desire [feelings] (Jn 3:20, 8:44; Rev 12:12). C) He has will power [i.e. volition] (2 Tim 2:26).
- He has depths of intellect (Rev 2:24).
- He speaks (Job 1:7, 2:2; Matt 4:3).
- He seeks out (1 Pt 5:8).
- He works (1 Jn 3:8).
- He is a father of children (Jn 8:44; 1 Jn 3:10).
- He rules over ranks of intelligent beings (Jn 12:31, 14:30; Eph 2:2; 1 Jn 5:19).
- He opposes men (Zech 3:1; Lk 22:31).
- He tempts men to sin using sophisticated deception (Jn 13:2; Acts 5:3; Rev 13:14).
- He moves from place to place (Job 1:7; 1 Pt 5:8).
- He flees when attacked (Jm 4:7).
- He exhibits the same sins as men (Jn 8:44).
- He is judged and condemned with men (1 Tim 3:6).
- He is punished with men (Matt 25:41; Rev 20:10).

Without any doubt, Satan is a real personality; a fallen angel with a real, eternal soul. He thinks, plans, determines, feels and chooses.

Satan's names, similes and titles

- Satan: meaning 'adversary'. Hebrew: *Satan*, from a root word meaning 'to lie in wait' (14 times); Greek: *Satanas* (40 times). It is used as a proper name or title only four times in the OT: with the article in Job 1:6, 1:12, 2:1; Zech 2:1, and without the article in 1 Chron 21:1.
- The Devil: meaning 'slanderer' or 'accuser' or 'adversary' (35 times). Not in Hebrew OT. Greek *Diabolos*.
- Beelzebub, the prince of the demons. Greek *Beelzeboul* meaning 'lord of the house' or 'lord of flies' referring to a Philistine god and thence the Devil as the prince of demons, 7 times. Satan rules over other fallen angels (Matt 9:34, 12:24-26, 25:41; Eph 2:2).
- Belial, a Hebraism meaning 'worthless' or 'wicked' (2 Cor 6:15).
- Symbolically as 'the dragon'; 13 times in Revelation. Greek *drakon*, a great serpent.
- Symbolically as 'the old serpent'; 4 times (Rev 12:9, 14, 15, 20:2). Greek *ophis* a snake.
- The prince of this world; Greek *archon* (Jn 12:31, 14:30, 16:11).
- Ruler of this world; Greek *archon* (Jn 12:31).
- The prince (*archon*) of the power (*exousia*) of the air (Eph 2:2).
- The god (*theos*) of this world (*aion*: 'age'; 2 Cor 4:4).
- The spirit (*pneuma*) that now works in the children of disobedience (*apeitheia*, 'obstinacy' or opposition to the divine will, Eph 2:2).
- The wicked one (8 times in NT).
- The evil one (Matt 13:19, 38; 1 Jn 2:13-14, 3:12, 5:18).
- The Deceiver (literally 'the one who deceives' (Rev 12:9)).
- The tempter (twice in NT Matt 4:3; 1 Thess 3:5).
- Him that has the power (*Kratos*, force not authority) of death, that is, the Devil (Heb 2:14).
- He is like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (1 Pt 5:8).
- He is like a strong man (Lk 11:21-23).
- Father of Lies (Jn 8:44).
- He is a murderer (Jn 8:44; 1 Jn 3:12). Satan is lord of death in the sense that as the instigator of sin in men he brings men to death (Gen 2:17; Rm 6:23; 1 Cor 15:56).

In the vast majority of passages (70 out of 83) either Satan or Devil is used.

Satan is not directly called 'Lucifer' (light-bearer, a Latin word) in the Bible. This term has been used by pagan cults to personify Satan as the bringer of wisdom. In Isaiah 14:12 the word 'Lucifer' is traditionally used to translate *heylel* meaning: 'shining one', 'morning star'.

By these names we can state that the character of Satan is evil personified. He is a wicked slanderer and accuser, the lord of demons (fallen angels), who works in sinners by temptation and seeks to devour believers by deceit. He is likened to a dragon (a flying destroyer); a snake (a venomous predator); a lion (a powerful predator); and the one that enforces death.

We can thus infer that Satan is:

- A spirit; a fallen angel.

- A ruler over other fallen angels (Matt 9:34, 12:24-26, 25:41). Regarding this position it is impossible to state that Satan was created as an archangel over other angels, or whether he usurped leadership after rebelling and assumed power over other angels. He is certainly now a prince and ruler.
- A personal being.
- An opponent of God.

As such, he cannot abide with God in his holy presence. So it is important to understand when he was exiled from the presence of God.

Satan's original position

We are not told a great deal about this but this is sufficient for us to affirm the following.

- Satan is a created angel. Any more than that is speculation. There is no evidence to state that he was an archangel or the prince of the angels or the most beautiful of angels.
- He rebelled against God.
- In his rebellion he managed to get a third of the angelic host to ally with him against God. 'His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth' (Rev 12:4). Though this is symbolic language, all agree that it refers to Satan under the symbol of the dragon. Stars here (as elsewhere in Revelation, but not in every case) refers to angels.
- The result of this action was being cast down to Earth at some point (Rev 12:4).

Satan's rebellion

Scripture tells us very little about the time, nature and effects of this fall from standing. As an angel he was created holy to be God's messenger and servant (Heb 1:7);¹ he was not created evil as God cannot originate evil (Gen 1:31; Deut 32:4; 1 Tim 4:4). Since God is good (Ps 73:1), he cannot originate evil or abide with it (Hab 1:13).

In some way Satan chose to rebel against God and it is quite likely he developed pride; however, we cannot certainly ascribe Isa 14:12-20 to Satan (see later). Satan manifests pride now² and this undergirds the likelihood that this was his original sin. He was condemned for pride (1 Tim 3:6) but also manifests lying, deceit, hatred and murder.

In fact the most likely explanation, and the reason for the swift temptation of man in Eden, was that Satan was furious with God for his creation of man and deeply jealous of the love, affection and favour given to man and particularly the delegated authority man was given as steward of the Earth. As an angel (a higher order of creation than man, Ps 8:5; Heb 2:7, 9) Satan would have been required to serve mankind – and this he could not stand.

This explains his motivation to develop a world empire ruled by proxies in his name. Satan actually hates mankind. The temptation of man is the origin of sin and evil in the world (Gen 3:1; Jn 8:44; 2 Cor 11:3; 1 Jn 3:8; Rev 12:9). Satan wants a world in his evil image.

¹ Heb 1:7, 'And of the angels He says: "Who makes His angels spirits And His ministers a flame of fire"'. Ministers = *leitourgos*, i.e. a public minister, a servant of the state, a servant of a king.

² 1 Tim 3:6, 'lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the devil'.

For his sins and rebellion he was cast out of heaven with his followers, a third of the angels, after a war was fought (Rev 12:7). This was allowed by God within the purposes of his decree because the remaining faithful angels were elected (1 Tim 5:21). It is important to affirm that God was not taken by surprise in the satanic rebellion. Satan's rebellion was necessary to tempt man to sin and produce the elect that withstand sin (Rev 12:10-11).

Thus Satan became the chief enemy of God, and also man as the delegated steward of God (Matt 13:39; Lk 10:19; Acts 13:10).

There is no Scriptural reason to suppose, as some, that Satan formally usurped the delegated authority given to man as a steward of the Earth and is thus the rightful ruler of this world. Rather Satan tried to usurp God's authority over the Earth. God is Lord of the Earth.

Satan is in darkness and chained

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.
Eph 6:12

And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day. Jude 1:6

God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell [Tartarus] and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment. 2 Pt 2:4

A change occurred in the limitations on Satan after the cross, which will be explained later.

Satan roams the air

The prince of the power of the air. Eph 2:2

Spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. Eph 6:12 ['Heavenly' does not mean 'heaven' here, but the sky. 'Heavens' often means the sky; e.g. Mk 13:25; Eph 4:10; Heb 1:10; 2 Pt 3:5, 7, 10.]

Satan roams the Earth

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ... Now when the tempter came to Him. Matt 4:1-3

The devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 1 Pt 5:8

Satan has a kingdom

Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons. Matt 12:24

If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? Matt 12:26

If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Lk 11:18

And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought. Rev 12:7

Satan has ranks of demons under his rule:

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities [*arche*] nor powers [*dunamis*], nor things present nor things to come. Rm 8:38

The principalities [*arche*] and powers [*exousia*] in the heavenly *places*. Eph 3:10

We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities [*arche*], against powers [*exousia*], against the rulers [*kosmokrator*] of the darkness [*skotos*] of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. Eph 6:12

For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones [*thronos*] or dominions [*kuriotes*] or principalities [*arche*] or powers [*exousia*]. Col 1:16

Having disarmed principalities [*arche*] and powers [*exousia*], He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. Col 2:15

Angels and authorities [*exousia*] and powers [*dunamis*] having been made subject to Him. 1 Pt 3:22

- Principalities: *arche*, the first place, leader, prince, ruler.
- Powers: *dunamis*, having power, strength.
- Powers: *exousia*, the power of authority, rule or government.
- Rulers of darkness: *kosmokrator*, lord, prince; *skotos*, darkness, blindness, ignorance.
- Thrones: *thronos*, throne, chair of state, kingly power.
- Dominions: *kuriotes*, dominion, power, lordship.

These titles are not authoritative or derived from God. Satan has no formal authority as a rebel under God. However, he has lordship over his own ranks of demons and thus these are given such nouns denoting the structure of the satanic army.

Summary

So, Satan is held in restraint by God. That is, he is allowed to be active only as much as God allows (e.g. the trials of Job). He is chained but not restricted so that he is unable to move.

Thus he can travel through the air and on the earth to tempt men according to the will of God. I will look at his location in more detail later.

Satan opposes God

Satan seeks to be God and to usurp his power and creation. He cannot attack God directly because God is all powerful and so Satan seeks to undo God's work on Earth and draw men to himself in a satanic kingdom.

He seeks to pervert God's people (1 Chron 21:1), causing them to sin. In the case of Judas he caused a disciple to betray Christ (Lk 22:3). He takes the Gospel away from those who are not elect (Mk 4:15; 2 Cor 4:4; 2 Thess 2:9-10). He tries to get saints to denounce God (Job 2:5). He even tried to tempt Jesus to worship him (Matt 4:9). He opposes God's people (Zech 3:1) and this is the reason for our spiritual warfare.

In his attacks he can cause loss of money, loss of health and bereavement (Job 1:10-22, 2:4-7; Lk 13:16).

But again we must affirm that whatever Satan does is only under the permission of God and used for good within God's purpose (Job 1:12, 2:6; Lk 22:31-32). Job's trials were intended by Satan to get Job to sin and deny God but they only succeeded in strengthening Job's resolve and faith.

Satan's methodology

Accusation

Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him. Zech 3:1 ['Oppose' is literally 'satan', to be an adversary.]

Note that this changed after the cross remitted sins:

Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. Rev 12:10

Deception

That he should deceive the nations no more. Rev 20:3

Using power and false miracles

The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish. 2 Thess 2:9-10

Devices (schemes)

Lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices. 2 Cor 2:5

'Devices' = a mental perception, an evil purpose. *Noema* means thought, but in a bad sense means a plot or stratagem.

The wiles of the devil. Eph 6:11

'Wiles' = 'cunning arts', 'trickery', 'cunning' 'deception', 'crafty scheming'.

Snares

Lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. 1 Tim 3:7

That they may come to their senses *and escape* the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will. 2 Tim 2:26

'Snare' = 'snare', 'trap', 'noose', 'net'. Implication of being caught unexpectedly and suddenly.

Promotion of idolatry

The things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God. 1 Cor 10:20

This was a focus of satanic activity during the OT period. Note:

They provoked Him to jealousy with foreign gods; with abominations they provoked Him to anger. They sacrificed to demons, not to God, to gods they did not know, to new gods, new arrivals that your fathers did not fear. Deut 32:16-17

But they mingled with the Gentiles and learned their works; they served their idols, which became a snare to them. They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons. Ps 106:35-37

Working through ranks of demons

Dan 10:11-11:1

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.
Eph 6:12

Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. Col 2:15

Works through wicked men

You are of *your father the devil*, and the desires of your father you want to do. Jn 8:44 [Spoken to Jews.]

O full of all deceit and all fraud, *you son of the devil*, *you* enemy of all righteousness, will not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord? Acts 13:10 [Spoken to Elymas the sorcerer.]

I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan. Rev 2:9

I will make *those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie -- indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Rev 3:9

Satan afflicts the saints

Within the bounds of his chain, he is allowed to afflict the saints; Job is the great example of this. The persecutions activated by Satan are merely the tests that God allows the saints to undergo in order to get stronger in faith and resolution. Trials make the saints dependent upon God's grace (2 Cor 12:9-10).

No genuine believer can be possessed by a demon (1 Jn 5:18). God dwells in the heart of the elect Christian and will not tolerate fellowship with demonic forces. This is why there is no such thing as 'deliverance ministry' to Christians in the NT; the apostles never diagnose that a demon needs expelling from believers. However, believers can be deceived and afflicted by demons if they don't resist.

He prompts persecution

Satan does this through his control of sinful men. He cannot, as an immaterial spirit, have any direct contact with material beings but must work through proxies.

The devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested. Rev 2:10

And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Rev 12:17

He accuses them of sin

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him. Zech 3:1

The accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night. Rev 12:10

He tempts to sin

Now Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel. 1 Chron 21:1

Peter said, 'Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back *part* of the price of the land for yourself?' Acts 5:3

He brings deceit

Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles [deceits] of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Eph 6:11-12

Lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices [mental perceptions]. 2 Cor 2:11

Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. 2 Cor 11:14

Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare [hidden trap, seduction] of the devil. 1 Tim 3:7

That they may come to their senses *and escape* the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will. 2 Tim 2:26

Satan, who deceives the whole world. Rev 12:9

Satan hinders and obstructs missions

Therefore we wanted to come to you -- even I, Paul, time and again -- but Satan hindered us. 1 Thess 2:18

He brings sickness

So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. Job 2:7

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. Acts 10:38

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. 2 Cor 12:7

And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise *herself* up. ... So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound -- think of it -- for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath? Lk 13:11, 16

Satan has some limited power of the natural atmospheric elements

While he *was* still speaking, another also came and said, 'The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you!' ... 'suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!' Job 1:16, 19

And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, 'Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?' Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace, be still!' And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. Mk 4:37-39 [Christ would not have rebuked the wind if it had originated from the Father.]

Saints are preserved and enabled in this

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*. 1 Cor 10:13

For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. 2 Cor 10:4-5

Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Jm 4:7

We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him. 1 Jn 5:18

Saints resist Satan (Jm 4:7; 1 Pt 5:9), overcome him by faith (Matt 17:20; 1 Jn 5:4), are victorious by prayer (Matt 9:29) and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God (Eph 6:17;) and by the blood of the Lamb (Rev 12:11) and the power of Christ's name (Lk 10:17).

Satan dominates the non-elect

The prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience. Eph 2:2

This can be summarised as follows:

- Satan possesses those whose wills are given over to him (Matt 4:24, 12:22, 45; Mk 1:32; Lk 6:18; Acts 10:38). 'Possessed', *daimonizomai*, means: to be under the power of a demon. It does not mean that a demon has any genuine authority to rule a person; it is a capitulation of the will. This causes a person to be dominated by demonic suggestions in the mind, will and emotions, often prompting self-harm (Mk 5:5), delusion (Zech 10:2), mayhem (Mk 5:4; Lk 8:27) or suicide (Jn 13:2 with Matt 27:3-5). The demons speak out of the person (Matt 8:31; Mk 1:23-25, 34). More than one demon can possess a sinner (Mk 5:9, 16:9).
- Satan empowers non-Christian people (Acts 26:18).
- Satan tempts men to sin (Matt 4:3; 1 Cor 7:5).
- Satan deceives people (2 Cor 11:3).
- He deceives nations (Rev 12:9, 20:3, 7).
- He prevents people understanding the Gospel (Mk 4:15).
- He blinds people to the Gospel (2 Cor 4:4).
- He enters men's unguarded hearts (Lk 22:3).
- He sifts (shakes to subvert) people (Lk 22:31).
- He causes people to lie (Acts 5:3).
- He dominates places given over to him (Rev 2:13).
- He shows wrath against men (Rev 12:12).
- He causes people to deny Christ (Jn 13:2, 27).

Satan as the god of this world

And the devil said to Him, 'All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for *this* has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish'. Lk 4:6

We need to consider this claim carefully because the Devil is a liar. In what sense does Satan have any authority over the world?

The first point is that God owns the world; that is very clear (Ps 24:1). The Devil has no formal authority over the Earth and its contents. So Satan lies when he implies that his power is an authority delivered to him by God.

However, the Devil does have power over the Earth and men through sin. By committing sin, men become pawns of Satan since sin is bondage (Jn 8:34; Rm 6:16). Through groups of men in power on Earth, Satan can thus dominate nations through tempting his pawns to do his will (Ps 2:1-4). Thus Satan can 'give' a nation to a man by orchestrating the various sinners involved in power.

Satan's temptation is always under the control of God for his purposes (2 Sam 24:1 with 1 Chron 21:1).

Satan's limitations

Sin always debilitates. The angels that sinned were cast out of heaven by Michael and the elect angels in a battle. Thus demons are weaker than elect angels. However, compared to men they have considerable power and must not be underestimated.

Yet there are severe limitations to this power; angels are not God.

Thus we see the following restrictions to Satan and his demons.

- Satan and his demons are not God. They are not sovereign and do not have divine attributes or power, let alone authority. [Note that in the heavenly war God remained peaceful on his throne, undisturbed. The battle was left to Michael and the elect angels (Ps 2:4, 37:12-13.) Angels are not omniscient, omnipresent or omnipotent. They may have superhuman powers but not supernatural powers.
- Demons cannot know the future. Only God knows the future. Isa 46:9-10.³
- Demons cannot read our minds. They can give the impression of knowing people's thoughts by deception through passing on information gained from a distant place or time by another demon present. Only God and Jesus can know men's thoughts. Gen 6:5; Ps 139:2; Isa 66:18; Matt 9:4, 12:25.
- Demons cannot become material. Demons are evil spirits and are thus immaterial creations. The folklore, myths and horror movies are all meaningless. Demons do not take physical shape and affect the material world. Therefore, they did not mate with human women in ancient times.⁴
- Satan is not king of the Earth as an estate. God owns the world and all that is in it. Exod 9:29, 19:5; Deut 10:14; Ps 24:1, 50:12; 1 Cor 10:26.
- Demons are restricted by God on the Earth. Jude 1:6.
- Christians can resist Satan with the authority of Christ. Jm 4:7; 1 Pt 5:8-9.
- Demons can only function within the permissive will of God. Job 1:12, 2:6.

³ Thus occult divination is a lie. Demons communicate through a vast network and can pass information on quickly. This can give an impression of special knowledge but not the future.

⁴ The fact that God has allowed certain angels to take human form for his purposes is irrelevant. This is not an innate power but a miracle.

Part Two

There must be three castings: a casting out, a casting down and casting into hell

The problem

Clearly there was a casting out of demons from heaven after the original rebellion. This is deduced from the fact that evil personified cannot remain in the holiness of God's presence. Secondly, the Devil is subsequently active on Earth subverting God's purposes.

There are also clear statements that the victory of Christ on the cross and his ascension to glory and authority led to a triumphing over the Devil and a casting down at a later time.

A further problem is that Satan appears to have some access to God in Job, after the first casting out and before the second.

So when was Satan cast out of heaven?

Satan cast out of heaven before the cross

How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *How* you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation. On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit. Those who see you will gaze at you, *and* consider you, *saying*: 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world as a wilderness and destroyed its cities, *who* did not open the house of his prisoners?' All the kings of the nations, all of them, sleep in glory, everyone in his own house. But you are cast out of your grave like an abominable branch, *like* the garment of those who are slain, thrust through with a sword, who go down to the stones of the pit, like a corpse trodden underfoot. You will not be joined with them in burial, because you have destroyed your land *and* slain your people. The brood of evildoers shall never be named. Isa 14:12-20

This is a proverb against the king of Babylon (v4). As such we must be very careful in our interpretation. Isaiah seems to be attributing more to this king than humanity can stand and thus appears to use the king as a personification of Satan, who directed him.

Lucifer is *heylel*, 'shining one', 'morning star', by extension 'Lucifer' as a reference to the king of Babylon and, by extension, Satan. The morning star of the ancients, that preceded the dawn, is actually Venus.

It is considered that, 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation. ... I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High' is a reference to Satan's rebellion, but paralleled by the presumption of Satan's pawn, the King of Babylon. All Satan's proxies who tried to set up a world empire sought deification (cf. Caesar worship). Many ancient emperors were deified as gods and established the original Babylonian pantheon.

This is the origin of the idea that Satan's original sin was pride (cf. 1 Tim 3:6). Certainly Satan's basic temptation to man is to be like God; to be God (Gen 3:5). This is the great lie of the Devil (Rm 1:25).

Is, 'Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit' speaking of the king or of Satan or both? If the king, it is a mere reference to death and burial; i.e. despite your great power you will one day die and end up under the ground.

If it is speaking of Satan then it may be a reference to the bottomless pit, in the great deeps of Hades (Sheol). Which leads to debate about what the pit is and where it is (see later). Is the pit in Hades or is it just the Earth?

In any event, as much as this refers to Satan, it states that he was brought down in a time that was past but possibly a prophetic future. Young's Literal Translation states: 'Only--unto Sheol thou art brought down, unto the sides of the pit' (Isaiah 14:15) using a hofal imperfect verb. The question is – is this before or after the cross?

The word of the LORD came to me again, saying, 'Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, "Thus says the Lord GOD: Because your heart is lifted up, And you say, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, In the midst of the seas,' Yet you are a man, and not a god, Though you set your heart as the heart of a god (Behold, you are wiser than Daniel! There is no secret that can be hidden from you! With your wisdom and your understanding You have gained riches for yourself, And gathered gold and silver into your treasuries; By your great wisdom in trade you have increased your riches, And your heart is lifted up because of your riches), Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have set your heart as the heart of a god, Behold, therefore, I will bring strangers against you, The most terrible of the nations; And they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom, And defile your splendour. They shall throw you down into the Pit, And you shall die the death of the slain In the midst of the seas. Will you still say before him who slays you, 'I am a god'? But you shall be a man, and not a god, In the hand of him who slays you. You shall die the death of the uncircumcised By the hand of aliens; For I have spoken, says the Lord GOD.'" Ezek 28:1-10

This passage is also thought by some to refer to Satan's claim to be god and something that goes further than a denunciation of the king of Tyre. However, this is a great stretch and can be dismissed. Many kings and emperors deified themselves and suffered judgment (NB Herod Agrippa, Acts 12:21-23). There is nothing here that needs to be interpreted as belonging to Satan.

And He said to them, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven'. Lk 10:18

Jesus said that he saw Satan fall from heaven to earth like lightning fall to earth. Jesus tells us that he saw this using an odd tense. 'I saw' is really 'I was beholding' using an imperfect active verb. 'Fall' is a second aorist (constative) active participle. This could refer to the past or prophetically to the future. Most commentators see this as the victory of the Seventy over the demons, the agents of Satan, forecasting Satan's downfall at the cross with Jesus picturing it as a flash of lightning.

Satan's position after man's creation

In Genesis 3 we see that Satan is on the Earth tempting man to sin and acting against God's will. Something has happened to Satan (and his hordes) so that he is not in heaven obeying God's commands; he is acting independently against God's commands.

Satan must have been thrust out of heaven to do this. The war in heaven has taken place and Satan has been cast out of heaven and his former estate.

In Job we also see that Satan is active on the Earth doing evil acts.

And the LORD said to Satan, 'From where do you come?' So Satan answered the LORD and said, 'From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it'. Job 1:7

This also shows that Satan is active travelling around the Earth inspiring evil acts. He tempts bandits to steal and kill for example. Satan is not an obedient angel in heaven doing God's will.

What about Satan having discourse with God in heaven in Job?

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. And the LORD said to Satan, 'From where do you come?' So Satan answered the LORD and said, 'From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it'. Then the LORD said to Satan, 'Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?' So Satan answered the LORD and said, 'Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!' And the LORD said to Satan, 'Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person'. Job 1:6-12

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. And the LORD said to Satan, 'From where do you come?' So Satan answered the LORD and said, 'From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.' Then the LORD said to Satan, 'Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil? And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause.' So Satan answered the LORD and said, 'Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. But stretch out Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face!' And the LORD said to Satan, 'Behold, he is in your hand, but spare his life.' So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. Job 2:1-7

This is a very difficult area of discussion involving matters that we are ignorant of in detail.

Firstly, God interacts intimately with sinful people in various ways without impugning his holiness and without his glory killing the sinner. There are many examples of this: Moses seeing God, as it were, face to face. God meeting with Abraham. The pre-incarnate Jesus wrestling with Jacob (Gen 32:22). Or even the Second person of the Trinity living a human life on Earth and hiding his glory for decades.

God, in his wisdom, interacts with sinners for the sake of his purpose and decree and does this by hiding his glory and forming some sort of dimensional barrier that allows communication but not direct presence.

This seems to be the case with Satan after being cast out of heaven. Until the cross, Satan is allowed, by divine permission, to have some sort of interaction with God. This is not the same as being allowed into the very presence of God in heaven's throne-room, but some sort of divine council, 'when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD'. Heaven can mean several things and generally means the spiritual realm. If Satan had been already cast out of the heaven of

God's presence and glory, this must refer to the spiritual realm of Satan and demons confined to Earth.

There are cases where an evil spirit is said to come from Satan but also to come from God (2 Sam 24:1 with 1 Chron 21:1). Or when an evil spirit performs God's will (1 Sam 16:14-16, 18:10, 19:9; 1 Kg 22:20-23; 2 Chron 18:20-22; Ps 78:49 'destruction' in NKJV is actually 'evil'). God is directing Satan and his demons to do certain things that comply with his plan.

Therefore, it seems that after creation and before the cross Satan has some kind of limited access to communicate with God under divine permission within a spiritual realm.

What was this casting out?

It resulted from a war in heaven. Satan rebelled against God due to pride (1 Tim 3:6) and this was won by the archangel Michael leading the elect angels in the fight. Having lost the war, Satan and his demons were cast out of heaven as being their normal dwelling place. They went to a spiritual realm in the environs of the earth to do mischief.

Summary

This is the period where Satan tries to ruin Israel (the only elect nation) and seeks to build a world empire through which he can dominate the earth by reason of sin. Thus Scripture highlights certain world empires that grew but were suddenly cut short (Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece). [See further on Revelation 20.]

Satan is cast out of heaven but has certain communication links with God and is under divine control. He is allowed to continually harass Israel/Judah and allowed to begin to build a world empire, which is eventually cut short.

Under these conditions, he would have been able to do great damage to the New Covenant church if he had remained in this position. He must be further restrained under the Gospel Age.

Satan cast down after the cross

And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Rev 12:7-9

Now some people consider that Michael represents Jesus; but this is not what is said and even in a symbolic apocalyptic book this is a speculative stretch.

Michael is a real angel and we are told about him in straightforward Biblical books. Not only that but Michael is stated to defeat demons in other situations (Dan 10:13, 21; Jude 1:9). He was one of the chief princes over the elect angels. Since he is clearly identified in name and rank, there is no reason to speculate that he is actually the Son of God.

Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, 'The Lord rebuke you! Jude 1:9

Michael, one of the chief princes. Dan 10:13

Michael is the archangel that God sends to protect the elect against the Devil and his hordes (Dan 10:21, 12:1) in the same way that Gabriel is the angel⁵ that is used to communicate special messages to the elect (Dan 8:16, 9:21-22; Lk 1:19, 26-27). There is no good reason to say that Michael is a pseudonym of the Lord in this passage.⁶

So in Revelation 12 we have a war in heaven won by Michael leading the elect angels and as a result Satan is thrust out of heaven to the earth in a limited way. [See later.]

The blow to paganism

One of the chief means of Satan to rule the nations was the use of idolatry and paganism. The empires that he developed prior to the cross were thoroughly pagan and dominated the world. This was given a deathblow by the cross (though not thoroughly implemented yet) and in the areas where Christianity held sway, gradually pagan empires vanished. This blow was necessary for the Gospel to flourish in the West.

Assyria, Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome had all been empires allowed by God but controlled by Satan through idolatry. They were all pagan-based empires. Around 300 years after the cross even mighty Rome discarded paganism under Constantine and from that time the areas dominated by Christianity abandoned paganism in the West.

This elimination of paganism seemed perpetual to our Victorian brethren but in God's plan paganism was allowed to reform in the Christian West for a short time. This began with the replacement of Christianity with pagan rationalism⁷ in the Enlightenment and was followed by wave after wave of more pagan ideas thinly disguised as philosophy and sociology. However, in recent decades this pagan attack has been more severe as political, rational, philosophical and cultural paganism had developed to corrupt all strata of society.

This answers to the deathblow (mortal wound) given to the beast (Satan's kingdom) and his resurrection in Revelation.⁸

Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. Jn 12:31

⁵ Only Michael is identified as an archangel (lit. 'chief-angel'). As the Devil had princes over angels (Dan 10:13, 20), so the elect angels were divided into ranks with a prince in charge. This is confirmed by 'Michael, one of the chief princes' (Dan 10:13). Angels had several princes among whom was Michael. However, since Gabriel is named and given great responsibility, it is not a stretch to suggest that he is an archangel.

⁶ This is denied by many commentators who see Michael as the Lord himself. But why would Scripture call Christ an 'archangel', which is neither man nor God and one of several princes. The fact that 'Michael' means 'who is like God' does not confirm that he is the Second Person of the Trinity; simply that he is a servant of God. Many men had names involving a word for God and indeed several men were named 'Michael' (Num 13:13; 1 Chron 5:13, 6:40, 7:3, 8:16, 12:20, 27:18; 2 Chron 21:2). The theophanies (Christ before the incarnation) mention the "The Angel of the Lord" because there was no other way to describe God in human appearance in those times. However, not every mention of this phrase points to the Second Person; indeed in Matt 1:24 he is mentioned in the same context as the Lord. In fact we cannot say with certainty that 'the angel of the Lord' is the Second person – but there are places where it seems highly likely. The Second Person never takes on an actual angelic form but only ever a human form. In fact, Hebrews argues that Christ is very different and superior to an angel. Jude 1:9 also shows that Michael is inferior to the Lord. In Rev 10 the 'mighty angel' is Christ because his attributes can only be divine.

⁷ Worship of the human mind – idolatry.

⁸ Admittedly the destruction of Rome and its resurrection in the Roman papacy is an interesting alternative fulfilment of this word.

‘Now’ means ‘at the present time’. ‘Shall be’ is a future passive verb. *Ekballo* means to cast out, drive out, expel. ‘Out’ is *exo*, meaning: outside, out, outer.

This clearly is a reference to the judgment on Satan that was proclaimed after the cross, resurrection and ascension of Jesus to the throne of all authority in the universe, which Jesus foresaw approaching.

As a result of the victory of the atonement, Jesus was able to cast Satan out from all authority and power and place a restriction upon Satan and his demons to enable the Gospel to flourish (see Rev 20). This was the fulfilment of the proto-evangel, ‘I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel’, (Gen 3:15).⁹

Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. Col 2:15

‘Disarms’ is despoils, disarms, strip off from one’s self, denoting a thorough separation.

Jesus disarms demons and triumphs over them. Something special happened when Jesus gained universal authority as a man. This is Satan’s inherent power being terminated. However, God does not fully implement this until the end so that Satan is used to further God’s purposes.

According to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, *who* has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. 2 Tim 1:9-10

Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil. Heb 2:14

What happened after the cross? Jesus defeated death and sin. These were the things that gave Satan power over men and this power was taken away. Satan has been bound by Christ (Matt 12:29).

Jesus had power as the Son of God before the cross and could give his disciples power over demonic forces (Lk 10:19); but the cross secured a permanent change and victory over sin in converted people.

‘Destroy him who had the power of death’. ‘Destroy’ is not annihilate but ‘render powerless (*katargeo*)’. The Devil wasn’t annihilated at the cross but the sentence was passed upon him to be carried out at the end (Rm 16:20).

Note that a vital aspect of Christ’s atonement was destructive, to destroy the Devil and his works. This was highlighted from the very beginning in Gen 3:15.

⁹ The bruising of the heel (a non-fatal injury) was Christ’s suffering; the bruising of the head is a fatal blow.

But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. Matt 12:28-29

If Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end. No one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. And then he will plunder his house. Mk 3:26-27

But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armour in which he trusted, and divides his spoils. Lk 11:20-22

A principle is established here that the binding of Satan is necessary before people controlled by him can be freed. In universal terms, the great binding of Satan is something achieved by the cross. Jesus is the strong man that despoils Satan and limits his activity from what it was before the cross. A binding occurred at the cross that severely limited Satan from doing his will. This was particularly from destroying the growing church under the Gospel and developing a world empire devoted to killing off the elect. [See Revelation 20.]

However, the specific mention in these texts is the localised power of Jesus as a man to exorcise demons. He was able to do this in a measure never seen before in history¹⁰ because he had first overpowered Satan in the wilderness temptations. The cross is a much bigger victory that gives all the elect in Christ the ability to overcome Satan by the blood of Christ.

For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 1 Jn 3:8

'Destroy' is *luo* meaning to loose any person (or thing) tied or fastened; to unbind, release from bonds, set free; to deprive of authority; to break up, demolish, destroy, to overthrow, to do away with. While the Devil is not yet destroyed, the effect of his operations on the saints is – which enables saints to resist him.

Heaven is reconciled

For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. Col 1:19-20

The cross had an effect in heaven as well as on Earth. The great reconciliation was between men and God by the removal of sin and the giving of righteousness (justification).

But there was also an effect on the very earth and nature, which had been damaged by the entrance of sin. The cross brought peace and liberty to nature as well as men (Rm 8:19-22).

The effect of Christ's reconciliation is seen in Eph 1:10, 'that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth - in Him'.

¹⁰ The Jews had itinerant exorcists since the close of the OT, Matt 12:27; Lk 11:19; Acts 19:13.

The purpose of the reconciliation is making peace and bringing together the various aspects of the universal creation under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Now a big aspect of universal government is the reign of Satan over men within the world through sin and wickedness. It is impossible for heaven to be reconciled with the Earth while Satan is ruling men by deception and dominating nations. Thus Satan has to be overthrown and his rule destroyed before the final reconciliation can take place. This victory was achieved at the cross but its full implementation is delayed until the end, 'Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death' (1 Cor 15:24-26).

But Satan also had access in some measure to the courts of heaven (not God's glorious presence) where he accused saints:

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. Job 1:6

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him. Zech 3:1

Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, 'Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down'. Rev 12:10

This situation needed to be reconciled and Satan thrown out and chained on Earth. The discord in heaven needed to be cleansed. We never read of Satan presenting himself before God again after the cross.

Summary

Satan had been cast out of heaven after his war against God where he sought to become God. However, he still had a certain measure of free movement (under divine permission) and some access to communication with God. In this he was able to pervert and corrupt the children of Israel into idolaters.

After the cross Satan is totally conquered by the actions of Jesus in death, resurrection and ascension. Jesus, having power over sin and death, takes away the Devil's chief weapons. Satan is then bound under certain limitations for the Gospel period. He is prevented from destroying the church and from building a world empire that tries to wipe the church out completely.

Casting into hell

Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels'. Matt 25:41

God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment [i.e. hell]. 2 Pt 2:4

The angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day [hell]. Jude 1:6

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Rev 20:10

Here we are on safe ground. There is unanimous agreement that Satan and his angels will be cast in hell (figured as a lake of fire) after the Second Coming of Christ and the Final Judgment. This is the place of eternal judgment and wrath.

This is the final casting down of Satan and his demons.

Satan was defeated by the cross and victory of Christ. However, in God's plan this victory is not consummated and applied until the end when the last elect person is born and converted. Satan after the cross is allowed to bring about the full development of man in sin, for the rebellion started by the Fall to reach its completion and the world become fully iniquitous – at the end of the age. As a result God can then bring about the judgment long awaited on sin and sinners.

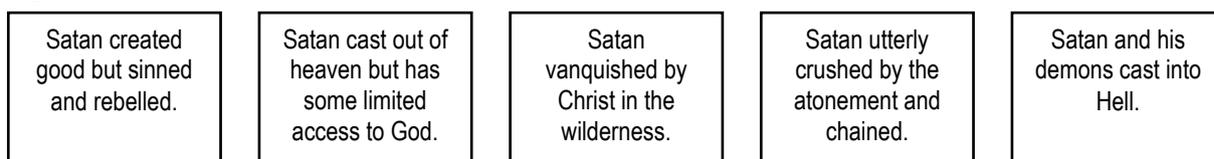
The overall framework

From what we have studied we can summarise the history of Satan and his demons as follows:

- All angels are created as part of God's creation process. These are created 'very good' (Gen 1:31).
- At some point between their creation and the Fall of man (Gen 3:1-5) there must have been a war in heaven whereby Satan (as the leader) and the demons were cast out of heaven and now wander on the earth because Satan tempted Eve to disobey God. Job 1:7, 2:2; 2 Cor 11:3; Rev 20:2. This is the origin of sin.
- The sin of Satan seems to have been a combination of pride (1 Tim 3:6), rebellion (Rev 12:7-9) and jealousy (Jude 1:6). The chief object of envy appears to man, the crown of God's creation and steward of the Earth. This led to the serpent's temptation (through which Satan worked). Satan became proud and wanted to be as God (Isa 14:13-14), then envied man, God's favourite, and fomented a revolution in heaven affecting a third of the angels (Rev 12:3-4).
- From this point Satan and his demons (fallen, evil angels) act independently (in their view) and oppose God and man. In reality, demons are under God's permissive will. Job 1:12, 2:6; Zech 3:1.
- In some manner unknown to us Satan is able, at this point, to communicate with God to accuse the saints in an angelic assembly of some kind. This is not the throne as there is no mention of Cherubim. Job 1:6-11, 2:1-5.
- Satan attempts to gather world empires through which he seeks to dominate the Earth and mankind – but he is prevented from allowing these to come to global fruition. One by one they are terminated. These include: Old Babylonia, Assyria, Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Greece.
- Satan's power as the god of his world/age (2 Cor 4:4) is not by any formal authority over the Earth, which belongs to God (Ps 24:1), but by controlling men and nations through sin (1 Jn 5:19). His chief method in this is the use of deception. 2 Cor 11:3; 2 Thess 2:9-10; 1 Tim 2:14; Rev 12:9, 20:3.
- When Jesus appears as God incarnate, there is an exposure of demonic activity and an attempt by Satan to overpower the Lord through temptations. Satan is conquered instead. Matt 4:1-11.
- At the cross, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Satan is completely vanquished and despoiled. However, the final sentence of punishment is delayed until the end. 1 Cor 15:24-25; Col 2:15.

- The means of subverting Satan is to destroy the things that enabled him to have power over men – sin and death. Lk 11:20-22; Rm 5:12, 6:16, 8:2, 16:20; 1 Cor 15:56; 2 Tim 1:9-10; Heb 2:14; 1 Jn 3:8.
- Satan was cast down from any sort of authority, power and not permitted any kind of communication in the heavenly assembly, or any entrance to God's presence, but was restricted in chains on the Earth and the air just above the Earth. This dimension is described as a place of darkness or a pit. Eph 2:2; 2 Pt 2:4; Jude 1:6; Rev 20:1-6.¹¹
- Satan still strives to assemble a global empire and the destruction of all Christians but Christ has restricted him from doing this during the Gospel Age until the very end. Rev 20:7-9.
- At the end, for a short time, Satan is allowed to build a world empire of evil and idolatry and to persecute the church ruthlessly. In fact, this is the fulness of man's sin coming to completion readying mankind for harvest of God's wrath. Rev 13, 17, 20:7-9.
- Jesus returns to the Earth in glory and destroys the human satanic leadership instantly. 2 Thess 2:8.
- After the Final Judgment of men and angels, Satan plus his demons and all sinners are thrown into hell, or the Lake of Fire. Rev 19:17, 20:10, 15.

In graphic terms:



The framework of Revelation 12

The scope of this chapter is a summary of the history of redemption from the beginning to the end. The fury of Satan is directed at preventing the fulfilment of the prophecy of Gen 3:15 – the coming Messiah / Deliverer.

Vision 1: the church and the Messiah

1 Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.

2 Then being with child, she cried out in labour and in pain to give birth.

The woman is the elect of God, here the OT church; the child is the Messiah.

Sun and moon, note Song 6:10. This is the OT (moon) and NT dispensation. The sun of revelation shines brightest in the NT explaining and revealing the dimmer revelation in the OT just as the moon only reflects the sun's light. Paul calls the OT revelation a 'shadow' of the revelation that Christ brought forth (Col 2:6-17; Heb 8:5, 10:1). The moon under her feet means that the OT dispensation is ended.

The garland (or better 'crown') of 12 stars refers to the covenant of God with the church. The government of the church is under 12 tribes in the OT and 12 apostles in the NT.

¹¹ It is not true that some demons are chained but some have more liberty.

Although verses 3-4 refer to an earlier event, John starts with what is most important to God – the manifestation of the elect on Earth. This ‘great sign’ is the focal point of the decree, the eternal purpose of God.

Vision 2: Satan’s rebellion; first casting out

3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.

4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born.

A new vision (‘another sign’).

The dragon is Satan. ‘Fiery red’ implies hatred and murder. The heads, horns and diadems are kingdoms that he controls. ‘Ten’ implies universality of dominion; ‘horns’ stands for power. In short, Satan’s earthly kingdom ruled by proxies.

This explains the original war in heaven whereby Satan was cast out of heaven along with a third of the angels.

The Devil wars against the elect in Israel and is particularly focused on killing the Messiah to come – God’s promised Deliverer. This is the OT period – the Messiah has not yet been born.

Vision 3: the incarnation and ascension of Christ

5 She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.

6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

The Messiah is born (Male-Child), performs his work upon the cross and is raised and ascended to heaven.

The woman is now the elect NT church that is in a place protected and nourished by God (perseverance) for the Gospel Age (1260 days). This is a reference to the flights of Elijah to Cherith and Zarepath for three and a half years (1260 days; cf. Rev 11:2-3). It is the total time of the church’s conflict with Satan in the world.

Vision 4: war in heaven; Satan cast down from authority

7 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought,

8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.

9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Some believe that Michael refers to Christ and that this is referring to the cross. But Michael is a real personality and is identified as a ‘chief prince’ of the angels (Dan 10:13).

We know that the casting to Earth happened after the original demonic rebellion before Gen 3:1. Therefore this has to be a further casting down from any access to God’s presence and a removal of power under chains on the Earth. ‘Cast out’, in all three cases, is really ‘cast down’.

Michael is able to defeat the dragon because he was given authority by Christ, who had conquered Satan by his atonement. Kings and emperors do not do menial tasks; they

delegate authority to a sergeant-at-arms or a commander-in-chief to remove unwanted people from power. In this case it is Michael.

This does not follow on chronologically from verses 5-6; it is not a war subsequent to the close of the Gospel Age. This is the mistake made by Dispensationalists and Premillennialists in general who put this warfare in the millennium. John is going back and forth in this vision, or rather a series of mini visions. Having already spoken of the ascension of Christ (verse 5), he separately explains one great effect of the authority given to Christ (Matt 28:18).

Vision 5: the victory of Christians after the casting down of Satan

10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

11 "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

12 "Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time."

The 'short time' refers to the Last Days of the whole Gospel Age.

John here explains another aspect of the victory of Christ – the power delegated to the elect to defeat Satan.

The casting down of Satan is paralleled with the lifting up of Christ (Jn 3:14, 12:31-32). As Christ is lifted up on the cross and ensures the victory over Satan, the world changes. Satan is no longer able to control the nations as he used to, is limited and chained, and is unable to *legally* accuse the saints of sin because their sins have been actually remitted. Before the cross the sins of saints were covered but could not be actually remitted until Christ paid for them by death. The accusations to saints since the cross is a deception, which must be resisted.

This victory in practice is explained in verse 11. Saints overcome Satan in three ways:

- By the work of Christ on the cross ('the blood of the Lamb') leading to justification.
- By our testimony to the atonement ('by the word of their testimony').
- And by our complete commitment to Christ as Lord ('they did not love their lives to the death').

Revelation is not laid out in chronological order but rather visionary snapshots, sometimes giving parallel truths, sometimes separate truths. 'Then' is really *kai* meaning 'and, 'yet', 'even', 'even', 'but', 'that is' etc. This would connect verses 10-12 with verses 7-9.

Verse 10 'accusing the brethren' refers to the OT period. Satan had been cast out of heaven but had a limited access to accuse saints before God because their sins had not yet been actually remitted until the cross. We see this in Job 1-2. After the cross Satan is no longer allowed to accuse the saints in heaven. He is now cast down; i.e. from any previous authority or position.

Verse 12 explains the history of warfare, strife, terrorism, and conflagrations. Having been despoiled, Satan is furious with mankind and rages at them. Both the civilised and

uncivilised wicked world populations (earth and sea)¹² are the victims of his wrath. His real enemy is the church but he is restricted in his attacks on the saints; however, all men are under the ownership of God their creator, and so Satan (who lies to them that sin is pleasant and his way is freedom) attacks mankind to get at God. Note how people given over to Satan (such as occultists) often get an early, distressing death. Satan does not love anyone, even his own servants.

Vision 6: Satanic persecution of the church

13 Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male *Child*.

This is the persecution of the NT church by Satan because the Messiah has been born.

This was initially by Jewish persecution of the Judaeen churches then the Roman persecution under ten emperors. Since open persecution failed, this was followed by the development of a false church with Satan at its head as the antichrist in the papacy, which succeeded in deluding many.

This was followed by multiple strands of attack: rationalism, mysticism, idolatry, physical persecution, atheism, hedonism, mechanism, scientism, philosophy, and so on. Today it is coming to a head with all of society being coerced into antichristian properties.

Vision 7: the protection of the church

14 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.

15 So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood.

16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.

17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

This is further commentary on the war against the saints. The church is cared for by God during the Gospel Age. A flood of persecution erupts against the church but it is not allowed to destroy the church entirely. Some of the vehemence of Satan through empires affects the rest of society, which absorbs the persecutions.

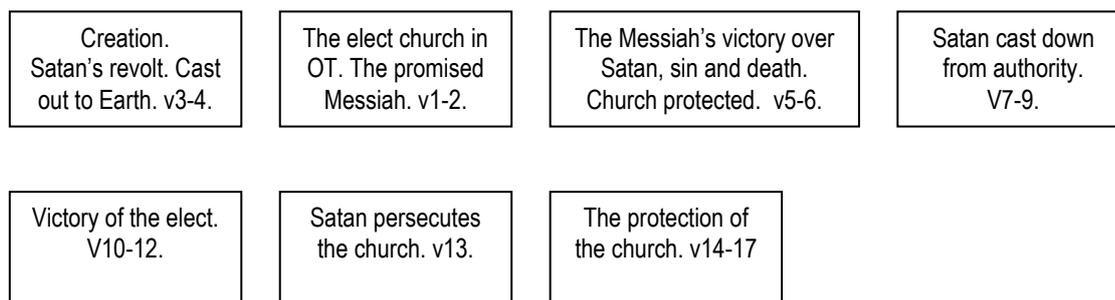
The great eagle is Christ (Deut 32:11; Exod 19:4). The wilderness is the world in which the church is a protected pilgrim just as the Israelites were protected in the Sinai wilderness. The place of protection is the heavenlies, the spiritual realm where saints are nourished and fed and where they reign with Christ.

So the Devil sends a flood of persecution, of all types, against the material church but the church is never destroyed. In fact, various powers in the world conflict against each other. As one power rises that may pose a threat to the church, so another power rises to oppose the first power. This has continued throughout history, which has been ordered by God for the benefit of the saints.

¹² Isa 57:20; Jude 1:13; Jn 5:31; Jm 3:15.

Summary

This framework endorses the argument of my thesis in this paper. Redemptive history can be summarised as follows:



The framework of Revelation 20

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Rev 20:1-10

Interpreted correctly, this passage confirms the framework that I have espoused.

Most commentators affirm that the angel with the key to the abyss is Christ (Rev 3:7), as he is the one that binds the Devil (Matt 12:28-29 etc.). However, calling Christ an angel of God is demeaning; he is not a messenger of God, he is God. The angel with the key is a servant of Christ, who alone has the authority to bind Satan. Christ is the owner of the key, the authority, the angel is the steward.

The thousand years is the Gospel Age, from the cross to the Second Coming.¹³

The purpose of the binding is to stop Satan from deceiving the nations in certain ways. We know that this was to stop Satan from stopping sinners responding to the Gospel. He can hinder the reprobate (2 Cor 4:4) but cannot stop the elect from being converted. The second aspect of the binding is to stop Satan from gathering a world empire ruled by sin that declares war on the church – so that he can destroy the elect (fulfilled in verses 7-9).

¹³ 1,000 is 10 x 10 x 10 – a trio of divine completion; i.e. divine fulness and completion – the elect.

When the thousand years (Gospel Age) is ended, Satan is released from bondage for a short time. This is to enable him to develop a world empire based on deceit and sin so that mankind is brought to the fulness of its rebellion to God, trying to be God, and ripe for judgment; then God harvests mankind for condemnation. Satan gathers the nations in this time of release and attacks the saints (Ps 2:1-4) but at the end God destroys the rebellious nations and throws them and Satan with his demons into hell.

Therefore we have:

- Satan bound by Christ at the cross.
- The church enabled to grow and fill the Earth during the Gospel period.
- World Empire prevented from being a global force seeking to destroy the saints.¹⁴
- Then, at the end of the Gospel Age, Satan is allowed to persecute the church and develop global empire.
- Shortly after that, Jesus returns and casts Satan, his demons and sinners into hell.

This passage therefore, covers the casting down from all authority by Christ at the cross and the casting into hell.

Where is the Devil and his hordes now?

The bottomless pit

There is much confusion about what this term means. Many commentators affirm that it refers to hell; but this is nonsense. Hell is the Lake of Fire, which the Devil and his demons have not been consigned to yet (Rev 20:10).

Others say that it is Hades, the place of departed human spirits. But this is not the abode of demons. Hades / Sheol¹⁵ is sometimes compared to a pit or the grave since dead people are buried in a pit (Ps 28:1, 36:3). But fallen angels are not cast into the same pit. There is a difference between a grave pit and a bottomless pit.

Added to the confusion is that fallen angels are said to be in a bottomless pit or abyss, the very depths of the earth, on the earth itself and yet they are also consigned to the atmosphere.

The depths of the earth

God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment. 2 Pt 2:4

‘Hell’ is a bad translation. The Greek word is *tartaroo* from *Tartaros*.

Lexicons tend to equate this with Gehenna (OT for hell) and also the subterranean abode of the dead (which would be Hades). This is inadequate.

What the word refers to is Tartarus, a part of the underworld where the wicked suffered punishment for their misdeeds, especially those such as Ixion¹⁶ and Tantalus¹⁷ who had

¹⁴ There have been large empires (e.g. Rome, British Empire), but these were not global and did not destroy the church.

¹⁵ Hades is the Greek term in the NT; Sheol is the OT Hebrew term.

¹⁶ A king punished by Zeus for attempting to seduce Hera by being pinned to a fiery wheel that revolved unceasingly through the underworld.

committed some outrage against the gods. It was the deepest abyss of Hades – the bottomless pit if you will.

Thus the original abode of the Devil and his angels was Tartarus. A bottomless pit deep below Hades nowhere near the spirits of dead men. Being under the earth is figurative; Hades is a special dimension for spirits. It is not a material place.

On the earth

And the LORD said to Satan, 'From where do you come?' So Satan answered the LORD and said, 'From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it'. Job 1:7

Now the ruler of this world will be cast out. Jn 12:31

The ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. Jn 14:30

The ruler of this world. Jn 16:11

The god of this age. 2 Cor 4:4

Your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 1 Pt 5:8

He who is in the world. 1 Jn 4:4

The whole world lies *under the sway of* the wicked one. 1 Jn 5:19

So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Rev 12:9

In the atmosphere, aerial regions

The prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience. Eph 2:2

Where is the Devil now?

We know that Satan moves on the earth tempting men to sin because the Lord himself and the apostles repeatedly told us so. In fact the Devil spent weeks tempting the Lord Jesus when he was in the wilderness.

He is also called the prince of the power of the air, so his realm includes the lower atmosphere above the earth; the region within which he can transport himself swiftly.

Where is the Devil in future?

In the Lake of Fire, the place of eternal punishment, hell.

Where was the Devil in the past?

This is more difficult and the heart of the problem.

Satan began created life as an angel serving God in heaven. As a result of his pride he rebelled against God and sought the throne. For this God cast Satan out of heaven along with a third of the angels that had followed his revolt (Rev 12:9). These all became fallen angels, unclean spirits, or demons. This much everyone agrees with.

Revelation tells us that Satan was cast down to Earth and confined:

¹⁷ A king of Lydia, son of Zeus and a nymph. At first the intimate friend of the gods, he offended them and was banished to Tartarus, the prison beneath the underworld. Here he was set in a pool of water, which always receded when he tried to drink from it, and under trees whose branches the wind tossed aside when he tried to pick their fruit (hence the word 'tantalise').

So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Rev 12:9

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. Rev 20:1-3

This would suggest that the bottomless pit is on Earth. Being restricted to the Earth is like being in a pit in comparison with the glory of heaven.

The Fathers taught that the bottomless pit is the evil heart of men. This is probably closer to the truth. The abyss is the evil dark, spiritual realm, or dimension, to which demons have been consigned by God in chains. Trying to identify more than this is pointless.

Who is Lord of the bottomless pit?

The Lord Jesus Christ.

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. Rev 20:1

Whether you interpret the angel as Christ after the cross, or a chief angel given authority by Christ, either way it is Christ that holds the key, the authority to chain Satan. Note that Michael was given authority to defeat Satan over the body of Moses (Jude 1:9). Therefore, this angel does not have to be the Lord, but the action is by the authority of the Lord.

[Note that Rev 9:1, 'Then the fifth angel sounded: and I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit', refers to Satan. This is God allowing Satan to do his will through the locusts (demons). It is God allowing Satan to deceive men for a higher purpose. 'Heaven' here need not refer to the presence of God in glory but to a realm above the Earth.]

The beast from the pit

The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. Rev 17:8

The beast that rules over the final satanic global empire has his origin in the pit. That is, he is a pawn and spawn of Satan.

Summary

The abyss or pit is highly figurative and symbolic; it is not to be thought of in material terms.

The pit is a place of darkness (Eph 6:12; Jude 1:6) that is the dwelling place of Satan and his hordes. It is a place of chains (Jude 1:6), that is, there are restrictions on Satan's activity. Demons do not like being in this abyss (Lk 8:31).

The facts are that Satan is active on the Earth and the lower atmosphere as God allows. Therefore, the pit is a spiritual dimension or prison of Satan from which he has access to men on the Earth, but not to heaven. This is why the darkness that surrounds Satan is spoken of as the darkness of this age (Acts 26:18; Eph 6:12; Col 1:13). The darkness is spiritual blindness (Acts 26:18; Eph 4:18); it is separation from all heavenly blessing and good.

The abyss is therefore the antithesis of the presence of God.

Conclusion

The only way to resolve the problems regarding the casting out of Satan is to affirm a threefold expulsion. Satan is CAST OUT of heaven after rebelling against God. This occurred before Gen 3:1. Satan is CAST DOWN from any authority he may have held and from having de-facto power over sin and death after the cross. He is thoroughly vanquished but the final sentence of punishment is delayed according to God's purposes. Satan is finally CAST INTO HELL, the Lake of Fire, at the end during the Final Judgment.

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