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What is This?
The Devil in the Details: A Survey of Research on Satan in Biblical Studies

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Abstract
This article surveys research on the figure of Satan in Jewish and Christian writings from the Old Testament, the Pseudepigrapha, the Qumran literature, and the New Testament. Following an introduction which notes early scholarly ignorance of Satan as a subject in and of itself, the article then proceeds according to the individual writings within the aforementioned groups. The overview will demonstrate that, while certain references to Satan have been discussed more often, typically due to their controversial nature (e.g., 1 Chron. 21.1; Lk. 10.19), others have been largely overlooked and require further consideration.

Keywords
devil, evil, powers, Satan, tempter

Introduction
In many studies in the history of scholarship on biblical studies, the figure of Satan has remained a peripheral subject. In most of these works, Satan, or the devil, is either passed over or subsumed into larger studies, and rarely regarded as a subject in and of itself. Generally speaking, there are two primary reasons for this trend. First, for a long time Satan was understood primarily as an object of doctrinal speculation. Thus one can find several works from the late 1900s on the ‘doctrine’ of Satan (e.g., Brown 1887). Second, modern skepticism of the supernatural also led to a general disinterest

1 In this article the terms ‘Satan’ and ‘the devil’ will be used interchangeably. However, where certain authors or writings employ a specific name or term to refer to this figure, the respective term will be used to reflect their usage.

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in, or at least a failure to engage seriously with, Satan as an acceptable academic topic. Bultmann’s well-known quote aptly demonstrates this suspicion: ‘It is impossible to use electric light and the wireless and to avail ourselves of modern medical and surgical discoveries, and at the same time to believe in the New Testament world of daemons and spirits’ (Bartsch, et al. 1972: 5). For these reasons, it is not surprising that for much of this period the devil was little more than ‘in the details’.

In more recent decades, however, Satan has received far more attention in research on the Old Testament (OT), the Dead Sea Scrolls, the OT Pseudepigrapha (OTP), and the New Testament (NT). It is impossible to attribute this new interest to a single methodological shift, archeological find, or even a trend within the field. Yet it is hardly coincidental that virtually all significant contributions to the study of Satan in biblical studies have been produced after the discoveries in the Judean desert (1947–61). The study of these texts, as well as closer readings of the writings of the OTP, shed new light on the demonology and angelology of Judaism. As a result of this fresh understanding, in the past few decades several studies on Satan’s role and significance within the various texts of Second Temple Judaism (STJ) and nascent Christianity have emerged.

With this general timeline of scholarship in mind, the present study of research aims to provide an overview of the scholarship on the devil in biblical studies. In it we will proceed primarily in terms of groups of writings, beginning with the books of the OT, then moving to the materials from the intertestamental period, and finally concluding with the writings of the NT. The reason for this method is to accomplish two main goals: first, we wish to avoid the pitfall of allowing a particular ‘doctrine’ of Satan to guide the study, and, second, we hope to fully appreciate the subtleties of how each of the writings in view understands and depicts the figure of Satan rather than describe the characterization of Satan within the Bible as a whole or as a topic of biblical theology. Given this focus, the present study will read as a collection of smaller surveys of literature with the overall aim of answering two basic questions: how do the different Jewish and Christian authors depict Satan? And how have scholars interpreted these references? To bring the study together, at the end of the article we will attempt to tie together the loose strings of our analysis and offer a few macro-assessments on the study of Satan in biblical studies.

**Early Studies: Interest in Demonology and Angelology**

As we noted above, ‘systematic’ treatments of Satan which regarded the figure as a subject of doctrinal inquiry were prominent in the nineteenth century. A good example of this sort of work is the 1876 work *The Satan of Scripture*, written by Reverend James Ormiston under the purportedly anonymous nom de plume, ‘a clergyman’. In it, the ‘clergyman’ sets out to provide a ‘definite Bible teaching on the whole subject of Satan’s personality and kingdom’ (Ormiston 1876: v; see also Brown 1887; Carus 1900). Common to books such as this
work, Ormiston operates with the entire Christian canon in view, drawing on all passages referring to Satan in order to present a doctrine of Satan which tells of his fall, his authority over his legion of fallen angels, and his efforts to tempt humanity and corrupt the church. The residual effect of this sort of popular treatment of the devil in scholarship was that the different roles and various presentations of Satan within individual writings were glossed over and, to a certain extent, ignored. The Satan of biblical theology and systematic doctrine was read back into each of the biblical references to the devil.

It is not surprising, then, that in his 1888 work on Paul’s angelology and demonology, Everling noted his failure to point to another work on the topic and that the subject’s subordinate significance had become virtually axiomatic in Pauline studies (Everling 1888: 4). Conversely, in his own work Everling demonstrated that Paul’s references to angelic and demonic figures (including Satan) are firmly rooted in Jewish theology and, more importantly, that they fit fully within the general contours and structure of Paul’s theology (Schweitzer 1950: 55-56). Building on Everling’s work, Dibelius’s *Die Geisterwelt im Glauben des Paulus* (‘The Spirit-world in the Faith of Paul’), published just after the turn of the century, represented another major step forward in taking seriously the ‘spiritual world’ (Geisterwelt) of the biblical authors (Dibelius 1909; also important in this period was Kabisch 1893). Employing the approach of the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule* (‘history-of-religions school’), Dibelius advanced the discussion beyond Everling by considering a greater amount of Rabbinic material and paying more attention to the background of Paul’s thought. In sum, the works of Everling and Dibelius brought to the fore the uniqueness of each author’s view (in their case, Paul) of demonology, while simultaneously demonstrating that such ideas did not belong to the periphery of the biblical authors’ writings but were part and parcel to their theology and worldview.

Although it might be too much to claim that Everling and Dibelius’s studies have framed the discussion for all subsequent studies on Satan, there is no doubt that their inquiries into the demonology of Paul created a foundation for analysing the subject. For soon after other studies emerged focusing on either Satan alone, or Satan as part of the wider categories of ‘evil powers’ and ‘principalities and powers’ (e.g., see Caldwell’s three-part discussion of the history of Satan in the Old Testament, the ‘Extra-Biblical Apocalyptic Literature’, and the New Testament [Caldwell 1913a, 1913b, 1913c]). Thus the early studies of the twentieth century paved the way for the investigation of Satan within various biblical texts, to which we now turn. As we consider the various scholarly contributions below, we will be less interested in chronological developments than the distinct contributions to the study of Satan within the individual writings of Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity (for an excellent discussion of the chronological development of Satan in STJ, see Sacchi 1990: 211-32). Accordingly, we will proceed thematically as we consider research on Satan within various groups of Jewish and Christian writings.
Satan in the Old Testament: The Accuser or the Satan?

In recognition that the writings of the OT presented a different view of the figure of Satan than that of systematic theology or even the Bible as a whole, several studies concentrating on Satan in the OT emerged throughout the twentieth century. Perhaps the first full-blown attempt to accomplish an historical investigation of Satan in the OT was Schärf-Kluger’s 1948 *Die Gestalt des Satans im Alten Testament* (‘The Figure of Satan in the Old Testament’; cf. Brock-Utne 1935), which was later translated into English (Schärf-Kluger 1967). Although Schärf-Kluger aims to present an essentially historical investigation, the use of Jungian analytical psychology steers the study, and thus shapes its results. Day’s 1988 work, *An Adversary in Heaven: sātān in the Hebrew Bible*, was therefore a welcomed contribution to a lacuna within the field.

In her work, Day (1988; cf. Breytenbach and Day 1999) investigates the etymology, meaning, and use of the noun סָטָן (sātān) in the OT where it refers to a heavenly being. Accordingly, she focuses on four passages: Num. 22.22-35; Job 1–2; Zech. 3.1-7; and 1 Chron. 21.1–22.1. One of Day’s main aims is to resist reading back into these texts a later notion of a theologically developed figure of Satan since these OT passages don’t necessarily assume the existence of such a figure. Instead, on the basis of her reading of the above passages, Day contends that סָטָן can either mean ‘adversary’ in a general sense or ‘legal accuser’, and that the term was used to refer to both terrestrial and divine beings in the OT. In conclusion, Day claims that there ‘is not one celestial סָטָן in the Hebrew Bible, but rather the potential for many’ (Day 1988: 15).

More recently, there have been further attempts to build on and refine Day’s basic thesis, though on the whole it remains the standard work on the subject. For example, Tate (1992) investigates the same texts as Day, though he also considers Gen. 3.1-15, Isa. 14.12-17, and Ezek. 28.11-19—texts commonly associated with the Satan of later Christian tradition—and comes to more or less the same conclusion: no single passage in the OT is ‘directly’ related to the Satan of later Christian theology. Accordingly, Tate asserts that ‘[i]n this sense there is no Satan in the Old Testament’ (Tate 1992: 471), though it is easy to see why such texts were later understood to refer to the Satan figure of Jewish and Christian lore. Even more recently, in a 2005 article Kreuzer has argued that in the cases of Zech. 3.1-2 and Job 1–2 we are not presented with a figure familiar to the imagination of ancient Israel (whether a ‘satan’ or the Satan), but rather introduced to a new, literary figure (Kreuzer 2005: 542-43; see also the works of Chung 2000 and Fabry 2003).

On the basis of Day’s monograph and the dozens of studies which have taken her study as their point of departure, we can note a few general agreements on the study of Satan within the OT as a whole: (1) the main passages which were later read as referring to the Satan (Num. 22.22-35; Job 1–2; Zech. 3.1-7; 1 Chron. 21.1–22.1) probably did not originally refer to this figure; (2) there is therefore, from the perspective of historical analysis, no single Satan figure of
the OT; and (3) each author who refers to a ‘Satan’ figure does so for their own reasons and to fit their particular literary context and/or theological concerns.

**Satan within the Books of the Old Testament**

One of the consequences of Day’s thesis is that, having recognized that the OT as a whole does not have a single presentation of Satan, scholars were faced to inquire about the view of Satan within each of the books which referred to the figure, and whether we are dealing with the Satan or merely a šātān (i.e., an adversary, whether celestial or human). Although there are dozens of occurrences of the noun שָטָן in the OT, only three passages are relevant for discussing ‘Satan’ in the OT: 1 Chron. 21.1; Job 1–2; Zech. 3.1-10. Of these individual passages, the passages in 1 Chronicles and Job have been discussed the most, whereas there are virtually no studies on the Zechariah 3 references to שָטָן.

The importance of (the) Satan in Job has often been considered in terms of the figure’s role and function within the book. For example, Kinet has noted that the roles of Satan and God seem to overlap in the prologue of the book of Job, and thus claims that in Job 1–2,

> the figure of Satan seems to have an exculpatory function. It is not God’s own idea to inflict vicissitudes on Job in order to test his religious devotion. Satan is the real instigator … [who] … acts more or less as an independent agent, thereby exonerating God from sole responsibility (Kinet 1983: 31).

Regarding the angelology and demonology of the Septuagint book of Job, Gammie contends that the LXX Job’s demonology is essentially ‘bland and undeveloped’ since the translator renders שָטָן as ὁ διάβολος to avoid the association between the שָטָן of Job 1–2 and evil figures such as Belial (Gammie 1985: 18-19). This claim, however, overlooks the fact that שָטָן is often rendered as ὁ διάβολος in the LXX—even when it refers to human adversaries (e.g., Ps. 109.4 [LXX 108.4]) and especially in Zechariah 3, Job 1–2, and 1 Chronicles 21—and thus calls into question claims regarding the Septuagint book of Job such as Gammie’s. Other studies on Satan in Job often engage the role of Satan in connection to the issue of theodicy in Job (e.g., Smick 1978; Nielsen 1992; Schramm 1998; Christo 2000).

The nature of the reference to שָטָן in 1 Chron. 21.1 is complicated by the author’s alteration of its Vorlänge, 2 Sam. 24.1. Indeed, this is the primary focus of most scholarship on the verse. Whereas the Samuel passage says the LORD in his anger against Israel incited David to take a census (2 Sam. 24.1), the 1 Chronicles version reads: ‘Then Satan stood up against Israel and incited David to count the people of Israel’ (1 Chron. 21.1). This text thus presents us with a seemingly unique phenomenon in the OT: a ‘Satan’ figure added to an OT text in order avoid presenting Yahweh as acting in a capricious fashion (so Braun 1986: 217; Knoppers 2003: 751).
The nature of the Chronicler’s ‘Satan’ is, however, widely debated in present scholarship. Until recent decades the idea that the reference to נַעַר in 1 Chron. 21.1 referred to the Satan of later Christian texts and theology was assumed by virtually all studies. In 1988 Day, building on several studies on the function of the divine council in the ancient Near East (e.g., Robinson 1944; Wright 1951; Cross 1953; Mullen 1980), launched a critique of the traditional position, arguing instead that in the Hebrew literature נַעַר doesn’t function as a proper noun until a period much later than when 1–2 Chronicles was finalized, and that the common redaction-critical explanation of the change of subjects is not corroborated by the Chronicler’s adaptation of his Vorlage elsewhere. Day therefore suggests that the נַעַר of 1 Chron. 21.1 is neither a celestial nor a terrestrial adversary, but rather an anonymous divine figure who belongs to the divine council (Day 1988: 127-45). Japhet, in her 1989 The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and its Place in Biblical Thought (translated from its original 1977 Hebrew version), also contested the traditional identification of the figure. Japhet insists that the lack of an article accompanying the noun נַעַר provides firm evidence that the term was not being used as a proper noun (Japhet 1989; pace Braun 1986: 216-17). Consequently, Japhet claims that the Chronicler’s נַעַר is nothing more than a human.

While other proposals regarding the identity of the ‘Satan’ of 1 Chron. 21.1 have been advanced (e.g., Sailhamer 1989; Wright 1993; Koorevaar 1995; Evans 2004; Beentjes 2007), perhaps the most original position is that of Stokes (2009). Stokes follows Day and Japhet in their criticism of the traditional interpretation, adding that the supposed textual connections between 1 Chronicles 21 and Job (see בְּךָ הָיָה) in 1 Chron. 21.1 and Job 2.3) and 1 Chronicles and Zechariah (cf. the expression נַעַר ‘stood at/against’ in 1 Chron. 21.1 and Zech. 3.1) have been red herrings for interpreters of the passage (Stokes 2009: 95, 100, 104). Instead, Stokes argues that one should concentrate on the connections between the Chronicler’s Vorlage (2 Samuel 24) and the story of the prophet Balaam and his adversary (תּוֹרֵע, without an article as in 1 Chron. 21.1) in Num. 22.22-35. After identifying five points of similarity between the two passages, Stokes contends that what the Chronicler has done is read his Vorlage in light of the Balaam story with the result of glossing the 2 Samuel 24 reference to Yahweh with the Num. 22 reference to Balaam’s adversary (תּוֹרֵע, Num. 22.22, 32). Although Stokes probably too easily dismisses the possibility of a theological motivation behind the Chronicler’s alteration (Stokes 2009: 99-100), his main thesis nevertheless provides a compelling interpretation of the verse.

The OT Pseudepigrapha and the Many Names of Satan

One of the most remarkable developments of the later Second Temple Jewish period is its burgeoning interest in angelology and demonology. This is no more evident than in the writings of the so-called OTP. For, while none of the main OT
passages which mention נְאָשָׁר probably referred to the figure of the Satan in their original meaning, in the references to similar figures in the OTP we get much closer to the Satan found in the NT. Although several writings of the OTP refer to and describe ‘Satan’ figures, and do so according to several names (see Barton 1912; Fontinoy 1984; Gershenson 2002; Penney 2003), we will restrict our conversation here to the texts that have received the most attention in scholarship: the Enochic literature, the book of Jubilees, the Testament of Job, and the Life of Adam and Eve.

Much of the relevant literature on the Enochic texts has focused on the role and significance of Shemihaza and Asael, who, generally speaking, function as Satan-like characters in the narrative and as head figures of the rebellious heavenly angels (so Pascale 1981). This marks a clear shift in function from the Satan(s) of Zechariah and Job who operates as part of the divine council. There is a fair amount of agreement that the traditions associated with these two figures, Shemihaza (or Semyaza) and Asael (or Azaz’el), were originally distinct though they have been assimilated into the narrative in 1 Enoch 6–11 (Collins 1998: 47-55; Hanson 1977: 220-27; Nickelsburg 1977: 383-405; Molenberg 1984: 145-46; cf. Reed 2005: 27-29). According to Sacchi, this head ‘Satan’ figure of the narrative of 1 Enoch is ‘the first, dim image of the devil. Perhaps it is not even correct at this point to call him by this name’ (Sacchi 1990: 212). Sacchi also goes on to claim that the primary function of the fallen angel myth of 1 Enoch 6–11 is etiological, to describe the origin of evil into the world (Sacchi 1990: 219). Thus, this ‘Satan’ figure, although clearly important for the issues of predeterminism and the problem of evil, is essentially a principle of evil and not an active figure (Sacchi 2000: 346).

Turning to Jubilees, which was highly dependent upon the Enochic traditions (so Bergsma 2009: 36-51), we find a significant and new presentation of a Satan-like character who not only is the head of the fallen angels but is active in Israel’s history (Eshel 2003: 359-64; Martens 2003: 161-82). According to Jubilees, Mastema was preserved from God’s judgment of the demons and given authority over a remnant of one-tenth of the demons (Jub. 10.7-10). Furthermore in Jubilees, Mastema (=‘Satan’; so Jub. 10.11; 23.29; 46.2; 50.5; cf. Davenport [1971: 39, note 1], who argues that of the four occurrences of the Ethiopic shah-yet-tay-nah within the text of Jubilees only the first one [10.11] ought to be translated as the name ‘Satan’) is included within several narratives from the OT which have been ‘recast’ by the author of the book. Most significantly, as scholars often point out (e.g., VanderKam 1997: 241-61; Steudel 2000: 334-37), Mastema is portrayed as instigating the Akedah account (Jub. 17.15–18.19) and opposing Moses and the Israelites in the story of the Exodus by trying to kill Moses, aiding the Egyptian magicians, and inciting the Egyptians to pursue the fleeing Israelites (Jub. 48.1-19). Thus, as Sacchi notes, in Jubilees ‘[t]he devil has therefore changed from being the metaphysical principle of evil to the head of a kind of kingdom, parallel to that of God, to whom God actually assigns as subjects the souls of the giants, that is, the evil spirits’ (Sacchi 1990: 224-25; see also Sacchi 2000: 348-49; cf. VanderKam 2003: 340-47).
In considering the role of Satan in the Testament of Job (T. Job), much is contingent upon the dating and provenance of the writing. Many simply assume a Jewish provenance for the Testament of Job (e.g., Kee 1974; Schaller 1979), and therefore a contemporary or earlier date, though Davila has insisted more recently that the Testament of Job is most likely a product of a (perhaps Egyptian) Christian circle from around the fifth century CE (Davila 2005: 195-99). Although these varying dating proposals raise questions regarding the origin and sources of the Testament of Job’s references to Satan, many have nevertheless carried out studies of Satan’s role in the writing. Early works include those of Hass whose essay suggested that Job’s perseverance (ὑπομονή) of his sufferings caused by Satan is the main theme of the first part of the Testament of Job (Haas 1989: 117-54), and Kee, who conducted an examination of Satan and magic in the work (Kee 1974: 53-76). More recently, Begg, in his comparison of characters in the biblical book of Job and the Testament of Job, has argued that the most significant alteration is the way in which the Testament of Job goes beyond its biblical counterpart by portraying Satan as the direct cause of all of Job’s sufferings (Begg 1994: 438-39). Begg also points out that in the Testament of Job Satan’s role is greater and he appears in more scenes (Begg 1994: 439-40). Kirkegaard’s literary approach to the role of Satan in the Testament of Job is perhaps the most comprehensive study to date. In it, Kirkegaard, after noting that Satan figures prominently in the first part of the Testament of Job (chs. 1–27; see T. Job 3.6; 4.4; 6.4; 7.6, 12; 16.2; 20.1; 23.1, 3, 11; 27.1, 6) but is virtually absent in the remainder of the narrative (except for T. Job 41.5; cf. 42.1-3), argues that the role of Satan shifts dramatically after the first section to the extent that after ch. 27 we might be dealing with a different ‘Satan’ (Kirkegaard 2004: 18-19). Lastly, against Schaller who contends that in the Testament of Job ‘Das Theodizeeprobelm wird gar nicht berührt’ (‘The Theodicy-problem, is not touched at all’; Schaller 1979: 315), Wisse has reconsidered the place of theodicy in the Testament of Job, claiming the author does in fact deal with theodicy by making Satan responsible for Job’s suffering and thus offering ‘a popularised but coherent alternative to the intellectual and ambiguous approach to evil in BJ [book of Job]’ (Wisse 2003: 44).

Finally, the Life of Adam and Eve (L.A.E.), which survives in manuscripts in a number of languages including Greek, Latin, Slavonic, and Armenian, presents yet another writing with a fascinating account of the story of Adam and Eve and the garden of Eden. Piñero argues for three aspects of the presentation of the devil in the Greek Life of Adam and Eve (=Apocalypse of Moses): (1) envy as the cause of devil’s hostility towards man; (2) the devil’s ability to metamorphose and transform himself; and (3) the devil’s performance as an ‘inspiratory spirit imitating the divine operation in the prophets’ (Piñero 1993: 213-14). In an article published in the same year, Stone investigated the ‘fall’ of Satan in the Latin tradition—which is missing from the Greek version (Stone 1993: 144)—and
concluded that the penitence and the fall of Satan are ‘integral parts of the Adam book’, and that the writer probably included the story because he thought it belonged to the original (Stone 1993: 156). Most recently, Stone has written a lengthy book on the idea that Adam signed a contract, a ‘cheirograph’ (cf. χειρόγραφον, Col. 2.14), with Satan, a story that is only present in the Slavonic version of L.A.E. (Stone 2002). See also Nir, who argues that the tension between the ‘image of God’ and Satan is paradigmatic for the story of the struggle between Seth and the beast in the Greek L.A.E. (2008: 327-39).

Qumran and Belial

As Sacchi points out, the conception of the devil in the writings of Qumran is essentially consonant with the general Qumranic theology (Sacchi 2000: 351). This can be seen in the notion that God, in his omnipotence and predetermined will, created two spirits to rule over humanity: the Prince of Light (יְאָרָה מַלְאָךְ, 1QS 3.20) and the Angel of Darkness (מַלְאָךְ הַשֵּׁאָלָה, 1QS 3.20-21) who, according to Sacchi, is ‘yet another interpretation of the devil’ (Sacchi 2000: 351; Sacchi 1990: 226).

One of the first attempts to understand the view of the devil at Qumran was von der Osten-Sacken’s Gott und Belial (‘God and Belial’; 1969; cf. Huppenbauer 1959a: 81-89), though in the volume von der Osten-Sacken is actually more concerned with the development of dualism at Qumran. For a number of years von der Osten-Sacken’s work remained the main contribution on the topic (though see also Kobelski 1981). In recent years, however, two articles have been published readdressing the developing theology of Belial at Qumran. First, in 2000 Steudel wrote an article on the use of the term בְּלַיְאָל at Qumran, ‘the most frequently used name for the power of evil in Qumran’ (Steudel 2000: 332-33). After surveying the use of the noun throughout the Qumranic writings, she suggests that although there probably was only a vague concept of Belial at the beginning of the yahad (‘community’), by the later stages ‘Belial’ came to have a more concrete idea behind it, as can be seen in later writings such as 11QMelch and the Damascus Document (Steudel 2000: 338-39). A few years later, Martone also investigated the development of ‘Belial’ from a concept to ‘a devil’, concluding that the Angel of Darkness of Qumranic theology had ‘Belial’ as its name (Martone 2004: 126). Importantly, it is noteworthy that among these scholars there is strong agreement that the conception of the devil, or Belial, was in flux during the period of the Qumran community, generally moving from an abstract idea of ‘Belial’ as ‘uselessness’ or ‘wickedness’—as it always is in the OT (e.g., Deut. 15.9; Ps. 18.5; cf. Lewis 1992: 654-56)—to a more concrete notion of ‘Belial’ as a personification of evil to be identified with the Angel of Darkness (Steudel 2000: 338-39; Martone 2004: 123; cf. Sperling 1999: 169-71).
Satan in the Synoptics

The Gospels of the NT contain the most concentrated amount of references to Satan among the biblical literature. This is especially the case in the Synoptics, which mention the figure by several names: the devil (Mt. 4.1, 5, 8, 11; 13.39; 25.41; Lk. 4.2-3, 6, 13; 8.12); Satan (Mt. 4.10; 12.26; 16.23; Mk 1.13; 3.23, 26; 4.15; 8.33; Lk. 10.18; 11.18; 13.16; 22.3, 31); Beelzebub (Mt. 10.25; 12.24, 27; Mk 3.22; Lk. 11.15, 18-19); the enemy (Lk. 10.19); the tempter (Mt. 4.3); and the evil one (Mt. 5.37; cf. 6.13 [par. Lk. 11.4]). As we turn to these texts, we will pay attention to both studies of individual references and thematic assessments within each of the Synoptic Gospels.

In her 1990 doctoral dissertation, Glancy considered the distinctive role of Satan in each of the Synoptic Gospels. In Mark, she claims, Satan is presented as Jesus’ ‘eschatology opponent’; in Matthew, Satan is again Jesus’ enemy but also connected to human sinfulness and moral failings; and in Luke Satan’s role as the ruler of demons who possesses individuals is ‘intensified’ from its Markan version, and Satan is also portrayed as an agent in the crucifixion, the seeming ‘apex of Satan’s power’ (Glancy 1990: 195-98). Although Glancy’s broad analysis is helpful to an extent, the meaning and significance of individual references to Satan within the Synoptics required further consideration.

Accordingly, dozens of publications on these passages within the Synoptics have emerged, each with its own methodology and aim (on passages in Matthew, see Yoo 1996; in Mark, see Juel 1997; in Luke, see Rudman 2004; Kilgallen 2006). In addition, Branden (2006) has attempted to make sense of ‘Satanic conflict’ in Matthew as it pertains to the Gospel’s overall plot. Luke 10.18, where Jesus says, ‘I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning’, has received considerable attention (e.g., Vollenweider 1988; Hills 1992; Marcus 1995; Hultgard 2000; Marx 2000; Gathercole 2003; Rusam 2004; Theobald 2005). Of the more recent interpretations, Gathercole (2003: 143-63) has argued against the interpretations of Lk. 10.18 as a primeval event (e.g., Vollenweider 1988) as well as a defeat of Satan within the time of Jesus’ ministry (e.g., Marcus 1995). Instead, Gathercole contends that Jesus’ vision alludes to the eschatological fall of Satan to take place in the future, an interpretation which he suggests coheres with Lukan ideas of future tribulation and makes sense within its wider Lukan literary context (Gathercole 2003: 155-63).

One of the most colorful scenes in the Synoptics is the story of Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness. Each of the three Synoptics contains the story, though at varying lengths and different details (e.g., a different name or title for Satan is used in each Gospel: Mt.: ‘the tempter’; Mk: ‘Satan’; Lk.: ‘the devil’)). The differences between the Synoptic Gospels’ accounts of the story have not always been emphasized, however. Characteristic of works on Satan from the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, Barrett’s 1883 work engages the temptations of Jesus in the Gospels without differentiating between the evangelists and at the same time venturing into speculation of Satan’s logic and
motivation (e.g., Barrett 1883: 52-54). It is important to note such an approach precisely because only recently have scholars turned their attention to the uniqueness of each Gospel’s account and their implications for the Gospel in general.

Speculative assessments can be found in studies throughout the twentieth century, too. For example, Thielicke has no problem discussing the ‘intentions’ of Satan in tempting Jesus in the wilderness (Thielicke 1958: 30-31). However, several recent works have focused more helpfully on the unique details of each account and Jewish background to the role of Satan. Here we highlight a few major contributions from each of the Synoptics. In her work on the temptations of Jesus in Mark, Garrett argues that the Gospel depicts the testing in the wilderness (Mk 1.12-13) in a manner similar to the testing of Job in which Satan functions as a testing agent of God: ‘it is God who thrusts Jesus into confrontation with Satan, so that the devil may assess whether Jesus meets the standard of faithfulness expected of the Son of God’ (Garrett 1998: 56; see also Gibson 1995; van Henten 1999; Dormandy 2003).

Garrett also offers perhaps the most developed thesis on the Lucan version of the testing of Jesus (Garrett 1989). She contends that in Lk. 4.1-13, Satan and Jesus are engaged in a battle over authority. Satan, according to Garrett, “has been given authority” over the inhabited world’, and Jesus must resist the ‘authority’ (ἐξουσία, Lk. 4.6) which Satan offers to him (Garrett 1989: 38). Garrett also rightfully stresses the ongoing nature of Satan’s temptations of Jesus, evidenced by Luke’s reminder (Lk. 4.13) that Satan’s departure was only temporary and that he would continue his testing throughout Jesus’ ministry (Garrett 1989: 42-43). More recently, Rudman has proposed the intriguing thesis that Luke’s text shares with Daniel 1–6 certain legal terminology, from which we learn about the devil’s legal authority and how he ‘is able legally to demand homage from those to whom he delegates his authority’ (Rudman 2004: 77-86; cf. Dupont 1968: 45-72; Hester 1977).

The function and meaning of Matthew’s temptation narrative in particular has been interpreted in a variety of manners. Surprisingly, however, few articles give due attention to the role of Satan in the narrative, instead choosing to focus on the importance of the event for Jesus’ mission and Christology (e.g., Kelly 1975: 57-62; Wilkens 1982: 479-89). More recently, Branden’s 2006 publication of his dissertation investigated the role of Satanic conflict in Matthew employing plot analysis and narrative criticism. Noting several strong connections between Satan in Matthew’s temptation narrative and in the OT and intertestamental literature, Branden argues that in Matthew’s temptation narrative Satan acts ‘entirely in accord with the concepts in apocalyptic Judaism … [by] tempting the main character in the story to forsake the way of God’ (Branden 2006: 151). From his narrative criticism approach, Branden concludes that ‘the temptations function as the beginning of Satanic challenge to Jesus’ mission’ (Branden 2006: 55).

Two subjects related to the figure of Satan in the Synoptics, which have received enough treatment that they probably warrant a survey of their own, are the Beelzebub controversy and the exorcisms of Jesus. Although we do not have space to cover the
history of scholarship on these topics, it is still worthwhile to point to a handful of references of the more recent contributions: on Beelzebub, see MacLaurin 1978; Robbins 1991; Syx 1992; Guijarro 1999; Emmrich 2000. On the exorcisms of Jesus, see the extensive works of Twelftree (1985, 1993, 2007—especially its helpful selected bibliography on pp. 297-314); Evans 2005; Bell 2007: 66-114.

Satan and the Gospel of John: ‘Your Father the Devil’ and Anti-Semitism

Although there are only a few references to the figure of Satan in the Gospel of John, Sproston rightly points out that they are nevertheless significant since the devil is assumed to have great power in the Gospel (Sproston 1980: 307). John’s references to Satan have been discussed along two different lines: (1) the connection between Satan and Judas (e.g., Jn 13.2), and (2) the allusion to the devil as ‘your father’ (Jn 8.44). Regarding the first issue, Sproston claims that John presents Judas as ‘the tool of Satan’ in a somewhat similar fashion to the Pauline ‘man of lawlessness’ (ὁ ἀνθρωπός τῆς ἀνομίας, 2 Thess. 2.3) who represents ‘the final apostasy’ (Sproston 1980: 310). More recently, Gagné has suggested that John’s characterization of Judas is paradigmatic for three sets of conflicts in the Gospel: the Son of Man and ‘the prince of this world’; the good shepherd and the hireling thief; and Jesus and Judas himself (Gagné 2003: 263-84). Turning to the second and more controversial issue, it is noteworthy that the alleged anti-Semitic character of John has received considerable attention well beyond the scope of this brief article (e.g., see the four essays by Motyer, Lieu, Griffith, and Tonstad in Bauckham and Mosser [2008: 143-208]). This idea is primarily rooted in Jesus’ notorious words in Jn 8.44a—‘You are from your father the devil, and you choose to do your father’s desires’—and the pejorative epithet, ‘the Jews’ (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι) used throughout the Gospel (Pagels 1995: 104-105). More representative of recent views, however, Motyer has argued that although John might have been perceived as ‘anti-Jewish’ (though not necessarily anti-Semitic), its motivation was ‘not at all hostile’ but rather evangelistic in principle and designed to persuade ‘the Jews’ that Jesus was the Christ (1997: 211-20). Pagels’s article on the social history of Satan in the Gospels is especially helpful here. She argues that what is implicit about the devil in the Synoptics has been made explicit in John (Pagels 1994: 40-51). That is, for John, just as God was in some sense incarnate in Jesus, so the devil was incarnate in Jesus’ human enemies (Pagels 1994: 42), as can be seen when the devil influences Judas and later enters him (Jn 13.2, 27) as well as in Jesus’ words in Jn 6.69-71 (‘yet one of you is a devil’) and 8.44 (‘you are from your father the devil’). Pagels goes on to suggest that the author of John ‘dismisses the device of the devil as an independent supernatural character’ (Pagels 1994: 52). Although Pagels’s analysis of the devil in the Fourth Gospel is persuasive insofar as it demonstrates
the uniqueness of John’s view, this statement probably goes too far since we have no reason to also posit Satan as a ‘supernatural’ figure for John.

**Satan in the Rest of the New Testament**

The references to Satan in the other books of the NT have received far less attention than those in the Gospels. Thus, while there are thematic studies of Satan in the Gospels, this is not the case for allusions to Satan in Acts, the Pauline epistles, the Catholic letters (though see Paschke 2006 on 1 Pet. 5.8), or Revelation. Rather, a majority of studies investigate the individual references to Satan on their own, often without a specific methodology or reference to other NT texts which allude to Satan. Here we highlight the main studies of the references to Satan in Paul’s letters and in Revelation since, outside the Gospels, they contain the most allusions to Satan and therefore have received the most attention.

**Paul**

The Pauline letters contain many references to evil forces, demonic figures, and existential powers. Generally speaking, scholars have tended to focus on the category of ‘principalities and powers’ (‘rulers’, ‘powers’, ‘dominions’, ‘thrones’; e.g., see Caird 1956; O’Brien 1982; 1984; Arnold 1992; Forbes 2001; 2002). However, a smaller, though still important, amount of scholarship has investigated Paul’s references to Satan on their own, which we will address below. First, however, it is worth mentioning what is surprisingly one of the only attempts to make sense of Paul’s wider view of Satan based on a reading of the references in the Corinthian letters. In a 1999 article, Johnson argued that in the Corinthian correspondence Paul’s allusions to Satan are not references to an actual figure of his worldview or theology, but rather a rhetorical technique the apostle employs in order to ‘cajole, threaten and inspire the Corinthians’ to re-submit to his authority (Johnson 1999: 155). Although a welcomed assessment of Paul’s allusions to Satan, Johnson’s claim that Paul’s references tell us nothing about his understanding of Satan is surely too bold and only tenable without reference to 2 Cor. 4.4 and by isolating these texts from Rom. 16.20; 1 Thess. 2.18; and 3.5 (cf. also Eph. 4.27; 6.11, 16; 2 Thess. 2.9; 3.3; 1 Tim. 1.20; 3.6-7, 11; 5.15; 2 Tim. 2.26; 3.3; Tit. 2.3).

With respect to the individual references within Paul’s letters, we will focus on 1 Cor. 5.5 and 2 Cor. 12.7, the two texts that have presented interpreters with the greatest difficulties, and thus have prompted the greatest amount of research (though on Rom. 16.20, see Scholer 1990: 53-61; Macky 1993: 121-33; Lohse 2003: 101-108; on 2 Cor. 4.4, see Segal 1987: 41-77; Garrett 1990b: 99-117; Bilde 1993: 29-41).
In 1 Cor. 5.5 (cf. 1 Tim. 1.20), Paul’s instructions to the Corinthians to hand over (παραδίδωμι) an incestuous man to Satan with the double purpose (1) of the destruction of the flesh and (2) that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord, has proved to be a controversial conundrum for biblical exegetes. Indeed, there is hardly a shortage of literature on the verse (for a thorough overview of previous scholarship, see Smith 2009: 3-56). Smith (2009: 6) proposes four basic categories of previous interpretations of the verse: (1) curse and/or magical interpretations (e.g., Collins 1980: 251-63); (2) non-curse and/or non-magical interpretations that envision physical suffering and exclusion (e.g., Barrett 1968); (3) non-curse and/or non-magical interpretations that envision psychological suffering and exclusion (e.g., Murphy-O’Connor 1979: 239-45); and (4) exclusion-only interpretations (e.g., Fee 1987; South 1993: 539-61; Thiselton 2000). Smith’s own study, which argues that 1 Cor. 5.5 envisions both a curse and exclusion, represents a fifth alternative interpretation. According to these various interpretations, Satan in this passage functions as either (1) a power who causes physical human suffering (Smith 2009: 159-61), (2) an ‘unwitting agent’ of God used by God for punishment (Thornton 1972: 151-51; Page 1995: 200-203; 2007: 449-65), or (3) the one who rules over the sphere outside of the church (‘Zugriffsbereich des Satans’ ['Access-area of Satan’], Ostmeyer 2002: 38-45).

The identification of Paul’s ‘thorn’ in his flesh (2 Cor. 12.7) has also riddled NT scholars for some time. Proposed interpretations range from physical maladies to human opponents. Ironically, one of the results of this intense debate on Paul’s reference to the ‘thorn in his flesh’ (σκόλοψ τῆς σαρκί) is that the phrase in apposition, ‘an angel/messenger of Satan’ (ἀγγελός σατανᾶ), has often been overlooked or ignored (e.g., Park 1980: 179-83). A number of recent publications, however, have attempted to explain not only the meaning of Paul’s ‘thorn’ but also the role of Satan in the passage. Both McCant (1988: 550-72) and Woods (1991: 44-53), for example, have argued that Paul’s ‘thorn’ is a symbolic representation of the rejection of his apostleship and his opposition at Corinth, behind which stands Satan. Like Page and Thornton mentioned above, Thomas (1996: 44-45, 52) argues that Paul’s language implies some sort of cooperation between Satan and God. In another proposal, Jegher-Bucher (1997: 388-97) suggests that Paul’s reference to ἄγγελος σατανᾶ was prompted by the story of Balaam and his adversary (Numbers 22) in which the Angel of the Lord ( степени θεοῦ; LXX: ὁ ἄγγελος τοῦ θεοῦ) appears before the prophet in order to ‘oppose’ him ( степени; LXX: ενδιαβάλλειν/εἰς διαβολήν). Thus the messenger of Satan is none other than the Angel of Lord who opposes Paul ‘from succumbing to selfishness and arrogance’ (Jegher-Bucher 1997: 396). Finally, Abernathy has suggested a rather straightforward thesis, namely, that Paul’s thorn in the flesh was a messenger of Satan, a demon (2001: 70). He argues that Paul would have interpreted many of his sufferings as opposition from demonic forces and, consequently, that we ought to understand Paul’s
‘thorn’ as part of Satan’s attempt—here through a demonic agent—‘to oppose and punish him in order to discourage and hinder his ministry’ (Abernathy 2001: 77).

Revelation

The depiction of Satan and his eschatological destruction in the Apocalypse is well-known, as are the many names used for Satan in Revelation, including ‘the devil’, ‘the great dragon’ (ὁ δράκων ὁ μέγας), ‘the deceiver of the whole world’, and ‘the ancient serpent’ (ὁ φίς ὁ ἄρχων οὐρανοῦ) (Rev. 12.9-10). Scholarship on these references focuses on two different parts of the book: the references to Satan in letters to the seven churches (Rev. 2.1–3.22), and the eschatological defeat of Satan (Rev. 12.9-10; 20.1-10). Regarding the first, scholars have tended to focus on the political-social background (e.g., Bredin 1998: 160-64; Hemer 2000: 82-87) and the relevant archeological evidence (e.g., Friesen 2005: 356-67; Collins 2006: 26-39) in interpreting the meaning of phrases such as ‘the synagogue of Satan’ (Rev. 2.9; 3.9) and ‘the throne of Satan’ (Rev. 2.13). With respect to the second, stress is placed on how Satan’s downfall figures within the wider eschatological narrative presented in Revelation (e.g., Guery 1996: 23-33; Thompson 1999: 257-68).

Summary

This survey, while admittedly not exhaustive in nature, has attempted to provide an overview of scholarship on the references to Satan in the writings of the OT, the OTP, the Qumran literature, and the NT. We conclude this article with two comments and two suggestions.

First, it is noteworthy to remark that, generally speaking, OT studies have typically focused on the presentation of Satan in all of the OT, whereas NT studies have tended to concentrate on the individual references within the NT writings. Second, texts that contain the greatest amount of uncertainty, or have caused the most controversy (e.g., 1 Cor. 5.5), have typically been discussed most in the relevant research.

These comments lead us to our suggestions. First, as Johnson (1999) did with (some of) Paul’s letters and several have done with the Gospels (e.g., Garrett 1989; Branden 2006), further studies of Satan in the biblical texts would do well to move beyond studies of single verses or pericopae which refer to Satan and instead to consider all of the references within given writings and/or authors, or even from a canonical viewpoint. Lastly, there seems plenty of room for further discussion of the references to the devil in the Johannine letters (1 Jn 3.8, 10), both in terms of their meaning and relationship to Johannine theology more generally, as well as in the so-called ‘disputed’ Paulines.
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