



Satanology in Pauline Theology:
An Exegetical Study of 2 Corinthians 12:7 and Romans 16:20

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Abstract

We begin this Master thesis by questioning what the function of Satan is in the two Pauline verses 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20 and if their Satanological implications are compatible with each other. We further question how these two verses fit into the overall portrayal of Satan in the Pauline letters. Additionally, we question if the Satanological ideas of the Old Testament and Second Temple Judaism are reflected in the Pauline letters.

In order to be able to identify potential Satanological reflections of the Old Testament and Second Temple Judaism in the Pauline letters, we must first briefly present the overall Satanological outlook of the Old Testament and Second Temple Judaism. We shall also add the New Testament (excluding the Pauline letters) to this brief presentation. The Satanology of the Old Testament diverges in many ways from that of the Second Temple Judaism and the New Testament. In the Old Testament, Satan is mainly understood as a servant of God. However, in the Second Temple Judaism and the New Testament, Satan is additionally (although not necessarily in discord with the Old Testament image) clearly understood as an evil being. A certain doubleness of Satan's servant-role and role as an enemy is nevertheless preserved in both the Second Temple literature and the New Testament, a feature which is also vaguely hinted at in the Old Testament. An important element to notice in both the Old Testament and the Second Temple literature is that God is repeatedly portrayed as ultimately in control and as the one who will defeat and condemn Satan.

As we do an exegetical study of the two Pauline verses 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20, we also encounter this double-sided impression of Satan as both God's servant/tool and enemy. Although certain aspects of these two verses remain ambiguous, we may with certainty conclude that there are two distinct impressions of Satan's function in 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20. In 2 Cor 12:7 he functions (indirectly through his messenger) as a thorn which is given to discipline and preserve Paul's spiritual life. An important remark here is that the ultimate giver of the thorn is God and not Satan. In Rom 16:20, Satan functions exclusively as an enemy to be crushed by God under the feet of the church. What is noteworthy with this is that the idea that God will crush his enemies under his (although here the church's) feet, is also clearly attested in both the Old Testament and the Second Temple literature. As we continue further with a comparative study between these two

verses and their Satanological implications, we observe that these two sides of Satan's function are in fact compatible with each other. This is perhaps mainly because God is in both of these Pauline verses portrayed as the one ultimately in control, either as the giver of the thorn or as the crusher of Satan. Moreover, this is a clear feature of the Satanology(ies?) of both the Old Testament and the Second Temple texts, as well. Paul's Satanology of 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20 does, as such, reflect central features of the Satanological outlook of both the Old Testament and Second Temple Judaism. A certain tension is, however, still present between 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20.

Finally, an overall study of the Satanology portrayed in the Pauline letters broadens the image that 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20 present of the Satan-figure. But the two aspects of Satan as a servant/tool of God and as evil, as seen in 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20, are upheld. The aspect of God as sovereign is additionally confirmed. Hence, the Satanology of the Pauline letters is theocentric in the sense that Satan is continuously understood as inferior to God.

Preface

My work with this Master thesis and study of the topic of Satanology has been very enlightening. I have encountered a broad spectrum of ideas and texts which I did not imagine in advance. I believe that this topic of Satanology is an important part Christian theology, but also a topic easily misunderstood and applied wrongly in the practical church life. An essential motivation for the writing of this thesis is therefore to understand this delicate topic better, in order to more appropriately teach and preach over this and related topics. I hope that whoever reads this thesis will not only be fascinated by the complexity of the biblical Satanology and the vast amount of biblical and extra-biblical texts relevant but also to be blessed with the message that is constantly echoed throughout the respective biblical texts; God is supreme.

I wish to thank VID Specialized University for granting me with the opportunity to write this Master thesis. I also wish to give a special thanks to Prof. Jostein Ådna for supervising me with this thesis. Throughout the whole writing process, Prof. Ådna has supported my research and spent many hours providing me with literature, feedback, and answers to countless questions.

Finally, I will give praise to the Lord for blessing me with this opportunity to study his word.

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations of reference works, serials, Bible translations, and general abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by David Noel Freedman 6 vols. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992
ACNT	Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament
AOTC	Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries
BDAG	Danker, Frederick W., Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3rd ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000 (Danker-Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich)
BDB	Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. <i>The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon</i> . Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996.
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentaries
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
ESV	English Standard Version
ET	English translation
GELS	<i>Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint</i> . Lust, Johan, Erik Eynikel, and Katrin Hauspie. Third Corrected Edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2015
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
KNT	Kommentar till Nya testamentet
LXX	The Septuagint translation
MT	Masoretic text
NA ²⁸	<i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> , Nestle-Aland, 28th ed.
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NCB	New Century Bible Commentary
NETS	<i>A New English Translation of the Septuagint</i> . Edited by Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007
NCBC	New Cambridge Bible Commentary
NIDNTT	The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology
NICNT	The New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIGTC	The New International Greek Testament Commentary
NIV	New International Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
OTL	Old Testament Library
RPP	<i>Religion Past & Present. Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion</i> . Edited by Hans Dieter Betz et al. 13 vols. + Index vol. Leiden: Brill, 2007–2013
SHBC	Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary

SP	Sacra Pagina Series
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–1976
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren. Translated by John T. Willis et al. 8 vols. Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1974–2006
UK	United Kingdom
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WEB	World English Bible

Technical abbreviations

ch.	chapter
chs.	chapters
n.	footnote
p.	page
pp.	pages
v.	verse
vv.	verses

1 Introduction

1.1 Observation

Deep-rooted in much of popular Christianity is the idea that the fallen angel and lord of the demons, Satan, is the ultimate cause of all evil in this world. But he will one day be slain, punished for his pride and offenses, and thrown into the eternal fire. The texts of the Bible concerning Satan must, nevertheless, again and again be carefully studied, without taking certain fixed ideas for granted. That we all face biblical texts and ideas with all sorts of conscious and subconscious presuppositions need, however, not be questioned. Yet, when one more actively begins to not only reveal these presuppositions but even question them, nuances and possibly even unfamiliar aspects within the Scripture presently hidden emerges and may begin to unfold. Perhaps the idea of Satan in the Old and New Testament is more complex than first assumed?

During my years as a bachelor student, I developed a certain fascination toward the Old Testament idea of the divine council (cf. Ps 82:1; Job 1:6; Jer 32:18, 22; 1 Kgs 22:19; Zech 3:1-5). But I quickly realized, to my surprise, that the/a Satan-figure is in fact presented as a member of this heavenly council (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7; Zech 3:1-5).¹ Surely this could not go unnoticed, and it inspired me to write a short biblical theological paper on Satan in the Old Testament. A PhD student at my university, who at that time was lecturing one of the courses I attended, wrote his PhD dissertation on Satan in the book of Revelation.² Through some conversations with him, I began to notice certain essential nuances of the Satan-figure in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. I also became further aware that the Old Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha played a decisive part in the Satanological development prior to the New Testament.

I have a concern if not much of popular Christianity tend to simplify or overdo its presumptions in regard to the biblical Satanology (and Demonology for that matter). Ultimately, there is a real danger of misrepresenting this rather delicate aspect of Christian theology, possibly even causing confusion to the observant Bible-reader. That is not to say that all the popular assumptions are

¹ For a short introduction of the divine council, see: Robin Routledge, *Old Testament Theology: A Thematic Approach* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 120-122.

² Cato Gulaker, "Satan, the Heavenly Adversary of Man: A Narrative Analysis of the Function of Satan in the Book of Revelation" (PhD diss., MF Norwegian School of Theology, Religion and Society, 2019).

incorrect, but I do call for a more thorough approach to this subject, perhaps particularly within practical church life. Throughout conversations with fellow Christians, I cannot but feel uneasy with the knowledge, or lack of knowledge, that I encounter – indeed, including myself, as well! Even the study-programs of my own theological education display, in my view, a lack of teaching in regard to Satanology and Demonology. Thus, I hope that my following study of Satanology, particularly within the Pauline letters, will not only provide myself with important knowledge of this field, but even benefit others who seek to acquire further knowledge on this theological topic as well.

1.2 Developing the Research Questions

As I encounter the respective passages in the Old and New Testament dealing with this matter, I find that the concept, or even person, of Satan is ambiguous. Particularly, when I begin to examine the content of the Pauline passages, I cannot but express a confusion over the fact that Paul shows both a positive and a negative side toward the works of Satan. Yet, the image presented in the Pauline writings appears to be in some sort of unity. In light of this, two passages have especially caught my attention, namely 2 Corinthians 12:7 and Romans 16:20. In 2 Cor 12, we read that in order to keep Paul humble after his rather strange visions (vv. 1-7a), he claims that “it has been given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, in order that it may strike me, in order that I may not exalt myself” (v. 7b). In this text, we have the impression that Satan is used as a tool to discipline Paul. In Rom 16:20, however, we encounter a rather hostile approach toward the Satan-being. Paul here assures the Roman church that “The God of the peace will crush Satan under your feet soon” (Rom 16:20a). There is therefore no doubt that these two verses portray a somewhat divergent picture of Satan.

The limitation of the number of words given for this Master thesis, as well as the time limit, require me to confine my study of the biblical Satanology. Hence, for reasons stated above concerning the complexity of the function of Satan in the Pauline letters and my curiosity toward this puzzle, I will concentrate my study on the Pauline writings of the New Testament. Furthermore, I intend for this thesis to first and foremost be an exegetical study and subsequently a comparative study of the two above-mentioned Pauline verses 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20. The Pauline picture of Satan is,

nevertheless, not sufficiently drawn with these two passages alone. I therefore wish to expand my research, as well, and include a brief study of the overall Satanology of the Pauline letters toward the end of this thesis. However, in order to accomplish these tasks adequately, a necessary, though condensed, examination of the Satanological picture and development throughout the Old Testament and Second Temple Judaism must be undertaken. The reason for this is that Paul clearly did not write in a historical “vacuum,” hence the theological background for him and his time is necessary to examine in order to be able to correctly understand the backcloth of his writings and theology. Thus, I have developed the following research questions: *What is the function of Satan in 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20? Are the statements in these two verses compatible with each other? How do these two verses fit into the overall Satanology of the Pauline letters? And is the Old Testament and Second Temple ideas of Satan reflected in the Pauline letters?*

1.3 Method

As stated above, the primary task of this thesis is to, through exegetical work, understand the Satanological ideas of 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20. And to shed further light to this task, I will do a comparative study between 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20. Besides the comparative study between these two verses, I will do a comparative study of the other essential Pauline texts in regard to the topic of Satanology and attempt to offer a general overview of the Satanology of the Pauline letters.

Consequently, the methods in this thesis will be exegesis and textual comparative study. I will deal more thoroughly with these two methods soon. No qualitative or quantitative studies will be part of this research.

1.4 Theory

1.4.1 Theory of collecting and analyzing the textual material

1.4.1.1 The Pauline corpus

When dealing with Pauline theology, the question of authorship must be considered. Ongoing scholarly debates and strong, but divergent conclusions on the question of authorship of the traditional Pauline corpus, that is, the thirteen letters of the New Testament traditionally ascribed

to Paul the apostle, may present us with a difficulty. Both 2 Corinthians and Romans (except for some discussions concerning at least parts of ch. 16) are, however, by most scholars considered to be of Pauline authorship. Several of the remaining passages central to the understanding of Satan in the Pauline letters are, on the other hand, found within the more disputed letters. These are 2 Thessalonians, Ephesians and 1 and 2 Timothy. We may, then, divide between an authentic Paul and a deuteropseudo-Paul when dealing with Pauline theology, provided that at least one or more letters are of a pseudepigraphic origin. However, I believe this should only be for pragmatic reasons. To conclude with a two-folded Pauline theology is, to my view, unnecessary. The term “Pauline” might very well be expanded to speak of Paul *and* his tradition, particularly since the biblical canon obviously leads us in this direction. Nevertheless, the biblical canon itself does not eliminate the difficulties of authorship altogether, for one must recognize that this is, and with good reasons, a debated question. Therefore, I write with an awareness of this issue of Pauline authorship, without it affecting this thesis in any significant way. Accordingly, I accept that seven Pauline letters are indeed written by Paul himself (1 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans, Galatians, Philippians, and Philemon) and six plausibly not written by Paul himself (Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, Ephesians, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus), without limiting what is to be considered “Pauline” within the traditional Pauline corpus.³

1.4.1.2 Old Testament texts

The Old Testament does not provide us with any serious difficulties now. I will accept the protestant Old Testament without the Apocrypha, though at least one of these will be of importance, albeit under the section or classification of Second Temple literature. What may present itself as an issue is the question of dating the particular books important for the Old Testament Satanology. However, this is not of any major relevance now, considering that the Old Testament dating does not produce any serious trouble for its Satanology.

³ For further discussion of Pauline authorship, see: Peter Stuhlmacher, *Biblical Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2018), 253-255; Stanley E. Porter, *The Apostle Paul: His Life, Thought, and Letters* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 156-179.

1.4.1.3 Second Temple literature

As a help to make this portrayal of Satan in the Second Temple literature less complicated, I wish to include all the Old Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha and texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls BC under this rather broad term “Second Temple literature.”⁴ However, the exceedingly high amount of writings found within this period, especially with the rather broad scope of texts I now include, provides us with a particular issue in regard to the task of systematizing this material. Furthermore, as expected, the Satanological picture(s) presented in these writings is(are) divergent. On the other hand, this also goes to show that there is an ongoing development which has not yet found its completion. Thus, to the extent possible, I must attempt to provide with a general picture of the Satanological development prior to Paul and the New Testament, although coupled with an awareness that it is not necessarily desirable to assemble every idea into a forced system. Let it also be mentioned that many of the discoveries in the Qumran dessert are fragmentary and fairly new. Chances are that more discoveries may come which could shed even further light to the matter.⁵ Nevertheless, my interests here are of such general nature that this matter should not cause any serious complications and will therefore not be commented on any further.

1.4.1.4 The New Testament

The New Testament in general is of lesser importance when we shall deal with the Satanology of the Pauline letters, first and foremost due to the fact that the Pauline Corpus (at least the seven authentic letters) is among the youngest writings of the New Testament canon.⁶ The rather brief treatment of the overall New Testament Satanology that I will provide with in this thesis will therefore merely function as a help to see the major lines of development throughout the Second Temple literature. We must not, however, take for granted that the New Testament present a/the complete, single picture of Satan.

⁴ The Septuagint is also an important Second Temple text, although it will be dealt with less exclusively compared to the other Second Temple texts listed.

⁵ Håkan Bengtsson, “Funnet i 1946 og videre,” in *Dødehavsrullene: Deres innhold, historie og betydning*, ed. Årstein Justnes (Kristiansand, Norway: Høyskoleforlaget, 2009), 17-26, 24-25; Torleif Elgvin, “Oversikt over skriftsamlingen fram Qumran,” in *Dødehavsrullene: Deres innhold, historie og betydning*, ed. Årstein Justnes (Kristiansand, Norway: Høyskoleforlaget, 2009), 41-48, 41-47.

⁶ For dating of the Pauline letters, see: Heikki Räisänen, *The Rise of Christian Beliefs: The Thought World of Early Christians* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010), 12-14; Stuhlmacher, *Biblical Theology*, 255.

1.4.1.5 Text editions

All Old and New Testament citations, except for 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20, are from the NRSV translation, unless else stated. For the Greek Septuagint text, I will use the Rahlfs-Hanhart Septuaginta Edition altera. For the English translation of the Greek Septuagint, I will use NETS. For the English translation of the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, I will use the two-volume translation of 1983 edited by James H. Charlesworth. For the English translation of the Dead Sea Scrolls, I will use the two-volume study edition translated and edited by Martínez and Tigchelaar. For the Old Testament Hebrew text, I will use Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia 1997 and for the New Testament Greek text, I will use Novum Testamentum 28th revised edition.⁷

1.4.1.6 Scholarly works

From the scholarly world there is a varied and helpful collection of literature on the subject matter. I will therefore actively consult with already written scholarly research on the topic of the development of biblical Satanology and Satan in the Pauline letters. However, within this selection of scholarly literature there are also certain questions in which scholars differ, which occasionally shall be discussed in this thesis.

1.4.2 Theory of theme/method

1.4.2.1 Satanology

“Satanology” is a term that refers to the teachings or doctrines of Satan and will be used frequently throughout this thesis. Additionally, I will use the terms “Satan-being/figure” and “Satan,” both with capital “S,” in reference to Satan. These terms do connote some sort of personification. However, as I believe Paul presents Satan as a single being or “person,” I find it reasonable to maintain these terms throughout the thesis.

⁷ See bibliography for complete references.

1.4.2.2 Exegetical study

Britannia Academic defines exegesis in short as “the critical interpretation of the biblical text to discover its intended meaning.”⁸ This is done with the goal of not influencing the interpretation with alien presuppositions, thus avoiding as much as possible the mistake of superimposing a foreign meaning unto the text. A proper balance between the desire to exposit the biblical text and the self-critical awareness of one’s own presupposition is therefore fundamental for a sound exegetical work. I will do my best to handle the selected texts with care, in order to critically interpret them well.

1.4.2.3 Comparative study

An inspiration to my choice of doing the comparative study between 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20 is an idea that the New Testament presents two traditions in regard to Satanology. Walter Wink describes this two-folded concept and its development in his “Unmasking the Powers.” Here he suggests that the earlier idea or tradition of Satan presented in the Old Testament world demonstrates Satan as some sort of (sly?) servant of God. But during the time of the Second Temple period, another tradition emerged, gradually developing Satan into God’s vicious archenemy. Yet, according to Wink, both traditions or aspects survived into the New Testament, even into the writings of the exact same author, such as the apostle Paul.⁹ Following this line of thought, 2 Cor 12:7 may be understood to reflect the former tradition and Rom 16:20 the latter. I will shortly address this later (3.3.4). I must, however, specify that although this idea of the two traditions is part of the backcloth of this thesis, I do not necessarily consider it to be correct. Moreover, this topic of these two traditions will only be explicitly and briefly address after the comparative study of 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20 (3.3.3.1). Even so, since 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20 still reflect a divergent picture of Satan, independent of the truthfulness of Wink’s portrayal of the two traditions, it is interesting to compare them and discuss how we should best consider these two verses together.

⁸ Matt Stefon, “Exegesis,” In Britannia Academic, last edited January 18, 2009.

⁹ Walter Wink, *Unmasking the Powers: The Invisible Forces That Determine Human Existence* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1986), 30-32.

Besides the comparative study between 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20, an analysis of the overall portrayal of Satan in the Pauline letters will be undertaken. This will therefore be a comparative study of all the Pauline texts (including 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20) that I believe is most essential in regard to Satanology. I will do this first and foremost for the sake of locating 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20 and their comparison into a greater whole, although to portray the overall Satanology of the Pauline letters is also an aim in itself. As such, this thesis will be a composition of both exegesis and Pauline theology, but with most emphasis on the exegetical study.

2 A Brief History of the Development of Satanology in the Old Testament, Second Temple Judaism and the New Testament

The Satan-figure is no stranger to the Bible and the non-biblical Jewish Second Temple literature. However, the material is profoundly complex. The following will therefore only be a very simplified and general outline of the Satanological ideas of the Old Testament, Second Temple Judaism and the New Testament.

2.1 The Old Testament

The Hebrew term שָׂטָן, meaning “accuser,” “adversary,” “slanderer,”¹⁰ is in the Old Testament a commonly used word for an adversary of any kind, humans as well as celestial beings.¹¹ In the following, I will mainly consider the texts that refer to celestial Satan(s), namely: Num 22:22, 32; 1 Chr 21:1(/cf. 2 Sam 24:1); Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7 and Zech 3:1-2.¹²

From these four(/five) texts we are generally provided with two features. First, there are most definitely one or several angels of God who are given this title (of) or assignment as (a) Satan.¹³ This is particularly attested in the Numbers passage, where “The angel of the LORD took his stand in the road as his [Balaam] adversary [לְשָׂטָן],” (Num 22:22) and in Job where (a) Satan is “among” “the sons of God [בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים]” (Job 1:6).¹⁴ Whether the Satan(s) in the selected passages in Numbers, Job, and Zechariah are the same being is uncertain, but they do have a strong similarity. All have a type of adversative role, either as an accuser (Zech), a tester or one who inflicts harm (Job), or a sort of combination of accuser and opposer (Num). However, in Zechariah and Job, the

¹⁰ Victor P. Hamilton, “Satan,” ABD 5: 985-989, 985-986.

¹¹ Examples of human Satans: 1 Sam 29:4; 1 Kgs 11:14, 23.

¹² For a further treatment of the texts that refer to human/terrestrial Satans, see: T. J. Wray and Gregory Mobley, *The Birth of Satan: Tracing the Devil’s Biblical Roots* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 52-57; Henry Ansgar Kelly, *Satan: A Biography* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 13-31.

¹³ For “Satan” to be a proper name, the definite article (הַ) should lack (This is the case for 1 Chr 21:1, thus Satan may be considered here as a proper name) (Annelies Felber, “Devil, I. Names and Terms,” *RPP* 4: 6-7, 6). In Zech 3:1-2 and Job 1:6 the definite article is present, hence a title (Christopher A. Rollston, “An Ur-History of the New Testament Devil: The Celestial שָׂטָן (šāṭān) in Zechariah and Job,” in *Evil in Second Temple Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Christ Keith and Loren T. Stuckenbruck [Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2016], 1-16, 3).

¹⁴ My translation of בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים. For further comment on Satan being among “the sons of God,” see: Reinhard Achenbach, “Devil, III. Ancient Near East and Old Testament,” *RPP* 4: 8-9, 9; Wray et al., *The Birth of Satan*, 59-60, 64-66, 100; Wink, *Unmasking the Powers*, 12-13; Samuel E. Balentine, *Job*. SHBC (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Inc., 2006), 48, 51-52.

works of Satan(s) are somewhat ambivalent, leading God to criticize (Job 2:3) and even rebuke (Zech 3:2) the Satan-figure(s).¹⁵ Second, the two parallel texts of 1 Chro 21:1 and 2 Sam 24:1 point us to an identification of God himself with Satan. The alteration made here, from God to Satan as the one inciting David to count the people of Israel in 1 Chro 21:1, does, however, present us with a difficulty in the interpretation of these two parallel texts.¹⁶

Although simplified, we may conclude the Satanology of the Old Testament in two aspects. First, we encounter the general use of שָׂטָן which connotes an adversative figure or role, either as a human or a celestial being. Second, Satan is not presented as *the* singular evil anti-thesis of the Lord God. The celestial Satan(s) of the Old Testament suggest(s) that Satan is an angel, or several angels, of God, perhaps even (directly or indirectly) God himself at one occasion, assigned with adversative tasks. Nevertheless, there exists some tension toward the Satan-character(s), attested in the selected texts in Job and Zechariah.

2.2 Second Temple Judaism

Eventually, the restricted Satanology of the Old Testament blossomed, leading to a vast spectrum of ideas regarding the questions of demons, fallen angels and Satan, which we shall now examine.

Although it is likely beyond the bounds of possibility to develop a consistent, single Satanology of the Second Temple period BC, I will try to highlight its overall Satanological picture(s?) in very general terms. Among the Old Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, I have concluded the following books to be the most essential for portraying the Satanological ideas of Second Temple Judaism: Jubilees, 1 Enoch, The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs and Wisdom of Solomon.¹⁷

¹⁵ Routledge, *Old Testament Theology*, 123.

¹⁶ For further discussion, see: Gary N. Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB 12A (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2004), 743-744, 751; Steven L. McKenzie, *1-2 Chronicles*. AOTC (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2004), 170-171; Sara Japhet. *I and II Chronicles: A Commentary*. OTL (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1993), 373-375; Routledge, *Old Testament Theology*, 122; Wray et al., *The Birth of Satan*, 66-68.

¹⁷ See the following literature: Jeffrey Burton Russell, *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977); Routledge, *Old Testament Theology*; Räisänen, *The Rise of Christian Beliefs*; Kelly, *Satan*; Wray et al., *The Birth of Satan*; Felber, "Devil, I. Names and Terms," 6-7; Achenbach, "Devil, III," 9; David E. Aune, "Devil, IV. New Testament," *RPP* 4: 9; Foerster, "σατανᾶς," *TDNT* 7: 151-163; Wink,

Perhaps it is correct to consider 1 Enoch and Jubilees as the most authoritative among these four sources during the last centuries BC.¹⁸ From the texts originally written by the Qumran community, also referred to as the “sectarian texts,”¹⁹ the following appear to be of most importance for understanding the community’s Satanology: Community Rule (1QS), War Scroll (1QM), and Damascus Document (CD).²⁰ A few references will also be made to other manuscripts of the Qumran community. For practical reasons, I will use this two-folded arrangement between the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha and the (original) Qumran texts.²¹

I have also chosen to vary in the names I mainly use for the Satan-being when dealing with the different books and with the chapter dealing with the Qumran Satanology. This I have done to signalize the most common name used in each of the respective writing.

2.2.1 The Old Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha

Let us first attempt to understand the main Satanological content of the selected Old Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha.

In Jubilees, there are several names for the Satan-being, such as “Mastema” (Jub 10:7-8; 11:5), “Beliar” (Jub 1:23; 15:33) and “Satan” (Jub 10:11; 50:5). We will begin with the story of the Watchers, namely “the sons of God” of Genesis 6:2. According to Jubilees, these are “angels of the LORD, who were called Watchers, [who] came down to earth” (Jub 4:15) with upright intentions, namely to “teach the sons of man, and perform judgement and uprightness upon the

Unmasking the Powers; Stephen F. Noll, *Angels of Light, Powers of Darkness: Thinking Biblically About Angels, Satan & Principalities* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998).

¹⁸ Kelly, *Satan*, 42-43; Elgvin, “Oversikt over skriftsamlingen fram Qumran,” 47.

¹⁹ Jutta Jokiranta, “Forbindelsen mellom skriftrullene og Qumran-bevegelsen,” in *Dødehavsrullene: Deres innhold, historie og betydning*, ed. Årstein Justnes (Kristiansand, Norway: Høyskoleforlaget, 2009), 117-127, 123 (see further: Jokiranta, “Forbindelsen,” 121-126).

²⁰ See the following literature: Årstein Justnes, ed. *Dødehavsrullene: Deres innhold, historie og betydning* (Kristiansand, Norway: Høyskoleforlaget, 2009); Gottfried Reeg, “Devil, IX. Judaism, 1. Early Judaism,” *RPP* 4: 13-14; Foerster, “σατανᾶς,” 151-163; Russell, *The Devil*; Noll, *Angels of Light*; H. Bietenhard, “Satan, Beelzebul, Devil, Exorcism: διάβολος,” *NIDNTT* 3: 468-472. Kelly confirms the textual selection, but displays a critical approach to, even rejection of, whether these texts concern the evil being of Satan (Kelly, *Satan*, 50).

²¹ Certain Old Testament Apocrypha/Pseudepigrapha are clearly present among the Dead Sea Scrolls (see 14n.32 [this will be the standard style of reference to internal footnotes of this thesis. The first number refers to the page number and “n” followed by a number refers to the footnote number]). This two-folded separation is therefore simply a tool to help systematize the material.

earth” (Jub 4:15).²² However, they sinned against God by copulating with the human women and teaching the humans “forbidden” knowledge. Consequently, these now fallen angels, along with their children with the human women, called “giants,” roamed the earth and it became increasingly corrupt and evil (Jub 4:21-22; 5:1-2; 7:21-25). On God’s orders, the Watchers were all bound “in the depths of the earth” (Jub 5:6) waiting for “the day of great judgement” (Jub 5:10), and the giants were forced to kill one another (Jub 5:7-9). However, the spirits of these giants, also called “demons,” remained on earth, continuing their wickedness upon the children and grandchildren of Noah. Thus, Noah prayed that God would “Shut them up and take them to the place of judgement” (Jub 10:5; see further Jub 7:27; 10:1-6). We then learn that Mastema, “the chief of the[se?] spirits,” (Jub 10:8), though probably not a demon himself, objects to the imprisonment of these spirits, and God chooses to leave one tenth of them for Mastema’s service. The rest are bound “into the place of judgement” (Jub 10:8). In short, Mastema, through his demon-servants, carries out his business toward the humans, tempts them to fall into sin, and accuses the people of God (Jub 1:20; 11:4-5,11). Throughout Jubilees, Mastema is mischievous and he is clearly met with contempt (Jub 17:16; 19:28; 48:15-18), but we read that he will, ultimately, be eliminated or excluded from “the land” (Jub 50:5).²³

When we turn to 1 Enoch, the relevant content corresponds much to what we saw in Jubilees, though some features differ.²⁴ In 1 Enoch, the Satan-being goes under the names of “Satan” (1 En 53:3; 54:6) and “Semyaz” (1 En 6:3,7; 9:7), and he is presented as the leader of “the angels, the children of heaven,” (1 En 6:2; see further 1 En 6:3) or “the Watchers” (1 En 10:9), the “sons of God” of Gen 6:2. Semyaz seems to accept the Watchers’ plan to marry human women and beget children with them (1 En 6:2). As in Jubilees, the Watchers (illegitimately) begin to teach the humans different skills and knowledge and engage sexually with the women, consequently begetting the giants, who eventually begin to do all sorts of atrocities (1 En 7:1-6). We are then introduced to several Watchers responsible for the different teachings, and one of them is a

²² In the Old Testament book of Daniel, we also encounter some beings named “watchers” (Dan 4:13, 17, 23). These watchers in the book of Daniel may be equivalent to angels, thus noteworthy, but of less interest in the discussion of the Old Testament Satanology (Wray et al., *The Birth of Satan*, 99).

²³ For similar outlines of Satan in Jubilees, see: Kelly, *Satan*, 37-40; Russell, *The Devil*, 192-194; Routledge, *Old Testament Theology*, 122; Wray et al., *The Birth of Satan*, 102-105.

²⁴ For a walkthrough of the differences between 1 Enoch (chs. 6-16) and Jubilees, see: Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels: Studies in Second Temple Judaism and New Testament Texts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014), 25-33.

Watcher named “Azaz’el” (1 En 8:1). In the following, it is mainly Azaz’el and his leader Semyaz who are blamed for these wrongdoings (1 En 9:6-9).²⁵ In chapter 10, we see that Azaz’el is bound and thrown into a hole in the Duda’el desert until judgement day, and the giants are forced by God to kill each other. 1 Enoch is, however, internally conflicting whether the spirits of these giants proceeded to roam the earth.²⁶ The archangel Michael is commanded by God to bind Semyaz and all his companions “underneath the rock of the ground” (1 En 10:12) until judgement day, before later to be eternally imprisoned “into the bottom of the fire – and in torment” (1 En 10:13).²⁷ Later in 1 Enoch, we are given some additional glimpses of Semyaz but mostly affirmative of the above stated.²⁸

In the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs (T12P), we find the names “Beliar” (Test.Reu 4:7; Test.Sim 5:3), “Devil” (Test.Naph 8:4, 6; Test.Ash 1:9) and “Satan” (Test.Dan 3:6; Test.Gad 4:7). Here we encounter some few passages in accord with the general lines of Jubilees and 1 Enoch concerning the story of the Watchers (though the Satan-figure is absent). We read that the women “charmed the Watchers,” and after their intercourse, the women “gave birth to giants” (Test.Reu 5:6), but “the Lord pronounced a curse on them [the Watchers] at the Flood” (Test.Naph 3:5). Throughout T12P we learn that Beliar does evil and causes people to stumble (into sin?) (Test.Reu 4:7; Test.Ash 1:8-9), and that he tried to incite Dan to kill his brother Joseph (Test.Dan 1:7-8). Beliar may also somehow captivate or rule over humans, even using them as instruments for his will (Test.Zeb 9:8; Test.Dan 4:7; Test.Naph 8:6; Test.Ben 6:1). Additionally, it appears that Beliar rules over some spirits (giant-ghosts?) (Test.Dan 1:7; 5:6, 11). Humans are, however, urged to seek God and follow his commands, in order to stay safe from Beliar (Test.Iss 7:7; Test.Dan 5:1; Test.Ben 3:3-4). Understandably, for Beliar there awaits “destruction” along with his servants

²⁵ Russell argues that Azaz’el and the later Satan of 1 Enoch are to be considered identical (Russell, *The Devil*, 206).

²⁶ See 1 En 15:8-16:1 versus 1 En 86:1-89:9. Although I have chosen to deal with 1 Enoch as a single writing, it must be recognized that the book is composed by (plausibly) five separate books or writings: ch. 1-36 “The Book of the Watchers”; ch. 37-71 “The Book of the Similitudes”; ch. 72-82 “The Book of Astronomical Writings”; ch. 83-90 “The Book of Dream Vision”; ch. 91-107 “The Book of the Epistle of Enoch” (E. Isaac, “1 (Ethiopian Apocalypse of) Enoch: A New Translation and Introduction,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*. Vol. 1, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1983), 5-89, 7). The internal conflict concerning the fate of the giant-ghosts may be explained by this fact that 1 Enoch is composed by several separate books (Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels*, 22-23).

²⁷ For similar outlines of Satan in 1 Enoch, see: Russell, *The Devil*, 191-192; Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels*, 12-16 (only 1 En 1-36).

²⁸ 1 En 53:3 (although this passage may speak about Satan punishing/chaining evil human rulers, rather than himself being punished/chained, i.e., 1 En 53:4-5); 54:3-6; 69:1-3.

(Test.Ben 3:8). We also read that an army is “arrayed for the day of judgement to work vengeance on the spirits of error and of Beliar” (Test.Lev 3:3), that he will be “bound by” the new priest/messiah(?) to come (Test.Lev 18:12), and that he will eventually “be thrown into eternal fire” (Test.Jud 25:3).²⁹

From the Wisdom of Solomon, there are only two verses of particular interest, verses 2:23-24, which reads:

Because God created human beings for incorruption and made them the image of his own nature, but through the envy of the devil [δίαβόλου] death entered the world, and those who belong to his party experience it.

Could this be the first or a very early witness of the identification of the serpent of Eden (Gen 3) with Satan? Kelly refutes this idea, though several scholars claim that it quite possibly is.³⁰ Additionally, there is one more occurrence of similar nature, although from 1 Enoch. In verse 69:6 we receive one single hint of an angel, most likely one of the leading Watchers, “Gader’el; (...) who showed the children of the people all the blows of death, who misled Eve,” which perhaps refers to the story of the fall in Genesis 3.³¹

2.2.2 Qumran

The following analysis is restricted to the sectarian texts of the Qumran community.³² In these texts, the names “Belial” (1QS 1:18; CD 4:13; 1QM 1:1) and “Melkiresha” (4Q280 frag. 1:2;

²⁹ For similar outlines of Satan in T12P, see: Russell, *The Devil*, 209-211; Räisänen, *The Rise of Christian Beliefs*, 137-138.

³⁰ Kelly, *Satan*, 70-79. For scholars who suggest this identification, see: Russell, *The Devil*, 200; Routledge, *Old Testament Theology*, 123; Achenbach, “Devil, III,” 9; David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB 43 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1979), 121.

³¹ Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels*, 153, 300-301.

³² Jubilees and 1 Enoch were probably prominent among the Qumran community (Elgvin, “Oversikt over skriftsamlingen fram Qumran,” 47). The Greek-written Wisdom of Solomon was probably not used by the community, considering that within the selection of texts discovered in Qumran, none which were originally written in Greek are found (Jokiranta, “Forbindelsen,” 119; Michael A. Knibb, “Wisdom of Salomon: to the Reader,” in *A New English Translation of the Septuagint: and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under That Title*, ed. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), 697-699, 697). It is plausible that The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs was not used by the community (H. C. Kee, “Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs: A New Translation and Introduction,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*. Vol. 1, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1983), 775-828, 778). But it is also arguable that T12P was in fact used by the Qumran community, cf. 4Q213-4Q215; 4Q537-4Q541 (see comment

4Q544, frag. 2:3) are attested. We see a tendency of a sharp dualism with a definite belief in good and evil celestial beings. This is clearly displayed in the idea of a final eschatological battle between the heavenly or angelic army and the evil army called “the army of Belial” (1QM 1:1; see further 15:2-3), probably made up of evil spirits or/and(?) demons (1QM 13:2; 4-6, 11-12).³³ Satan is also mentioned as one of the Watchers (4Q544, fr. 2:1-5). Additionally, there appears to be an “Angel of Darkness” who rules the earth (1QS 3:20-23). This angel is most likely identical with Belial, considering that his (Belial’s) (spirit-?) army is called “the lot of darkness” (1QM 13:5) and the titling of the then present time as the “dominion of Belial” (1QS 1:18; see further 1QS 2:19).³⁴ The Qumran community may have believed that the majority of the Jewish people were captivated by Belial, perhaps since the rules of the Qumran community were considered a/the secure way to “establish a covenant before God in order to carry out all that he commanded and in order not to stray from following him (...) during the dominion of Belial” (1QS 1:16-18).³⁵ A possibility to protect oneself from Belial is therefore provided with (1QS 2:1-10). It is further worth noticing that the fate of Belial and his company is “everlasting destruction” (1QM 1:5; see further 1QM 13:1-5; 18:1; 4Q286, fr. 7 2:1-12). Thus, the idea of a final defeat of Satan is very much present in the sectarian texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Nevertheless, we do clearly find the underlying idea that he has ultimately been granted, or at least been restricted of, his possibilities to act by God himself, or as written: “in compliance with the mysteries of God” (1QS 3:23; see further 1QS 3:21-26; CD 4:10-20; 1QM 13:1-18; 16:11-12).³⁶ This reflects then the importance of YHWH still being the one God who, ultimately, governs this world.³⁷

by Vermes: Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*. Fiftieth anniversary edition [London, England: Penguin Classics, 2011], 561, 563-564).

³³ Cecilia Wassén, “Apokalyptikk,” in *Dødehavsrullene: Deres innhold, historie og betydning*, ed. Årstein Justnes (Kristiansand, Norway: Høyskoleforlaget, 2009), 309-321, 320; Cecilia Wassén, «Engler og demoner,» in *Dødehavsrullene: Deres innhold, historie og betydning*, ed. Årstein Justnes (Kristiansand, Norway: Høyskoleforlaget, 2009), 341-354, 342, 346. Kelly, however, questions if the dualism of 1QS and 1QM is representative of the overall Qumran theology (Kelly, *Satan*, 41-42).

³⁴ Foerster, “σατανᾶς,” 153; Derek R. Brown, *The God of This Age: Satan in the Churches and Letters of the Apostle Paul* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 35-36.

³⁵ Wassén, “Engler og demoner,” 343.

³⁶ Russell, *The Devil*, 214.

³⁷ Leonhardt-Balzer provides with a valuable and thorough description of the thought-world of the Qumran community in regard to the question of evil, see: Jutta Leonhardt-Balzer, “Evil at Qumran,” in *Evil in Second Temple Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Christ Keith and Loren T. Stuckenbruck (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 17-33.

2.2.3 The overall picture

In contrast to the Old Testament Satanology, the Second Temple literature portrays an incredible development of Satanology, as well as Demonology. Despite the disharmony of certain elements, some general outlines are unmistakable. Satan, with all his various names, accuses the people of God, and is the leader of an army, possibly the evil ghosts of the giants, that presumably roams the earth, causes evil, and leads humans to sin. Nevertheless, he has probably been granted this possibility, perhaps even assignment, by God himself. Meanwhile, by staying close to God, one may build a defense against Satan's attacks. Perhaps by now, one may have vaguely begun to associate the serpent of Eden with one of the Watchers, even Satan (the chief Watcher?) himself, although this is somewhat uncertain. Ultimately, Satan will be defeated and punished forever.

2.3 The New Testament

Since the topic of Satanology in the New Testament includes an enormous amount of passages, the following will only be a very brief sketch. The Pauline letters are also excluded for now.³⁸

Throughout the New Testament the names used for the Satan-figure vary greatly: "Satan" (Matt 12:26; Rev 20:7); "Devil" (Luke 4:3; Rev 20:10); "Beelzebul" (Matt 12:24; Luke 11:18); "The great dragon" (Rev 12:9); and Paul's use of "Beliar" (2 Cor 6:15). Additionally, there are several epithets used, such as "that ancient serpent" (Rev 12:9); "the ruler of this world" (John 14:30); "the evil one" (Matt 13:19); "the tempter" (Matt 4:3). The story of Genesis 6, as developed in Jubilees and 1 Enoch, is barely mentioned explicitly in the New Testament. Nevertheless, the New Testament confirms the idea that the Watchers of Genesis 6 were angels who sinned but were thrown "into hell and committed (...) to chains of deepest darkness to be kept until the judgement" (2 Pet 2:4; see further 2 Pet 2:10-11; Jude 5-8, 14-16?).³⁹ Regarding Satan, he seems to be understood as the ruler of demons (Mark 3:22), unclean spirits(?) (Mark 1:23), and it appears that he has some angelic followers that will be punished with him (Matt 25:41), much in line with the Second Temple literature. He is a tempter and tester (Matt 4:1ff; Luke 22:31-32; Acts 5:3; Rev

³⁸ The Pauline letters are undoubtedly important to the overall New Testament Satanology as well, perhaps even influential of the New Testament writers (cf. 2 Pet 3:15-16). This brief picture of the New Testament Satanology is therefore very basic, even incomplete.

³⁹ For a more thorough comment, see: Stuhlmacher, *Biblical Theology*, 549-550; Kelly, *Satan*, 131-134.

2:9-11), and he even claims to have been granted some sort of power over the earth, though scholars disagree on the truthfulness of this claim (Luke 4:6).⁴⁰ He is an adversary and accuser of Christians (1 Pet 5:8-9; Rev 12:10), and he oppresses or holds captive human beings (Acts 10:38; Heb 2:14-15; 1 John 3:8-10). Yet, by staying close to God one may build a defense against him (Matt 6:13; 1 Pet 5:6-10; Jas 4:7-10).⁴¹ In conformity with the Christocentric picture of the New Testament, we may therefore say with Russell, that Christ “saves us from the power of the Devil.”⁴² Satan appears to still (partially?) be in, or have access to, heaven, although there are clear hints of him being (gradually or instantaneously?) cast out (Luke 10:17-18; John 12:31-32?; Rev 12:7-12).⁴³ Besides, there is a restriction toward how to condemn Satan (Jud 9), perhaps because Satan is still in God’s service.⁴⁴ It even appears as if he may be used by God to test/tempt Jesus in the desert (Matt 4:1; Luke 4:1-2, 13) and to test the disciples, particularly Peter, during the passion of Christ (Luke 22:31-32). He is also most likely identified with the serpent of Eden (Rev 12:9; 20:2).⁴⁵ Ultimately, it is very clear that Satan is an evil being (John 8:44; see further 1 John 3:8) who will be eternally punished (Matt 25:41; Rev 20:7-10; John 16:11).

2.4 Conclusion

I have now attempted to portray a brief and general Satanological picture(s) of the Old Testament, Second Temple Judaism, and the New Testament.⁴⁶ The scope is wide and complex, making it impossible to comprehend all the details here, but some major lines have been presented.

In the Old Testament, the appearance of a celestial Satan(s) is scarce, although noteworthy. A certain adversative impression is occasionally given, although this would later evolve immensely

⁴⁰ See: David E. Garland, *Luke*. Vol. Vol. 3. Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 182; Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*. The NIV Application Commentary: From Biblical Text ... to Contemporary Life (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 129; John Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20*. WBC 35 A (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1989), 180; David L. Tiede, *Luke*. ACNT (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988), 100-101.

⁴¹ Stuhlmacher, *Biblical Theology*, 110, 720.

⁴² Russell, *The Devil*, 229.

⁴³ Bietenhard, “Satan, Beelzebul, Devil, Exorcism: διάβολος,” 470.

⁴⁴ Kelly argues in favor of this (Kelly, *Satan*, 128-130).

⁴⁵ Foerster, “σατανᾶς,” 158-158. According to Foerster, the idea of a pre-cosmic fall of Satan is, however, not found within the New Testament (Foerster, “σατανᾶς,” 157-158). See also Russell on the fall of Satan and on Satan as the origin of evil: Russell, *The Devil*, 232.

⁴⁶ It is truly worth noticing that during the same period that the New Testament was written (and later), ideas concerning Satan continued to expand in new-coming Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, see particularly: *Life of Adam and Eve*; *2 Enoch*; *Testament of Job*; *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah*; *The Apocalypse of Abraham*.

throughout the Second Temple period. Satan in the writings of the Second Temple period BC is most frequently described as God's evil enemy, but he is also at times portrayed less hostile. The New Testament is very similar in its Satanology, portraying Satan most frequently as God's vicious foe, although certain texts are also here less hostile to the Satan-figure. Common for the Old Testament, Second Temple literature, and the New Testament, is that God is portrayed as superior. Ultimately, it is God who is the sovereign one, who appoints Satan to do certain tasks, who may (and will) protect his people, and who will eventually judge and defeat Satan and his evil lot.

2.5 Excursus: בליעל and the Old Testament

Before we continue with the Pauline letters, I find it reasonable to do a brief excursus on the Hebrew word בליעל (bēliyya'al) of the Old Testament due to its and its transliterations' frequent occurrence in Second Temple writings.

בליעל appears a number of times in the Old Testament (e.g., Deut 13:14; 1 Sam 25:25; Prov 19:28). It may be translated to "worthlessness," "worthless," "good-for-nothing," "ruin," "destruction."⁴⁷ Following TDOT, the Old Testament use of בליעל may be divided into four categories.⁴⁸ 1. "As a Term Referring to the Powers of Chaos" (e.g., Ps 18:5 [ET 18:4]), hence a close relation to death, "Sheol," chaos, and consequently to "anything that is hostile to God and to society."⁴⁹ 2. "In Juridical Contexts" (e.g., Judg 19:22), where it functions particularly in situations where the social order is disrupted. 3. "In Connection with the King" (e.g., 1 Sam 10:27), particularly in situations where the monarchy is subverted, either against the Israelite king or against JHWH as "king."⁵⁰ 4. "In Connection with Cultic Abuses" (e.g., 1 Sam 2:12), thus in situations where people offend or violate the cultic/religious life and order of the Israelites. It is worth noticing that on several occasions in the Old Testament, there are examples of people being called "sons of Belial [בני-בליעל]" (e.g., Jud 19:22; 1 Sam 2:12; 10:27), an expression also to be found in the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and Dead Sea Scrolls (e.g., Jub 15:33; 4Q286 Fr. 7, 2:6). Considering that Belial/r

⁴⁷ BDB s.v. בליעל. The translation and etymology of בליעל remains, however, probably somewhat ambiguous (Otzen, "בליעל bēliyya'al," TDOT 2: 131-136, 131-133; see further: Theodore J. Lewis, "Belial," ABD 1: 654-656, 654-655).

⁴⁸ The titles of these four categories are direct citations from TDOT (Otzen, "בליעל bēliyya'al," 134-135).

⁴⁹ Otzen, "בליעל bēliyya'al," 134.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 135.

is the name most frequently used for the Satan-being in both the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs (Beliar) and the sectarian texts of the Qumran community, we cannot overlook the relatedness this word displays between the Old Testament and the Second Temple literature (see further Jub 1:20; LivPro 4:6).⁵¹ Additionally, I find the parallel between בליעל and שטן curios. Despite their somewhat regular and ordinary use in the Old Testament, both words developed into a name for *the* evil Satan-being.⁵² Moreover, in the New Testament Pauline corpus, both the Greek equivalents to בליעל and שטן are used of the Satan-being (e.g., 2 Cor 2:11, ὁ σατανᾶς; 2 Cor 6:15, Βελιάρ [although this is the only occurrence in the New Testament]). We must, nevertheless, recognize that שטן as (a) celestial being(s) is more explicitly attested in the Old Testament than בליעל.

To conclude, albeit its common use in the Hebrew Old Testament (though possibly not in direct reference to the Satan-being), בליעל developed into a name used for no other than Satan himself. Furthermore, the parallel to the similar use and development of שטן is remarkable.

⁵¹ For further treatment of Belial/r in the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and Dead Sea Scrolls, see: Lewis, “Belial,” 655-656.

⁵² Additionally, although of less importance, there are four related cases of other Old Testament words with a similar development worth noticing. **1.** We encounter the word “Baal-zebul [בבעל זבוב]” (NRSV), meaning “Lord of flies” (BDB s.v. בעל [n.m., †Baal, 4]), in 2 Kings 1:2-3, 6, 16, where it is a name used for “the god of Ekron (2 Kgs 1:2). This may be the reference to the later New Testament use of the name “Beelzebul [Βεελζεβούλ]” for the Satan-figure (Matt 12:24-27; Mark 3:22-26; Luke 11:15-19) (Bietenhard, “Satan, Beelzebul, Devil, Exorcism: διάβολος,” 468-472, 469). The very similar “Beelzeboul” is also frequently used in the pseudepigraphic Testament of Solomon, perhaps also here in reference to the Satan-being (e.g., TSol 3:1-6). **2.** Another word of interest is “Abaddon [אבדון]” (NRSV), meaning (place of) “destruction,” “ruin” (BDB s.v. אבדון) (e.g., Job 26:6; 31:12). Abaddon appears to be the name of a location associated with death and “Sheol,” sometimes even personified, which bears a close parallel to “the angel of the bottomless pit(...) Abaddon (...) Apollyon” of Rev 9:11 (Herbert G. Grether, “Abaddon,” *ABD* 1: 6, 6). According to Mounce, however, an identification of Abaddon/Apollyon with Satan in Rev 9:11 is unlikely (Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*. NICNT [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977], 198). Additionally, in the Qumran texts, we encounter “the ange[l] of the pit” and “the sp[irit of des]truction[אבדון]” in 4Q286 fr. 7, 2:7, which is probably a reference to Belial, the Satan-figure (Leonhardt-Balzer, “Evil at Qumran,” 27). **3.** We have the name “Azazel [עזאזל]” (NRSV) of Lev 16:8, 10 (x2), 26, which may be rendered “entire removal” (BDB s.v. עזאזל). According to Wright, Azazel is plausibly the name of a demonic being (although other interpretations are suggested) to who one of the goats of the sacrifice of Lev 16:8-10 is offered (David P. Wright, “Azazel,” *ABD* 1: 536-537, 536). As we saw in 1 Enoch (2.2.1), “Azaz’el” became(?) the name for one of the fallen Watchers. **4.** Finally, is the occurrence of משטמה (maštēmâ) in Hos 9:7-8, which may be translated “animosity” (BDB s.v. משטמה) or “hostility” (NRSV). We observed above that “Mastema” later, in Jubilees, became the most commonly used name for the Satan-figure (2.2.1).

3 Satan in the Pauline Letters

As much as thirteen of the twenty-seven books in the New Testament are ascribed to the apostle Paul, and they provide us with plentiful references to the Satan-figure. But the material is diverse and in need of careful handling. Therefore, before we begin our exegetical study, I should again specify that our work with 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20 does not display for us a complete Satanology of the Pauline letters. The general outline of Satan in the Pauline letters will therefore receive more attention afterwards (3.4).

3.1 Exegesis of 2 Corinthians 12:7

διό⁵³ ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι, ἐδόθη μοι σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί,
ἄγγελος σατανᾶ⁵⁴, ἵνα με κολαφίζῃ, ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι⁵⁵.

Therefore, in order that I may not exalt myself, it has been given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, in order that it may strike me, in order that I may not exalt myself.

3.1.1 Introduction

3.1.1.1 Structure

It is reasonable to deal with the whole of 2 Cor 12:1-10 as a unit of its own, particularly since the topic(s) Paul writes about in these ten verses are very interconnected.⁵⁶ In its broader context, the

⁵³ There is a strong and early witness of omitting διό from the text (most importantly: p⁴⁶ D), but the manuscript evidences for considering διό as original (most importantly: κ A B) I find more convincing. The inclusion of διό in the text is supported by NA²⁸ and several commentators, see: Frederick W. Danker, *II Corinthians*. ACNT (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1989), 192-193; Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. NIGTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 851-853; Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*. WBC 40 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1986), 411; Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*. ICC (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), 347; Mitzi Minor, *2 Corinthians*. SHBC (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2009), 226, 235 n.17; including the translations of both NRSV and NIV.

⁵⁴ σατανᾶ has in several manuscripts been read as/corrected to Σαταν (κ² A^c D¹), but the textual witness for reading σατανᾶ as original is very strong (p⁴⁶ κ* A* B D*).

⁵⁵ This repeated phrase ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι has in several significant manuscripts been omitted (κ* A D), but it is included in a number of other significant manuscripts (p⁴⁶ κ² B Γ^{vid} Cyp Ambst). NA²⁸ has included these three words as part of the text as well. It is probably correct to consider these three words as part of the original reading of the verse and consistently put there by Paul himself as a literary rhetoric (Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 829 [note m]).

⁵⁶ Several commentators deal with these ten verses separately as well, see: Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 387, 390; Ben Witherington III, *Conflict & Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand

unit is part of a longer sequence where Paul needs to defend his apostleship and authority to the Corinthian church (10:1-13:10).⁵⁷ Martin provides us with a helpful overall structure, which I will use as well, though an abridged version.⁵⁸

1:1-2	I	Address
1:2-11	II	The Past Experience of Paul Reviewed
1:12-14	III	Transition to the Letter's First Theme
1:15-2:14	IV	Paul's Self-Defense of His Travel Plans
2:14-7:16	V	The Main Theme: Paul's Apostolic Ministry
8:1-9:15	VI	The Collection
10:1-13:10	VII	Fresh Troubles in Corinth
10:1-11	A	Paul's Self-Vindication
10:12-18	B	The Issue of Paul's Ministry
11:1-15	C	The Emissaries Identified and Opposed
11:16-12:10	D	Paul's Fool's Story
11:16-21a		1. Boasting: True and False
11:21b-33		2. Paul's Trials
12:1-10		3. Paul's Ecstasy and Its Evaluation
12:11-18	E	Paul's Apostolate Justified
12:19-13:10	F	Warnings and a Third Visit Promised
13:11-13	VIII	Conclusion

I hold that $\delta\iota\acute{o}$ in verse 7b belongs to the original text, leading us to consider the conjunction as the beginning of a new sentence and of the new, following message of verses 7b-10.⁵⁹ The theme, I suggest, changes from verse 7a to 7b; from Paul's vision, to his thorn in the flesh. As a

Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 459; Ernest Best, *Second Corinthians*. IBC (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1987), 116; Danker, *II Corinthians*, 187. Harris does also treat these ten verses on their own, although he claims that they are part of a section that starts at verse 11:30 (Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 816, 827).

⁵⁷ Litwa argues that Paul's story of his heavenly ascent in 2 Cor 12 is possibly meant as some sort of "parody" of the story of Moses' ascent from the Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 88b-89a (M. David Litwa. "Paul's Mosaic Ascent: An Interpretation of 2 Corinthians 12.7-9." *New Testament Study* 57. [2011], 238-257, 243). Litwa makes an interesting point, although I find some of his suggestions at times too far-fetched.

⁵⁸ See: Martin, *2 Corinthians*, vii-viii. I do, nevertheless, disagree with Martin's conclusion that chapter 1-9 and 10-13 were originally two separate letters (see discussion below).

⁵⁹ Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 411; Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 528; see further 20n.53.

consequence, my exegetical analysis will focus on verse 7b, excluding verse 7a from the exegesis, which I therefore believe belongs to verse 6 and the preceding message.⁶⁰ The separate unit of verses 7b-10 may further be divided into three sections: I. Paul's thorn in the flesh, which prevents him from exalting himself (v. 7); II. Paul's prayer to God for the removing of the thorn (v. 8); and III. God's response to Paul, which leads him to accept and rejoice over his weakness (vv. 9-10). Additionally, according to Harris, it is reasonable to understand verses 9-10 as "the climax of 12:1-10, just as 12:1-10 is the acme of the whole 'Fool's Speech' (11:21b-12:13)."⁶¹

It is noteworthy that Harris argues that it would be most reasonable to not only include the conjunction $\delta\acute{\iota}\omicron$ from verse 7b, but to even consider the conjunction as a reference to the previous verse(s). Verse 7b is then considered directly connected to verse 7a.⁶² As seen above, I differ with Harris on this matter. Yet, despite my exclusion of verse 7a in the exegesis, I feel the need to underline that verses 1-7a should still be considered important for our understanding of verses 7b-10. I will therefore propose the following connection between the ten verses of 2 Cor 12:1-10. We read that Paul refrains from boasting (vv. 5-6), and a fundamental reason for this may be the simple fact that he does not wish to prove to the members of the Corinthian church his apostolicity by alluding to his vision(s). He rather wishes to appeal to them with "what they can *see* him doing and *hear* from him" (i.e., v. 6b), in particular his weakness.⁶³ Paul had earlier experienced an extraordinary event, namely to be taken up, either physically or spiritually(?), into the "third heaven" (v. 3), God's own dwelling place. Here he received visions of things forbidden to re-tell (vv. 1-4). However, instead of boasting of this experience, he chooses to do the opposite, namely, to boast of his weakness and disastrous experiences as a missionary (vv. 5-7a, 9-10). He even declares that he has received a "thorn in the flesh" from a messenger of Satan himself (v. 7b). Additionally, for the Corinthian citizens, this type of anti-boasting, or perhaps better said, boasting of one's deficiency, rather than one's personal greatness, was quite countercultural.⁶⁴ To conclude,

⁶⁰ Danker, *II Corinthians*, 192-193.

⁶¹ Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 827.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 853. This is also supported by Minor, who considers $\delta\acute{\iota}\omicron$ as part of the original text, but still "believe Paul starts a new thought with v. 7" (not only v. 7b) (Minor, "2 Corinthians," 235 n.17).

⁶³ Victor Paul Furnish, *II Corinthians: Translated with Introduction, Notes, and Commentary*. AB 32A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1984), 546; see further: Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 547; Robert G. Bratcher, *A Translator's Guide to Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians*. Helps for Translators (London: United Bible Societies, 1983), 132-133.

⁶⁴ Witherington III, *Conflict & Community in Corinth*, 8.

there is, on the one hand, an important thematic connection between verses 1-7a and verses 7b-10. On the other hand, it is reasonable to deal with verses 7b-10 as an own unit but with an awareness of its connection to the preceding verses.

Johansson recognizes a chiasmic structure of verse 7b, which is worth portraying (with my translation):⁶⁵

- A Therefore, in order that I may not exalt myself
- B it has been given me
- C a thorn in the flesh
- C¹ a messenger of Satan
- B¹ in order that it may strike me
- A¹ in order that I may not exalt myself

3.1.1.2 Authorship and composition

We recall from the introduction (1.4.1.1) that 2 Corinthians is among the Pauline letters whose authorship we may consider as undisputed.⁶⁶ However, many scholars question whether certain parts of the letter do not belong the original composition, but rather that the letter is a composition of more than one Pauline writings.⁶⁷ I will not engage in the full discussion of this matter, but I will maintain that all parts of the letter as we have it is originally one single letter or unity.⁶⁸ Additionally, Harris makes a fair point in suggesting that, “though sent as a single letter, 2 Corinthians was composed in stages not at a single sitting.”⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Hans Johansson, *Andra Korintherbrevet 8-13*. KNT 8b (Stockholm: EFS-förlaget, 2003), 333.

⁶⁶ See further: Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1-2.

⁶⁷ See for example: Martin, *2 Corinthians*, xlvi; Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 54-55.

⁶⁸ Witherington III sketches for us the difficulties with several theories on why 2 Corinthians is not to be considered a single unity/letter, which I find, despite its shortness, satisfactory, see: Witherington III, *Conflict & Community in Corinth*, 328-333).

⁶⁹ Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 51. For an introduction and further discussion of the matter, see: Porter, *The Apostle Paul*, 268-278; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 8-51.

3.1.1.3 Date and historical context

As I find it most credible to consider 2 Corinthians to not only be entirely Pauline but also, as Harris suggests, as *one* original letter, there need not be any serious issues with the question of dating. I believe that it is reasonable to follow Harris further and consider the letter to be sent to the Corinthian church in the fall of year 56 AD.⁷⁰ There is also a discussion in regard to the amount, date and nature of the visit(s) Paul had to the Corinthian church prior to and during his writing and composition of 2 Corinthians. However, this is less relevant for our dealings with verse 12:7b and its Satanological implications.⁷¹

The Corinthian church consisted of a very mixed gathering of people, spanning from poor and slaves to wealthy and eminent members of society.⁷² Additionally, it is probably correct to think that the Corinthian church consisted of both Gentile and Jewish Christians, although the majority may have been Gentile.⁷³ Paul had a direct, personal relation to the Corinthian church, and it is very probable that Paul was the first to establish a Christian church in the city of Corinth (cf. Acts 18:1-21).

Paul's intentions with the letter have several aspects, but it appears in many ways that the major issue of the letter is Paul's own defense against all sorts of accusations. Most importantly for our case is his defense of his apostolic ministry toward the Corinthian church (chs. 10-13). He therefore writes to a church he is in more or less direct and personal dispute with, which is a remarkable feature of this letter.⁷⁴ As Witherington III points out, the ultimate goal of this writing of Paul is reconciliation, though not only between the Corinthian church and him, but between the Corinthians and Christ himself.⁷⁵ However, as Harris portrays for us, the letter is also of a somewhat positive nature, as it is not merely a simple rebuke of the Corinthian church but an encouragement as well (cf. 2 Cor 1:6-7, 11, 23-2:4; 7:3-9, 14-16).⁷⁶ Therefore, 2 Corinthians is a

⁷⁰ Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 65-67, 102-105.

⁷¹ For further discussion, see: *ibid.*, 54-65.

⁷² Witherington III, *Conflict & Community in Corinth*, 22, 28; Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Corinthians: A Literary and Theological Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1987), xvii-xviii.

⁷³ Martin, *2 Corinthians*, xxix; Witherington III, *Conflict & Community in Corinth*, 24-25.

⁷⁴ Martin, *2 Corinthians*, lxi-lxii.

⁷⁵ Witherington III, *Conflict & Community in Corinth*, 328.

⁷⁶ Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 52.

dramatic letter, ranging from Paul’s personal and drastic defense and warnings to the Corinthians from falling astray from Christ, to encouragements and appeals for reconciliation.

3.1.2 Exegesis

3.1.2.1 Overview

Paul opens the unit of 2 Cor 12:7b-10 by explaining how he is kept from exalting himself, namely by “a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan” (v. 7b). Though he prays to God for the removing of the thorn (v. 8), he is given the answer that he must, due to his weakness, rely on God’s grace and power (v. 9a). Ultimately, Paul boasts in his weakness, for it is when he is weak and in prone to calamities that Christ is in him, making him strong (vv. 9b-10).

3.1.2.2 Detailed exegesis

Verse 7b begins with the conjunction διὸ, immediately followed by a second conjunction ἵνα. διὸ, which may be translated to “therefore,” “for this reasons,”⁷⁷ functions as an introduction to the succeeding words and verses.⁷⁸ ἵνα, probably best translates “in order that,” “that,” “so that,” and bears here the function of introducing the purpose of/reason for the σκόλοψ.⁷⁹

ὑπεραίρωμαι, from ὑπεραίρω, which means to “rise up,” “exalt oneself,” “be elated,”⁸⁰ is in the subjunctive mood. The present tense most likely indicates that the μὴ ὑπεραίρω of Paul is to be continuous.⁸¹ This I believe is in perfect correspondence with the answer Paul is given when he prays for the thorn to be left from him (v. 8). God answers him that “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness” (v. 9a), which implies that the thorn will remain with Paul to both preserve him and keep him in weakness.⁸² Hence, considering that the following

⁷⁷ BDAG s.v. διὸ.

⁷⁸ See 21n.59.

⁷⁹ Cleon L. Rogers JR. and Cleon L. Rogers III, *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998), 417; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 411.

⁸⁰ BDAG s.v. ὑπεραίρω. A further comment on the meaning of the verb by BDAG is “to have an undue sense of one’s self-importance,” (BDAG s.v. ὑπεραίρω).

⁸¹ William D. Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek Grammar*. Fourth Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2019), 349, 353-354; Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 547.

⁸² Rogers JR and Rogers III comment that the present tense of τελεῖται of 2 Cor 12:9 (“is made perfect”) “emphasizes the continuous action” (Rogers JR. et al., *The New Linguistic and Exegetical*, 417).

verses after verse 7 clearly portray this aspect of continuance, I choose to translate (ἵνα) μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι without any explicit indications of a permanent condition. μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι therefore translates to simply “I may not exalt myself.”⁸³ The phrase ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι is repeated at the end of verse 7, but I will comment on this later.

Further, to prevent Paul from exalting himself, something is ἐδόθη μοι. ἐδόθη is the aorist passive of δίδωμι, which has a vast specter of meanings, e.g., “give,” “bestow,” “grant,” “cause,” “appoint,” “place,” “offer.”⁸⁴ It is probably here best translated simply “given,” which is fairly neutral in tone. The aorist passive indicates that the σκόλοψ has, before the composition of the letter, been given to Paul. Although it is obvious from the text that the thorn is in a direct association with Satan, I believe there should not be any doubt that it is God himself who is the ultimate cause of this painful thorn of Paul.⁸⁵ The passive voice may therefore be classified as a “divine passive,” meaning that God is the implied active subject.⁸⁶ Additionally, if Satan was the one ultimately bestowing the thorn to Paul, another verb than δίδωμι would probably be more suitable. According to Plummer, δίδωμι has far more positive undertones, with God as the typical subject of the verb, giving/providing (δίδωμι) with his gifts.⁸⁷ The thorn is therefore God’s appointed means to discipline Paul.

The thorn was given μοι (dative), which could either function as an indirect object “to me,” as a dative of interest “for me,” or as a locative dative, namely that the thorn was given “in me,” perhaps then in ἡ σὰρξ.⁸⁸ I must point out that I believe it is best to separate μοι and σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί when we translate ἐδόθη μοι. τῇ σαρκί is not “my flesh” (τῇ [σαρκί] as possessive) but “the flesh.”⁸⁹ To conclude on the dative use of μοι is difficult. However, I believe none of these three alternatives

⁸³ It would also be acceptable to translate the full phrase ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι to “lest I exalt myself” (Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek Grammar*, 359).

⁸⁴ BDAG s.v. δίδωμι.

⁸⁵ Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 412; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 829, 855-856; Witherington III, *Conflict & Community in Corinth*, 461-462; Delling, “σκόλοψ,” *TDNT* 7: 409-413, 411; Johansson, *Andra Korintherbrevet 8-13*, 343, 346. Danker suggests that it is Satan who is the actual giver of the thorn, though “within the boundaries of divine permission” (Danker, *II Corinthians*, 193); for a similar conclusion, see: Minor, “2 Corinthians,” 226.

⁸⁶ Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 412; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 855-856.

⁸⁷ Plummer, *the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, 348; see further Martin and Harris who both follow Plummer in this: Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 412; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 855.

⁸⁸ Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek Grammar*, 65-66.

⁸⁹ Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 854; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 413. NIV has chosen the translation “in my flesh.”

of indirect object, dative of interest, and locative dative do any decisive difference in this passage. The thorn is most definitely given *to* Paul, *for* his “interest” (either advantage or disadvantage), and *in* Paul (in some abstract or concrete way). Nevertheless, I prefer the translation “it has been given me.” Although this favors the dative as an indirect object, it does not specify either where (physically or abstract) it is given, or if it is given for the advantage or disadvantage. I therefore find this rendering the safest.⁹⁰

According to TDNT, σκόλοψ literary means “what is pointed,”⁹¹ and following BDAG, it may be translated “a (pointed) stake,” “thorn” or “splinter.”⁹² I prefer “thorn.” Our two most plausible alternatives for the dative of τῆ σαρκί, either dative of interest or locative dative, may determine how we further interpret σκόλοψ. If Paul’s thorn is *in* the flesh (locative), it may suggest that it has something to do with his physical (or psychological?) health.⁹³ But if the thorn is *for* the flesh (dative of interest), it would plausibly be of disadvantage, following that ἡ σάρξ would refer to Paul’s sinful self.⁹⁴ We must, however, be aware that the identification of the thorn has a rather wide range of interpretations from scholars, and it continues to be debated. I find it therefore somewhat pointless to provide with any final conclusions to what the σκόλοψ τῆ σαρκί is a reference to, but rather suggest some further readings that introduce the most popular interpretations.⁹⁵ What I do find fruitful to do now is to point out some of the most obvious features of the σκόλοψ τῆ σαρκί from the text itself (vv. 7a-10). First, as we saw above, the thorn is something given by God, and as we see further in verses 8-10, the thorn is something that God sustains with Paul for an unknown extended time. Second, the thorn is not only preserved with Paul, it preserves Paul as well, because it hinders him from exalting himself and causes him to rely on God’s grace. Third, considering that Paul views this as a thorn, it must clearly be something unpleasant which causes Paul to pray three times to God in hope that it would be taken away from him. Fourth, the thorn has a direct satanic connection. Fifth, the thorn is directly connected to the

⁹⁰ Translations that also render it as indirect object: NRSV, NASB, ESV.

⁹¹ Delling, “σκόλοψ,” 409.

⁹² BDAG s.v. σκόλοψ.

⁹³ Examples of this understanding: Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 413; Witherington III, *Conflict & Community in Corinth*, 462; F.F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians*. Softback ed. NCB (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), 248; Bratcher, *A Translator's Guide*, 133.

⁹⁴ Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 854. Examples of this latter understanding: Litwa, “Paul’s Mosaic Ascent,” 243; Plummer, *the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, 348.

⁹⁵ See: Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 412-416; Johansson, *Andra Korinthiebrevet 8-13*, 344-346.

σάρξ, maybe Paul's physical body. And finally, this whole affair of the thorn was both humbling and demeaning for Paul but nevertheless something of a necessity for his personal spiritual life.⁹⁶

Concerning the final interpretation of σκόλοψ τῆ σαρκί, it is inevitable that one must choose a certain translation of the phrase. Understandably, translation becomes then a particular issue when we choose to refrain from identifying the thorn. To translate this to “a thorn for the flesh” (dative of interest) has perhaps too much emphasis on the interest. An unobservant reader may even too hastily use it to emphasize Paul's physical body, especially if the knowledge of the Greek σάρξ is limited. On the contrary, and in light of the proposed dative of disadvantage, this translation may possibly also rule out any suggestion that the thorn is a physical disorder of some sort, if such actually is the case. If we were to translate the phrase to “a thorn in the flesh” (locative), we do connote the locative aspect of the dative, perhaps too easily emphasizing something physically/bodily with Paul. Several translations, however, have this rendering (although with some diversity in the ordering of the words).⁹⁷ Perhaps this is our best alternative. I therefore choose, although a bit reluctantly, to translate the phrase with the locative “in the flesh.”

ἄγγελος σατανᾶ stands connected to the previous σκόλοψ τῆ σαρκί, as it probably functions as an apposition.⁹⁸ How we understand and subsequently translate ἄγγελος depends therefore to a certain degree on what the thorn is. If ἄγγελος is a spiritual being, then perhaps “angel” is our best alternative for translation, at least in light of the Second Temple Satanological development where Satan is seen as some sort of leader of the rebellious angels/Watchers.⁹⁹ If we consider ἄγγελος to be a human being, then perhaps “messenger” is our best guess for translation, considering that “angel” may have too much of celestial connotations.¹⁰⁰ But ἄγγελος might simply be a symbolic expression of the thorn, as well, thus we need not decide if it is a human being or a celestial being/angel. Considering that I leave the identification of the thorn open, I should not conclude to

⁹⁶ Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 857.

⁹⁷ See: NRSV (“a thorn was given me in the flesh”), NIV (“a thorn in my flesh”), NASB, ESV (“a thorn was given me in the flesh”), WEB; See further: Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 854; Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 529.

⁹⁸ Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 855.

⁹⁹ Litwa suggests a quite literal reading of ἄγγελος, which then refers to a hostile “angel he [Paul] encounters in an ascent to heaven” (Litwa. “Paul's Mosaic Ascent,” 243).

¹⁰⁰ BDAG connects the translation “messenger” to humans and the translation “angel” to God's (celestial/heavenly?) messengers (BDAG s.v. ἄγγελος).

strongly on what this ἄγγελος specifically is. Nevertheless, lots of well-known translations choose “messenger,” and perhaps this is our best alternative.¹⁰¹

σατανᾶς derives from the Aramaic equivalent 𐤒𐤍𐤅, and is widely used in the Pauline letters.¹⁰² We shall observe that σατανᾶς lacks a definite article (ὁ), which is the only occurrence of σατανᾶς in the Pauline corpus without the article. Moreover, the four times ὁ διάβολος (“the devil”) occurs in the (disputed) Pauline letters (Eph 4:27; 1 Tim 3:6-7 [x2]; 2 Tim 2:26), it is always written with a definite article. However, the genitive of σατανᾶ is what we may call a “doric genitive,” which most likely signifies a proper name, “Satan.”¹⁰³ Several commentators have chosen to understand σατανᾶ accordingly, as a proper name, although they do not comment on the absence of the definite article.¹⁰⁴ Besides, considering that Paul uses the word elsewhere only in regard to the Satan-figure, I find it reasonable to understand σατανᾶ as a proper name. Hence, ἄγγελος σατανᾶ may be translated “a messenger of Satan.” This is also close to Harris’ understanding of the genitive as subjective, “sent by Satan.”¹⁰⁵

Considering that the thorn is ultimately given by God, it will inevitably connect God and Satan in some manner. Since Paul eventually boasts in the weakness-effect of the thorn, it is probably correct to suggest that Satan may here function as a tool for God himself (cf. 1 Cor 5:1-5).¹⁰⁶ I believe this stands in accord with the Satanology of the Old Testament, particularly in the book of Job.¹⁰⁷ Hence, we might say along with Martin that “the thorn served a good purpose as a gift from

¹⁰¹ NRSV, NIV, ESV, WEB, NASB. Several commentators translate to “messenger” as well, see: Minor, “2 Corinthians,” 226; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 828; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 388.

¹⁰² Kelly, *Satan*, 54; See further: Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 829 [note I]; Foerster, “σατανᾶς,” 158. Some scholars do, however, (incorrectly?) regard σατανᾶς as the equivalent to the Hebrew 𐤒𐤍𐤅, see: James D.G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*. WBC 38 B (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1988), 905; Russell, *The Devil*, 229. Reid recognizes the Aramaic “*ho satanas*,” but still only refers to it as “a transliteration of the Hebrew śātān,” (D. G. Reid, “Satan, Devil,” *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters*: 862-867, 863).

¹⁰³ Ragnar Leivestad, *Nytestamentlig Gresk Grammatikk*. Ny utgave [3. utg.] ved Bjørn Helge Sandvei (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1996), 54; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 413; Kelly, *Satan*, 72; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 855 n.146. Plummer considers the possibility of the translation “a hostile angel,” but rejects it as he claims that, “in N.T. Satan is always a proper name” (Plummer, *the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, 352).

¹⁰⁴ See: Minor, “2 Corinthians,” 226; Johansson, *Andra Korinthierbrevet 8-13*, 343; Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians*, 248; Witherington III, *Conflict & Community in Corinth*, 461; Danker, *II Corinthians*, 193; V. George Shillington, “2 Corinthians.” *Believers Church Bible Commentary* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1998), 231, 275-276.

¹⁰⁵ Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 855.

¹⁰⁶ Johansson, *Andra Korinthierbrevet 8-13*, 343; Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians*, 248; Reid, “Satan, Devil,” 865-866.

¹⁰⁷ Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 547; Craig S. Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*. NCBC (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 340. See also Shillington’s essay on Satan in 2 Corinthians: Shillington, “2 Corinthians,” 275-276.

God.”¹⁰⁸ Perhaps we could claim that this provides us with some understanding of Paul’s view of God’s sovereignty and its clear position in Paul’s system of belief (cf. Rom 11:33-36). Additionally, it is most reasonable to consider σκόλοψ τῆ σαρκί, ἄγγελος σατανᾶ to be the subject of the activity of striking of Paul, which further underlines how Satan indirectly functions as a disciplinary agent. However, we should probably not consider Satan as doing this to intentionally help Paul’s preservation, although this is ultimately the effect.¹⁰⁹

We read that this messenger of Satan, the thorn, was given ἵνα με κολαφίζῃ. The conjunction ἵνα expresses, again, the purpose of the giving of the thorn, namely με κολαφίζῃ. κολαφίζῃ, from κολαφίζω, means to “strike with the fist,” “beat,” “cuff.”¹¹⁰ As with ὑπεραίρωμαι, the present subjunctive, suggests an ongoing event or circumstance; “strike (continuously).”¹¹¹ The congruence between these verbs fits very well, since the continuous striking will hinder a continuous self-exaltation of Paul. κολαφίζω has connotations to some sort of physical beating or thrashing, or as BDAG suggests as “fig. (...) of painful attacks of an illness, described as a physical beating by a messenger of Satan.”¹¹² Other uses of the verb in the New Testament signify this physical use and aspect of the verb as well. First, it is used concerning the beating of Jesus before his crucifixion (Matt 26:67; Mark 14:65). Second, it is used within Paul’s lament over the apostles’ sufferings (1 Cor 4:11, which fits well with the description of the apostles’ physical beatings in Acts 5:40; 14:19; 16:22-23; 21:31-32). Third, it is used in 1 Peter 2:20 where one is encouraged to endure beatings, with reference to Jesus’ crucifixion. Consequently, we are given a further understanding of the unpleasant nature of the thorn, namely something that is painful and will continue to be (figuratively or literally). That Paul’s thorn might be a physical ailment or illness appears to be a fair possibility in light of the underlying, physical tone of the use of the verb stated above. Yet, other alternatives, such as a reference to Paul’s experience of being persecuted, become plausible as well. Anyhow, we should not regard the thorn to be some sort of penalty. Rather,

¹⁰⁸ Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 416.

¹⁰⁹ Johansson, *Andra Korinthiebrevet 8-13*, 346. Kelly, however, embraces the possibility that the preservation of Paul through the thorn is Satan’s own desire (Kelly, *Satan*, 62).

¹¹⁰ BDAG s.v. κολαφίζω.

¹¹¹ Rogers JR. et al., *The New Linguistic and Exegetical*, 417; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 856; see further the discussion of ὑπεραίρωμαι above.

¹¹² BDAG s.v. κολαφίζω (2). Delling, also suggests a figurative understanding of ἄγγελος (Delling, “σκόλοψ,” 411).

κολαφίζω indicates more a disciplinary necessity, to prevent Paul from acting wrongly, not to punish him for misconducts.¹¹³

Finally, the beginning phrase ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι is repeated, which we also observed with Johansson's suggestion of a chiasmic structure of verse 7b.¹¹⁴ This has, according to Martin, the effect of sharply stating a message, namely that "Paul is weak and [that] this is further demonstrated by the thorn in the flesh."¹¹⁵ Paul strongly claims that though he is clearly weakened by the thorn, it is a genuine blessing for him as well. Paul's weakness therefore preserves him close to Christ.

3.1.2.3 *The Satanology of 2 Cor 12:7*

Despite the struggle with understanding certain essential elements of 2 Cor 12:7b, verses 7b-10 provide us with a wonderful insight of Paul's personal struggles, and how God secures him through the mysterious thorn. Moreover, 2 Cor 12:7b grants us with even further insight into Paul's Satanology. First, we see that Paul considers Satan as someone who is able to cause pain of some sort, though here it is through his messenger (whoever/whatever that is). Second, and furthermore, we learn that the pain, that is, the thorn, is ultimately given by God himself, not Satan. Satan's activity with Paul described in this verse functions therefore as a sort of tool for the disciplining of Paul. Third, we have discovered a linguistic feature, namely that Paul uses σατανᾶς without the definite article as a proper noun, "Satan." And finally, this verse and the passage to which it belongs, portray for us a reflection of Old Testament beliefs. God is the ultimate ruler, the one who may cause and relieve pain and suffering, all according to his sovereign will (cf. Job 1:2; 42:2; Isa 45:7; Lam 3:37-39).¹¹⁶ Hence, Satan is not only under God's authority, he may even function as some sort of agent of God himself.

¹¹³ Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 547; Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians*, 248.

¹¹⁴ See 3.1.1.1 (23n.65). See above for a detailed analysis of the phrase.

¹¹⁵ Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 411.

¹¹⁶ Donald A. Carson, *From Triumphalism to Maturity: An Exposition of 2 Corinthians 10-13* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1984), 144.

3.2 Exegesis of Romans 16:20

ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης συντρίψει¹¹⁷ τὸν σατανᾶν ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας ὑμῶν ἐν τάχει. Ἡ χάρις τοῦ ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ¹¹⁸ μεθ' ὑμῶν¹¹⁹.

*But the God of the peace will crush Satan under your feet soon. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.*¹²⁰

3.2.1 Introduction

3.2.1.1 Structure

It is reasonable to regard verses 17-20 as a unit of its own, considering that verses (1)3-16 consist solely of greetings *to* individual persons, continuing in verses 21-23 with greetings *from* individual persons. Furthermore, there is a clear consensus among commentators that this is a separate section.¹²¹ The change of the subject(s) matter in verses 17-20 is striking, as the Roman Christians are suddenly provided with a strong appeal to be aware of false teachers and to conduct themselves after what is good (vv. 17-19). This is then followed by a promise of God's soon crushing of Satan (v. 20a), followed by a short blessing (v. 20b). The final verses of 25-27 finish the letter with a combination of a doxology and a brief word of comfort. We shall notice that verse 24 is missing, though most likely due to it being a later addition, perhaps a variant of verse 20b transferred to after verse 23.¹²² A verse 24 is therefore omitted from the NA²⁸ text and only highlighted in the text-critical apparatus.¹²³

¹¹⁷ Some manuscripts read the aorist optative συντρίψαι (the most prominent one: A). According to Jewett, this would understand the crushing to be a "prayer request," thus "may he crush" (Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*. Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible [Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007], 985 [note j]). Due to the lack of attestations for this reading, it is only of minor importance.

¹¹⁸ A strong selection of manuscripts have also included Χριστου between Ἰησοῦ μεθ' (most importantly: A C). However, it is reasonable to exclude this insertion, as other more considerable and older manuscripts witness a lack of Χριστου (p⁴⁶ & B). Besides, the theological implication of this alternative reading is insignificant.

¹¹⁹ There is a small attestation (most importantly: D^{*vid} F G) of omitting the whole of 20b (Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ μεθ' ὑμῶν). Several manuscripts have, however, placed a similar benediction at the end of verse 23, presumably the missing verse 24 (most importantly: D F G). The selection of manuscripts which have omitted 20b is not critical, nor convincing.

¹²⁰ My translation.

¹²¹ See: Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Commentary* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994), 252; Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*. NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), vi, 927-928; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 900-901; Frank J. Matera, *Romans*. Paideia: Commentaries on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 343; Jewett, *Romans*, ix, 985-988 (except 16:20b).

¹²² Moo, *Romans*, 933 n.1; see further: 32n.119.

¹²³ The numbering of the chapters and verses are often preserved, leading several translations to simply omit a verse 24 (such as NRSV, NIV, ESV), while still continuing with verses 25-27.

The structure of the letter may be portrayed the following way:¹²⁴

1:1-17	I	The Letter Opening
1:18-4:25	II	The Heart of the Gospel
5:1-8:39	III	The Assurance Provided by the Gospel
9:1-11:36	IV	The Defense of the Gospel
12:1-15:13	V	The Transforming Power of the Gospel
15:14-16:27	VI	The Letter Closing
15:14-21		A. Recapitulation of Paul's Missionary Calling and Strategy
15:22-33		B. The Report on Travel Plans and an Appeal to Participate in Present and Future Missionary Activities
16:1-2		C. The Recommendation of Phoebe as Missionary Patroness
16:3-16, 21-23		D. Greetings and Commendations between Ministerial Leaders
16:17-20		E. Paul's Warning Against Heretics, the Final Defeat of Satan and a Short Benediction
16:25-27		F. The Letter's Final Benediction

According to Moo, the unit may consist of three distinct themes, or parts. The first theme, verses 17-19, concerning the heretics; the second theme, verse 20a, concerning the final defeat of Satan; and the third theme, verse 20b, the benediction.¹²⁵ Additionally, I believe that the three verses of 16:17-20 may also be divided into five minor sections: I. Paul's admonition to the Roman church to watch out for heretics (v. 17); II. a short description of the heretics (v. 18); III. Paul's encouragement to the Roman church for right conduct (v. 19); IV. God's final defeat of Satan (v. 20a); and V. a short benediction (v. 20b). Of these five sections, sections I-II provide with a negative aspect of the message(s), while sections III-V provide with a positive and eschatological

¹²⁴ This structure is an abridged combination of Moo's (I-VI) and Jewett's (VI, A-D) choice of structuring the letter, plus my own choice in structuring the two final parts (VI, E-F), see: Moo, *Romans*, v-vi; Jewett, *Romans*, vii-ix.

¹²⁵ Moo, *Romans*, 928.

aspect of the message(s). This will then have the following outline:

1. A Admonition (v. 17)
B Description of heretics (v. 18)
2. A Encouragement (v. 19)
B Final defeat of Satan (v. 20a)
C Benediction (v. 20b)

Finally, it is worth noticing that Romans has no other occurrence of σατανᾶς and possibly no other reference to a/the Satan-figure at all. This makes our respective passage unique to the epistle and somewhat less comparable to other passages in Romans regarding the Satan-figure.¹²⁶

3.2.1.2 Authorship

Following what I wrote in the introduction (1.4.1.1), the question of authentic Pauline authorship of the letter to the Romans is generally considered as undisputed.¹²⁷ However, the authorship, hence also the authenticity of certain parts of chapter 16, has been challenged by some scholars, including the textual unit of verses 17-20(a?).¹²⁸ I shall not engage in a full discussion of the matter here, although I wish to state some remarks in favor of the acceptance of verses 17-20 as authentic.¹²⁹ First, following NA²⁸, there does not appear to be any text-critical remarks that would suggest these verses (vv. 17-20[a]) to be alien to the original text (compared to vv. 25-27, which NA²⁸ proposes as potentially not a part of the original text). Second, we should acknowledge that verses 17-20 may appear somewhat awkwardly placed between the greetings of verses 3-16 and verses 21-23, which tend to be one of the major concerns with the question of authenticity of this unit.¹³⁰ However, they are nevertheless located in what I consider to be a natural break between these two categories of greetings: the former is *to* the addressee of the admonition, and the latter

¹²⁶ Brown, *The God of This Age*, 110.

¹²⁷ See further: Moo, *Romans*, 1-2; Jewett, *Romans*, 22. However, it is worth noticing that there is a scholarly debate concerning the authenticity of both chapters 15 and 16 (Porter, *The Apostle Paul*, 313-316).

¹²⁸ Jewett makes a fair argument in favor of considering verses 17-20a as an interpolation, although I find some of his arguments farfetched, hence not convincing (I will argue against one of these below) (Jewett, *Romans*, 986-988).

¹²⁹ For further defense of the authenticity of Rom 16:17-20, although short but valuable, see: A. Andrew Das, *Solving the Romans Debate* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 21-22.

¹³⁰ Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 252; Moo, *Romans*, 928; Jewett, *Romans*, 986-987.

is *from*. This, I believe, creates a natural space for an advice to the recipients concerning the false teachers.¹³¹

Third, I wish to comment on the message(s) of the warning against false teachers and the subsequent crushing of Satan of Roman 16:17-20a. Jewett suggests this theme to be inappropriate in light of the rest of the letter, at least concerning the rather harsh tone of these verses. According to him, the message(s) here is(are) in discord with Paul's former encouragements to the church as not only following the right teachings (Rom 6:17), but even to accept believers with divergent theological thoughts (Rom 14:1f).¹³² However, to emphasize this perspective of the letter to such degree, to the disadvantage of the authenticity of 16:17-20, I find problematic. Romans, as well as his other letters, show a clear opposition to false teachings and practices.¹³³ Thus, the cautionary nature of these words against the false teachers are surely not unfamiliar in Paul, even in Romans.¹³⁴ Additionally, the message(s) of 16:17-20 might also be close to what is written earlier in parts of verses 12:1-20, though these have a more positive tone compared to 16:17-20 and lack any direct reference to Satan. Let us parallel these two passages:

12:1-20

¹I appeal [Παρακαλῶ] to you therefore, brother and sisters [ἀδελφοί]

⁹hate what is evil [πονηρόν], hold fast to what is good [ἀγαθῶ]

²¹Do not be overcome by evil [κακοῦ], but overcome evil [κακόν] with good [ἀγαθῶ]

¹⁹ Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord

16:17-19

¹⁷I urge [Παρακαλῶ] you brothers and sister [ἀδελφοί]

¹⁹I want you to be wise in what is good [ἀγαθόν] and guileless in what is evil [κακόν]

²⁰The God of the peace will shortly crush Satan under your feet

I find, however, no other scholars who parallel these two passages in such a direct manner as I

¹³¹ Although I find no other commentators who directly follow me in this suggestion, Dunn seems to suggest a somewhat similar understanding of the slightly sudden change of theme of Rom 16:17-20 (Dunn, *Roman 9-16*, 901-902).

¹³² Jewett, *Romans*, 987-988.

¹³³ See: 1 Thess 5:12-22; 1 Cor 1:10-13; 3:1-23; 5:3-13; 2 Cor 12:20-21; 13:2-6; Gal 1:6-9; 5:1-12; Phil 3:2; Rom 2:1-11, 17-29; 6:1-4, 15-16; 12:1-9; 13:11-14; 15:14-15.

¹³⁴ This is also the stance taken by Stuhlmacher, see: Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 252.

have suggested above.¹³⁵ Accordingly, I will not give this comparison any extensive value, although I do find these similarities to be noteworthy.

3.2.1.3 Date and historical context

Dating of the letter to the Romans does not present any serious issue for our case, and there is a very fair chance that the letter should be dated to the year of 56 or 57 AD.¹³⁶

Rome during the period prior and currently to the letter, particularly the Jewish and Christian religious community, experienced a serious impact from an edict issued by Emperor Claudius. The edict, which was most likely promulgated in the year of 49 AD, stated that all Jews were to be expelled from the city of Rome, probably due to heavy discussions concerning the messiahship of Jesus. As a consequence, the Roman church was left solely (or at least decisively more) in the hands of the non-Jewish, Greek Christians of the city.¹³⁷ Inevitably, the overall church life became less Jewish and more Gentile oriented. The subsequent return of the Jews after Claudius' death in 54 AD and the following years presented itself to be troublesome.¹³⁸ Quarrels and divisions between the Gentiles and the returning Jewish Christians probably arose, most likely reflected in some of Paul's messages concerning the salvific relationship between Jews and Gentiles (Rom 2:17-24; 3:27-31).¹³⁹

In contrast to 2 Corinthians, Paul had never visited Rome and the Roman church when he wrote this letter. One may speculate over what his intention with this long and topically broad writing was. However, scholars diverge in their conclusions, causing a challenge to the task of establishing the main purpose of the letter. I shall therefore not suggest any conclusion to why Paul wrote Romans.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁵ Several scholars do, however, point out certain correlations in these two passages, see: Jewett, *Romans*, 993-994; Dunn, *Roman 9-16*, 902; Matera, *Romans*, 343; Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 252.

¹³⁶ Porter, *The Apostle Paul*, 293-294; Jewett, *Romans*, 18-23.

¹³⁷ Räisänen, *The Rise of Christian Beliefs*, 42; Jewett, *Romans*, 19.

¹³⁸ Moo, *Romans*, 4-5; Porter, *The Apostle Paul*, 296.

¹³⁹ Porter, *The Apostle Paul*, 301.

¹⁴⁰ For a lengthier discussion on the question of the purpose of the letter, see: Jewett, *Romans*, 80-91; Porter, *The Apostle Paul*, 302-312.

3.2.2 Exegesis

3.2.2.1 Overview

We saw earlier that Rom 16:20 completes the distinct unit of verses 17-20, breaking off a longer section of greetings made by Paul and his companions to the Roman church. In verses 17-19, Paul gives a clear admonition to the Roman Christians to be aware of humans who oppose the correct teaching and cause dissensions in the church (v. 17). These are people who lift up themselves and their own needs and fictitious ideas to the damage of others who easily fall prey to their error (v. 18). Afterwards, Paul encourages the Roman church, both by honoring their obedience and by reminding them to follow what is good and not evil (v. 19). Satan is then promised to soon be crushed by God under the feet of the church (v. 20a), before a short benediction closes the unit (v. 20b).

3.2.2.2 Detailed exegesis

Rom 16:20 begins with the words ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης. Paul's frequent use of the phrase ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης appears often as an element of the final closings of his letters (1 Thess 5:23; 2 Thess 3:16; 2 Cor 13:11; Phil 4:9.). Additionally, he has a tendency to also begin his letters with a peace greeting (1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3; Phil 1:2; Rom 1:7).¹⁴¹ This expression of τῆς εἰρήνης is also attested in the pseudepigraphic Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, Test.Dan 5:2. However, as Jewett shows, there is a divergent focus between the Pauline use of the expression and its use in Test.Dan 5:2, where it is the law and one's conduct in accordance with it which is emphasized. The underlying principle with Paul is that God's peace is a work of the good news of Jesus, the gospel.¹⁴² It is probably correct to connect this to Rom 5:1 as well, where Paul proclaims that "since we are justified by faith, we have peace [εἰρήνην] with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."¹⁴³ Accordingly, Matera chooses to translate this expression in verse 20 to "God, who is the source of peace," which emphasizes that "God is the one who has reconciled humanity with

¹⁴¹ Halvor Moxnes, *Theology in Conflict: Studies in Paul's Understanding of God in Romans* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1980), 21 n.20.

¹⁴² Jewett, *Romans*, 939-940. This is Jewett's comment to Rom 15:33, which I believe is also applicable for 16:20. He also states that there is a shift in the understanding of "peace" in these two verses, though, to my knowledge, not concerning the point made above (Jewett, *Romans*, 994). See further: William Hendriksen, *Exposition of Paul's Epistle to the Romans*. New Testament Commentary Volume II Chapter 9-16 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1981), 498, 512.

¹⁴³ See further: Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 244, 255.

himself with the result that the justified are at peace with God (Rom. 5:1).”¹⁴⁴ I therefore find it appropriate to understand the genitive of τῆς εἰρήνης as attributive to the nominative ὁ θεός, describing both the personal attribute and the activity of God.¹⁴⁵ Additionally, we cannot avoid the parallel of Paul’s use of εἰρήνη to the Jewish Hebrew concept of שלום. According to Dunn,

In Paul, the more typical greetings of Jew and Greek have become a blessing which combines the strength of the word which perhaps more than any other characterizes his gospel (“grace”) with the richness of the Semitic greeting (“peace”).¹⁴⁶

Consequently, God has always been the one who provides humans with peace with himself, only now it is by faith, through the gospel of Christ.

Further, the God of the peace is the one who συντρίψει Satan. συντρίβω means to “shatter,” “smash,” “crush” or even “annihilate.”¹⁴⁷ The future tense points to an event that is still yet to come. Therefore, Paul’s promise to the (Roman) church that God will crush Satan is of an eschatological character. Is Paul here alluding to the story of the fall in Gen 3, where Eve’s offspring is said to strike the serpent’s head (Gen 3:15)? Let us examine this further.

First, it is worth noticing that there is plausibly no exceptional correlation between the wordings of Rom 16:20 and the Septuagint version of Gen 3:15.¹⁴⁸ Rom 16:20 states that “God (...) will crush [συντρίψει] Satan under your feet [πόδας],” while Gen 3:15 LXX runs “he [Eve’s offspring] will watch [τηρήσει]¹⁴⁹ your [the snake’s (ὄφιν)] head, and you will watch [τηρήσεις] his heel [πτέρναν].” We should also, along with Seifrid, observe the parallel between Gen 3:5 and Rom 16:19 with the feature of being “wise in what is good [ἀγαθόν] and guileless in what is evil

¹⁴⁴ Matera, *Romans*, 344; see further: Moo, *Romans*, 911.

¹⁴⁵ See further: Moxnes, *Theology in Conflict*, 21-22.

¹⁴⁶ James D.G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*. WBC 38 A (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1988), 25 (see further p. 20).

¹⁴⁷ BDAG s.v. συντρίβω.

¹⁴⁸ Brown, *The God of This Age*, 106. Cranfield, however, suggests that it is the Masoretic text that is Paul’s reference, not the Septuagint, hence the different wordings in the letter to the Romans and the Septuagint may be insignificant (C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. Vol II: Commentary on Romans IX-XVI and Essays. ICC (Edinburg: T. & T. Clark Limited, 1979), 803).

¹⁴⁹ From τηρέω, meaning to “keep watch over,” “guard,” “keep,” “preserve,” “observe” or even “protect,” (BDAG s.v. τηρέω). GELS highlights the rather close τηρήσει, which is there rendered “he will bruise,” “he will break,” (GELS s.v. τηρέω). This meaning is very similar to the Hebrew verb הָרַשׁ (“bruise,” “strike,” [BDB s.v. הָרַשׁ]) which is the Masoretic text’s equivalent verb in Gen 3:15. It may therefore be suggested that τηρήσει is a (faulty) correction of τηρήσει. However, this is very speculative, thus excluded from any further comment.

[κακόν]” (Rom 16:19), compared to the serpent’s words to Eve that “you would be like gods knowing good [καλόν] and evil [πονηρόν]” (LXX Gen 3:5).¹⁵⁰ The wording is, however, clearly different. It should nevertheless be recognized that the Hebrew הָשָׁ (‘‘bruise,’’ ‘‘strike’’), which is used in Gen 3:15 in the Masoretic text of Eve’s offspring striking [יִשְׁפֹּךְ] the serpent’s head, is much closer in meaning to συντριβώ. Additionally, the translation of הָשָׁ to συντριβώ even occurs in Job 9:17 LXX, although this is the only example of this translation within the Septuagint translation. However, there is another occurrence in the Hebrew Bible of the verb הָשָׁ worth noticing. In LXX Psalm 138:11 (MT 139:11), the verb is translated to καταπατέω, which means to ‘‘trample (under foot).’’¹⁵¹

Second, besides Gen 3:15, there are a number of other Old Testament passages that are comparable to both Rom 16:20 and Gen 3:15. LXX Psalm 8:7 reads, ‘‘you [God] subjected all under his [man] feet’’; LXX Psalm 73:13b-14a (MT 74:13b-14a), that ‘‘you [God] shattered [συνέτριψας] the heads of the dragons [δρακόντων] upon the water. It was you who crushed [συνέθλασας] the heads of the dragon [δράκοντος]’’; LXX Psalm 90:13b (MT 91:13b) reads, ‘‘you [He who lives by the help of the Most High (v.1) (?)] will trample [καταπατήσεις] lion and dragon [δράκοντα] under foot’’; and LXX Psalm 109:6b (MT 110:6b) reads, ‘‘he [The Lord] will shatter [συνθλάσει] heads on the land of many.’’ Additionally, in LXX Isa 27:1 it is proclaimed, ‘‘On that day God will bring his holy and great and strong dagger against the dragon [δράκοντα], a fleeing snake [ὄφιν]—against the dragon [δράκοντα], a crooked snake [ὄφιν]—and he will kill the dragon [δράκοντα].’’ We also encounter similar ideas from the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs. Test.Sim 6:5b-6a reads, ‘‘By himself will he [God] save Adam. Then all the spirits of error shall be given over to being trampled underfoot.’’ In addition, Test.Lev 18:12 reads, ‘‘And Beliar shall be bound by him. And he shall grant to his children the authority to trample on wicked spirits.’’¹⁵² Therefore, we encounter a number of Old Testament and Old Testament Pseudepigraphic passages which constitute a sort of anticipation of a trampling on the (heads of the) enemies.

¹⁵⁰ Mark A. Seifrid, ‘‘Romans,’’ in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Apollos, 2007), 607-694, 692.

¹⁵¹ BDAG s.v. καταπατέω.

¹⁵² See further: Jewett, *Romans*, 994; Seifrid, ‘‘Romans,’’ 692; Brown, *The God of This Age*, 105-107.

Third, since the idea that Satan is closely associated or even identified with the serpent of Eden possibly developed during the time of the (writing of the) New Testament, it would be mistaken to not at least consider the possibility that Paul was aware of this idea. We observe this development both (probably) in the New Testament (Rev 12:9; 20:2; Luke 10:18-19?) and outside of the New Testament canon (Life of Adam and Eve 16:1-3 [vita]; 15:1-21:6 [apocalypse]; 2 Enoch 31:3-8 [J]).¹⁵³ Even so, scholars diverge in their conclusions concerning the direct connection between Rom 16:20 and Gen 3:15.¹⁵⁴ I find it therefore to be most reasonable to consider a direct reference between Rom 16:20 and Gen 3:15 as plausible, although Rom 16:20 possibly best reflects the more general message of the final destiny and trampling of God’s enemies portrayed above. Dunn suggests a similar conclusion as well, as he proposes that the connection is “probable, but not necessarily direct (...) and quite likely through the influence of Gen 3:15 on the whole strand of Jewish hope.”¹⁵⁵

ὁ σατανᾶς, which is a transliteration from the Aramaic שטן,¹⁵⁶ could very well be translated “the Satan” with the definite article. This is Dunn’s recommendation, as “it probably reflects the functional significance which still is attached to the name.”¹⁵⁷ However, we may also choose to exclude to translate the article, as Jewett suggest, explicitly against Dunn’s suggestion.¹⁵⁸ Both alternatives are to my knowledge acceptable, but I choose to translate ὁ σατανᾶς as simply “Satan” without the definite article. What we must address further is the question of the association (or the lack thereof) with ὁ σατανᾶς and the false teachers of verses 17-18. Moo provides us with two immediate alternatives on how to regard the relationship between the false teachers and Satan in

¹⁵³ In Life of Adam and Eve (LAE), it looks as if Satan is, however, not directly identified with the serpent of Eden. Here the Devil persuades the serpent, who even appears to be somewhat skeptical toward the Devil’s deceiving plan, to be his “vessel” (LAE 15:3-16:5 [apocalypse]). Besides, the curse made unto the serpent after the fall (Gen 3:14-15) appears to be directed toward the serpent alone and not the Devil (LAE ch. 26 [apocalypse]) (Brown, *The God of This Age*, 45; See further: 17n.46).

¹⁵⁴ Some scholars more or less reject the idea (Kelly, *Satan*, 63-64, 78-79; Brown, *The God of This Age*, 106-107, 173). Other scholars are somewhat reserved toward the direct connection between Rom 16:20 and Gen 3:15 (Moo, *Romans*, 932; Dunn, *Roman 9-16*, 905; Reid, “Satan, Devil,” 866). Still other scholars seem positive of the assumption of a direct connection (Seifrid, “Romans,” 692; Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 253-254). Additionally, despite Brown’s reluctance regarding this direct identification, it is worth noticing his point made that “The majority of scholars identify Paul’s reference to the ‘crushing’ of Satan as an allusion to Genesis 3:15” (Brown, *The God of This Age*, 105 [see also n.12]).

¹⁵⁵ Dunn, *Roman 9-16*, 905.

¹⁵⁶ For further comment on this, see 29n.102.

¹⁵⁷ Dunn, *Roman 9-16*, 905; see further: 9n.13 concerning the use of the definite article of שטן in the Old Testament.

¹⁵⁸ Jewett suggests that to translate the article is inappropriate because of Paul’s almost constant use of the word with the article, which are all in reference to the same single Satan-being (Jewett, *Romans*, 994-995).

these verses.¹⁵⁹ On the one hand, we may consider the false teachers of verses 17-18 to be in direct association with Satan of verse 20, hence the final destruction of Satan also being a final judgement and defeat of the (Satan-influenced?) false teachers.¹⁶⁰ On the other hand, we might consider the warning against the false teachers to be a separate issue from the promise of the crushing of Satan, hence understanding Satan and the false teachers in Rom 16:17-20 not directly connected.¹⁶¹ Moo opts for a solution in between these two alternatives, which I agree with, although I also feel the need to accentuate this slightly sharper according to my own understanding.¹⁶² On the one hand, the distinctiveness of God's συντρίψει of ὁ σατανᾶς is the specific defeat of Satan himself. On the other hand, the final eschaton also provides for a final defeat and judgement of false teachers. Clearly this strengthens Paul's expression of God being ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης, for in the end, there will be neither Satan nor human deceivers. Nevertheless, I believe that it is important to underline that it is Satan who is the prime focus of verse 20 and the false teachers only a secondary focus.¹⁶³ Considering that verses 17-19 and verse 20 probably presents two different themes (cf. 3.2.1.1), a certain caution toward their connection may be reasonably upheld.

We read that God's crushing of Satan is to be done ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας ὑμῶν. Paul's words here are not surprising, in light of the Old Testament and Pseudepigraphic anticipation that God is (directly or indirectly) to trample on his enemies that we saw above. But it is noteworthy that it is not under God's own feet (anthropomorphically?), but ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας ὑμῶν that the crushing is to occur.¹⁶⁴ Brown points out that the change from the enemies of God being crushed under his (or the messiah's) feet, to the feet of the church in Rom 16:20, refers "to the future and to believers' share

¹⁵⁹ Moo, *Romans*, 932.

¹⁶⁰ Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 253-254; Brown, *The God of This Age*, 69, 109. Tonstad is not so explicit, but he connects the two by at least suggesting that the crushing of Satan in verse 20 displays the seriousness of the false teachers of verses 17-18 (Sigve K. Tonstad, *The Letter to the Romans: Paul among the Ecologists*. Vol. 7. The Earth Bible Commentary Series [Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2017], 84-85). Malina and Pilch take the association between the false teachers and Satan in another direction, as they seem to reduce ὁ σατανᾶς of verse 20 to primarily designate (symbolize?) the false teachers of verses 17-18 (Bruce J. Malina and John J. Pilch, *Social-Science Commentary on the Letters of Paul* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006), 293).

¹⁶¹ Dunn, *Roman 9-16*, 905; Cranfield, *Romans*. Vol II, 803.

¹⁶² Moo suggests, although somewhat vague: "But perhaps a mediating position is best, in which we view the promise as a general one, similar to others that occur in Paul's letter endings, but with obvious relevance to the false teachers that Paul has just warned the church about" (Moo, *Romans*, 932).

¹⁶³ ὁ σατανᾶς is not merely symbolic of the false teachers here (cf. Malina et al., *Social-Science Commentary*, 293), it refers to the specific Satan-being. The false teachers are therefore judged along with Satan, although certainly not vice versa.

¹⁶⁴ According to Jewett, this "makes it clear that the author of this formula has the action of the current church in mind" (Jewett, *Romans*, 995).

in God's eschatological triumph over his enemies."¹⁶⁵ Consequently, the church is brought close to the eschatological crushing of Satan (and the judgement of heretics). The preposition ὑπὸ with the accusative probably translates best "under," and the full phrase ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας ὑμῶν may be best translated "under your feet." BDAG has an interesting remark to this, for there it is suggested that one should understand the event in Rom 16:20 as "*God will crush Satan so that he will lie at your feet.*"¹⁶⁶ That would imply that the ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας ὑμῶν is neither the instrument of God's crushing of Satan nor even the place of the actual crushing; it is merely Satan's location after the crushing has already been executed.¹⁶⁷ Indeed, this quite correctly emphasizes the active role of God in the crushing, but I suspect that it would also render the church as perhaps too distant from the event. However, if Paul intended to identify the instrument of the crushing, he would rather have drawn on other prepositions that would have been more suitable (ἐν, διὰ) than ὑπό.¹⁶⁸ Jewett proposes that "Verses 19-20a suggest a cause-and-effect relationship in which the believers' wise obedience in shunning heretics brings about a quick defeat of satanic power."¹⁶⁹ This will certainly render the church active, but it may also too overly emphasize both the church's activity and the heretics' connection to Satan. A more theocentric focus of this verse is probably wise to uphold. This would correspond well with Paul's use of the expression ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης, proclaiming that it is the God of the peace who is the savior, who reconciles humans with himself and defeats his enemies.

God's crushing of Satan under the church's feet will happen ἐν τάχει, meaning that it will happen "soon," or "in a short time." The crushing of Satan could be understood as gradual, depending on the (Roman) church's conduct.¹⁷⁰ However, this would probably put too much responsibility on the church's influence of the exact time of the coming of the final eschaton. Paul is confident and

¹⁶⁵ Brown, *The God of This Age*, 108.

¹⁶⁶ BDAG s.v. ὑπό (see B.1.a). It is further worth noticing that BDAG explains the preposition (with its suggested use) under category B.1: "**a position below an object or another position, under**, w. acc. of place *under, below*-(...) answering the question 'whither?'" (BDAG s.v. ὑπό).

¹⁶⁷ This is also supported by Newman and Nida, who suggest that the meaning behind Paul's words here are: "will destroy Satan and make him subject to you"/"destroy Satan's power and make him subject to you," (Barclay M. Newman and Eugene A. Nida, *A Translator's Handbook on Paul's Letter to the Romans*. Helps for Translators [London: United Bible Societies, 1973], 297).

¹⁶⁸ But it is worth noticing that Foerster comments on Rom 16:20a by stating that it "is Paul's call to the Roman church. God will do it, but He does it through the community" (Foerster, "σατανᾶς," 161).

¹⁶⁹ Jewett, *Romans*, 995.

¹⁷⁰ Jewett seems to imply this, based on his suggestion that "the interpolator promises divine dispatch in the execution of wrath against Satan's minions, once the believers' 'innocence' is established," (Jewett, *Romans*, 995).

does not display any doubt about the time or the actual execution of the crushing of Satan; it will happen “soon.” As such, the alternative reading of the aorist optative συντριψαι, understanding the crushing as a prayer request, would certainly be inappropriate.¹⁷¹ Besides, the future tense of συντρίψει clearly points to a prospective event, perhaps with a punctuated aspect more than a continuous one.¹⁷² God’s final judgement of Satan is first and foremost a single future event, succeeded by the new heaven and the new earth.¹⁷³ However, based on the exegetical analysis above, I find it reasonable to uphold a certain interrelatedness of Rom 16:17-20, thus leading us to see verse 20 together with verses 17-19. The church may therefore be considered to play a part in the crushing of Satan and the defeat of evil.¹⁷⁴ “under your feet” (v. 20) probably then reflects first and foremost the whereabouts of the crushing, and maybe an additional secondary instrumental aspect of the event. Nevertheless, we must still remember that it is ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης who is the ultimate executer of the crushing of Satan, proclaiming a hope of God’s gracious and fully realized shalom. Thus, we conclude that it is God alone who is the ultimate crusher of evil, and the church is his servant for whatever he pleases in this crushing event.

Finally, some remarks must be addressed to the benediction in verse 20b, Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ μεθ’ ὑμῶν. First, it is worth recognizing that this is the typical Pauline benediction of his epistle closings (cf. 1 Thess 5:28; 2 Thess 3:18; 1 Cor 16:23; 2 Cor 13:13; Gal 6:18; Phil 4:23; Phlm 25).¹⁷⁵ Second, one must ask if the benediction is a wish, that is, a hope that the grace of the Lord Jesus shall be with the Roman Christians, or if it is more in the nature of a statement, a proclamation that Jesus’ grace *is* with the Roman church. According to Newman and Nida, it should be understood as the former, although they also suggest that it should be understood as a continuance of an ongoing fact: “may our Lord Jesus continue to act towards you in grace.”¹⁷⁶

¹⁷¹ Cf. 32n.117.

¹⁷² It is true that in the future tense, aspect plays a very minor role in Greek, yet to translate the verb to “will be crushing” would probably be incorrect (Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek Grammar*, 155, 197).

¹⁷³ Hendriksen clearly confirms the future, eschatological feature of the verse, although he also, retrospectively, refers to Jesus’ salvific work on the cross as a part of the message of the defeat over Satan in Rom 16:20 (Hendriksen, *Romans*. Volume II, 512).

¹⁷⁴ Stuhlmacher directs us in this understanding, as he writes, “With God’s aid, the Christians will triumph in the near future over Satan and his helpers, in order that they may dwell and reign together with the living Christ” (Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 254). Additionally, Hendriksen, in his comment on Rom 16:20a, calls the church “co-conquerors,” and that “The saints will participate in God’s victory over Satan” (Hendriksen, *Romans*. Volume II, 512).

¹⁷⁵ Moo, *Romans*, 933; Matera, *Romans*, 344. Similar grace-benedictions also occur in all the remaining disputed letters, although the wordings are different (Col 4:18; Eph 6:24; 1 Tim 6:21; 2 Tim 4:22; Tit 3:15).

¹⁷⁶ Newman et al., *A Translator's Handbook*, 297.

Hendriksen argues that the benediction is to be considered more as the latter alternative, namely as a statement, assuring that Jesus' grace *is* with the Roman Christians.¹⁷⁷ Additionally, we should also recognize the similarity between this benediction of 16:20b and the benediction of 15:33 (Ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν, ἀμήν). According to Stuhlmacher, Paul “picks up the benediction from 15:33 by imploring God on behalf of his addressees for the support of the power of grace which belongs to the crucified and resurrected Christ.”¹⁷⁸ This may lead us to consider Rom 16:20b more as a prayer wish, not necessarily an affirmative statement. However, Paul has a firm belief in God's grace being something that provides the Roman Christians with peace, not uncertainty (cf. Rom 5:1-11; 8:1, 28-39). Perhaps we will do best with not concluding in either/or, but rather translate the expression simply “The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.” This may then imply both that the assurance of Jesus' grace is with the Roman Church *and* the confident wish that this grace continues to be present with them.¹⁷⁹

3.2.2.3 *The Satanology of Rom 16:20*

Rom 16:17-20 offers us in many ways an exciting text, and throughout our exegesis of verse 20, we have been granted with insights into important elements of Christian theology. Particularly, we are provided with further insight into Paul's understanding of Satan. First, we recognize a very hostile attitude on Paul's part toward Satan in this passage, proclaiming that Satan will be crushed, defeated by God himself. Second, it appears that false teachers may be associated with Satan, either directly as his instruments or servants, or more indirectly as co-felons who both share in being victims of God's eschatological judgement and condemnation. Third, we learn that the church is related to the actual defeat of Satan himself, as it is to occur under the feet of the church. However, this victory over false teachers and Satan must be merited to God alone, the true provider of peace. And finally, Paul's message of the destruction of Satan reflects, possibly even anticipates, the Old Testament and Second Temple Jewish hope of the final defeat over evil and Satan himself.

¹⁷⁷ Hendriksen, *Romans*. Volume II, 513.

¹⁷⁸ Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 254.

¹⁷⁹ Additionally, this would be very much in accord with the double-sided feature of Paul's letters where a message is both stated as a fact with the Christian addressees (“indicative”) and encouraged or admonished to continue with (“imperative”) (Karl Olav Sandnes, *I Tidens Fylde: En innføring i Paulus' teologi* [Oslo: Luther Forlag, 1996], 277-278).

3.3 A Theological Comparison Between 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20

I will, in the following reflections, lay out a comparison between the portrayals of Satan in 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20. First, I will highlight their differences, followed by their similarities, and finally, I will shortly discuss how we should best consider these two verses with their Satanological implications together.

3.3.1 Differences

Our two respective verses differ in several aspects concerning the Satan-figure, which we shall now elaborate further.

First, there is a linguistic feature that differs between 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20. 2 Cor 12:7 reads σατανᾶ, without the definite article, while Rom 16:20 reads τὸν σατανᾶν, with the definite article.

Second, a minor difference in these verses is reflected from Paul's own perspective as author. In 2 Cor 12:7b, Satan, i.e., his messenger, the thorn, plays a close and personal role to Paul. In Rom 16:20, however, Paul only mentions Satan once, and in more general and impersonal terms, assuring the Roman church that Satan will one day be crushed. This difference is not decisive, although it is worth mentioning.¹⁸⁰

Third, the functions of Satan in these two verses are contrasting, which is perhaps the most outstanding difference between them. 2 Cor 12:7 does not offer us a particular evil impression of Satan. The fact that the thorn, a messenger of Satan, is ultimately given by God for the discipline and preservation of Paul, leads us to consider Satan more as a sort of tool or even servant of God. In Rom 16:20 the aspect has, however, changed. Here we read that the Satan-being will be crushed by the God of the peace himself, possibly including the (Satan-influenced?) false teachers as well. From this, I believe it is most plausible to infer a solely hostile portrayal of Satan's function, compared to the more servant role that he is given in 2 Cor 12:7.

¹⁸⁰ Brown suggests that the difference of Paul's single mention of Satan in Romans compared to many of his other letters, may be related with the fact that he presumably had less "apostolic responsibility" for the Roman church (Brown, *The God of This Age*, 110).

This leads us to our fourth and final point, namely the difference in the relationship between God and Satan in these two verses. In 2 Cor 12:7b, we have the impression that God and Satan are not entirely in contrast, considering that God uses (a messenger of) Satan for a good purpose. However, In Rom 16:20, God and Satan are more or less portrayed as sheer enemies, where Paul promises defeat as Satan's fate. Compared to 2 Cor 12:7b, we have in Rom 16:20 a far more adversative picture of the relationship between God and Satan.

3.3.2 Similarities

Despite the differences portrayed above, there are also similarities to be recognized.

First, against their differences regarding the (lack) of definite article, σατανᾶ (2 Cor 12:7b) and τὸν σατανᾶν (Rom 16:20) may both reasonably be translated as "Satan."

Second, though Rom 16:20 is far sharper in its denunciation of Satan than in 2 Cor 12:7b, the fact that the thorn described in 2 Cor 12:7 was of such harmful nature to Paul, leads us to understand a certain negativity associated with Satan and his messenger (though the text is not precise about this matter). The positive tone of 2 Cor 12:7 should therefore not overshadow the negative image we probably still receive of the Satan-being in both 2 Cor 12:7 and especially Rom 16:20.

Third, the portrayal of God in these verses are highly related. God is ultimately in control, either concerning the dominion over things beyond human control, even Satan, or concerning the eschatological judgement and defeat of evil, including Satan. Hence, the relationship between God and Satan is unmistakably asymmetrical in both of our respective verses: God is the supreme ruler, Satan is not.

Finally, both 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20 reflects ideas from both the Old Testament and Second Temple texts. 2 Cor 12:7 follow particularly what we find in the book of Job and from certain texts of the Second Temple period where Satan functions more as an agent of God (e.g., Jubilees; and certain texts from the DDS [cf. 2.2.2]). Rom 16:20 reflects Old Testament and Second Temple ideas particularly concerning the feature of God crushing/trampling (on) his enemies (see the

exegesis in 3.2.2.2). Additionally, although the hostility against the Satan-figure is far more severe in the Second Temple literature, a certain adversative attitude toward the Satan-figure(s) in the Old Testament is also to be found (cf. 2.1).

3.3.3 Compatibility?

Inevitably, the differences presented above provide us with an issue concerning these two verses' compatibility. However, I find that there are good reasons for concluding that they are compatible with each other.

First, as shortly addressed above, the apostle Paul is undisputedly the author of both letters. This information alone should, in the first place, drive us to search for harmony, not disharmony. However, suppose that Paul was inconsistent with his depiction of Satan in these two letters, the Satanological implications of 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20 are of such noteworthy differences (despite their coexisting similarities) that for these differences to supposedly go undetected by Paul, I find strange.

Second, although there is a variety in the phrasing of the two verses, they clearly speak about one and the same being. Accordingly, despite the differences of transliteration in the two texts, it is *the* Satan-figure who is referred to.

Third, the divergency in Paul's personal perspective of Satan on these two occasions is not problematic, nor significant for that matter. Nevertheless, I find it worth mentioning that the two perspectives are reasonable. 2 Cor 12:7 is part of Paul's final defense of his apostleship with the appeal to his weakness, making this personal aspect of the Satan-being clearly suitable. Rom 16:20, however, is part of the letter's final greetings where Paul's general promise of the defeat of Satan appears to be appropriate.¹⁸¹

Finally, there is still no doubt that the messages in our two selected verses certainly differ. 2 Cor 12:7b, on the one hand, focuses on Satan as a function for Paul's discipline and preservation. Rom

¹⁸¹ See further: 45n.180.

16:20, on the other hand, focuses on Satan's crushing, that is, his final defeat. Perhaps this is where we find these two verses to be less congruous, though I will argue that they are not conflicting. The most important common denominator of these two verses is the sovereign God. Hence, the theocentric focus of both verses, namely that God is the one who sends the thorn to Paul (2 Cor 12:7b) *and* crushes Satan (Rom 16:20), cannot be overlooked. In other words, God will both use Satan for the greater good, yet eventually also crush him. What we learn about Satan on these two instances is therefore both different and similar but nevertheless compatible. Additionally, we must recognize that both verses reflect thoughts from both the Old Testament and Second Temple literature. But the diverse impression of Satan in these two verses is still difficult. It is therefore appropriate that we examine the overall portrayal of Satan in the Pauline letters.

3.3.4 Walter Wink's two traditions

Before we continue with the Pauline letters, a brief consideration of Walter Wink's idea of the two traditions mentioned in the introduction (1.2) must now be undertaken. Let us repeat these two traditions. First, there is the first tradition which Wink refers to as "Satan as a Servant of God," in which Satan mainly functions as God's servant, more or less performing tasks that he has been appointed to.¹⁸² Second, there is another (later?) tradition which he refers to as "Satan as the Evil One," in which Satan is considered to be an enemy of God.¹⁸³ What is curious about Wink's description of Satan in this latter tradition, is his emphasis on Satan as a(n) (experienced) reality, showing less interest in the ontological question of Satan being an actual creature or "person."¹⁸⁴ Considering that Wink deals with the whole of New Testament and not the Pauline corpus only, his discussion of these two traditions is of less importance for our case with the Pauline letters. That being said, we do seem to recognize this twofold outlook in 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20. Accordingly, 2 Cor 12:7 portrays Satan (functioning) as God's servant in the preservation of Paul, and Rom 16:20 portrays Satan as an evil enemy to be overthrown by God himself. Yet, as seen above, both verses reflect ideas from the Old Testament and Second Temple writings. Placing one with the Old Testament and the other with the Second Temple would be misleading (which Wink

¹⁸² Wink, *Unmasking the Powers*, 11 (see further pp. 12-22).

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 22 (see further pp. 22-30).

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 24-28.

does not do either). Whether all the details of Wink’s portrayal of this double tradition outlook are reasonable, need not be discussed in this thesis. Besides, as Wink adds a third and crucial element to this idea, “our [humans] choices,”¹⁸⁵ which broadens the outlook decisively, a consideration of this idea deserves a far more thorough discussion than what I consider to be appropriate here. Nevertheless, I do again acknowledge that his book “Unmasking the Powers” has clearly impacted the preparation of this thesis.

3.4 Satan in the Pauline Letters

In this final part, I shall further examine the Satanology of the Pauline letters. A certain limitation of the selection of texts is necessary, but I believe that the following provides with a sufficient overview of the Satanology as presented in the selected Pauline letters.

3.4.1 First and second letter to the Thessalonians

In the letters to the Thessalonians, we encounter the Satan-being on several occasions. In 1 Thess 2:18, there is a short notice made by Paul that he and his companions, Silvanus and Timothy (1 Thess 1:1) wished to visit the Thessalonian church, “but Satan [ὁ σατανᾶς] blocked our way” (1 Thess 2:18). A number of scholars take this verse as a witness of Satan’s general oppositional activity against God, here specifically directed against Paul’s apostolic and missionary activity.¹⁸⁶

In 1 Thess 3:5, Paul writes to the Thessalonian church that he is worried that “the tempter [ὁ πειράζων] had tempted” them (to apostasy?). It seems reasonable to understand ὁ πειράζων here in reference to Satan, thus Satan is a tempter of the church.¹⁸⁷ Marshall suggests this to be God’s

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 32.

¹⁸⁶ See: Torben Kjær, *Første Thessalonikerbrev: Indledning og fortolkning* (København: Dansk Bibel-Institut, 1999), 94; Abraham J. Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB 32b (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2000), 184; I. Howard Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*. NCB (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983), 86; Ernest Best, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*. BNTC (London: A & C Black, 1986), 126; Earl J. Richard, *First and Second Thessalonians*. SP 11 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1995), 130-131, 136.

¹⁸⁷ Hartvig Wagner, *Paulus’ første and andet brev til tessalonikerne: En indledning og fortolkning*. Credo Kommentaren (København: Credo Forlag, 1991), 104; Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, 93; Kjær, *Første Thessalonikerbrev*, 102-103; Best, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*, 136; Richard, *First and Second Thessalonians*, 144.

own means of testing the Thessalonian Christians,¹⁸⁸ although it might be just as likely that the temptation here is in line with 1 Thess 2:18 and reflects a more hostile relation between God and Satan.¹⁸⁹

The author of 2 Thessalonians writes about the coming of “the lawless one [ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας]” (2 Thess 2:3), perhaps identical with the “antichrist” of 1 John.¹⁹⁰ This may be in line with what ἀνομία would imply, namely someone who is “against the law,” hence against God, the lawgiver, himself.¹⁹¹ Who/whatever this lawless one is, it is very clear that he is directly associated, though not identified, with “Satan [τοῦ σατανᾶ]” (2 Thess 2:9). He may even, according to Malherbe, be regarded as Satan’s “tool.”¹⁹² This lawless one will therefore play an essential role in Satan’s doings in the eschaton.¹⁹³ Nevertheless, we will do well to recognize the many hints of God’s government behind this event (2 Thess 2:2-12).¹⁹⁴

The final verse of our dealings with the letters to the Thessalonians is 2 Thess 3:3. Here Satan is referred to as “the evil one [τοῦ πονηροῦ].”¹⁹⁵ However, the author encourages the Thessalonian church that God will guard them from him (2 Thess 3:3). This reflects the Second Temple idea of God’s protection from Beliar/l (particularly T12P [2.2.1] and the DDS [2.2.2]).¹⁹⁶

To conclude, in the letters to the Thessalonians, Satan is portrayed as an evil, (“the evil one,” 2 Thess 3:3), opposer of God and his church (1 Thess 2:8). He is also “the tempter” (1 Thess 3:5) who presumably tried to lead the Thessalonian church astray (1 Thess 3:5). Additionally, we learn

¹⁸⁸ Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, 93.

¹⁸⁹ Per-Erik Ragnarsson, *Thessalonikerbrevet*. KNT 13 (Stockholm: EFS-förlaget, 1983), 62, 70; Best, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*, 138.

¹⁹⁰ Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, 431.

¹⁹¹ Best, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*, 283.

¹⁹² Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, 431.

¹⁹³ Richard, *First and Second Thessalonians*, 334.

¹⁹⁴ Richard, *First and Second Thessalonians*, 335-336, 348-349, 353-354; Best, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*, 308.

¹⁹⁵ τοῦ πονηροῦ could also here be regarded as neutral (“[the] evil”), not masculine (“the evil one”). Similar cases are also to be found in Matt 5:37; 6:13 (both: τοῦ πονηροῦ). However, the masculine (and personified) understanding of the word “the evil one” is supported by several scholars, see: Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, 446; Best, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*, 322, 327-328; Richard, *First and Second Thessalonians*, 370-371; see further: Wagner, *Paulus’ første and andet brev til tessalonikerne*, 262. NRSV and NIV both follow the masculine translation.

¹⁹⁶ See further: Richard, *First and Second Thessalonians*, 445.

that Satan will have an agent in the final end-times, a being(?) who acts on behalf of Satan and does all sorts of wickedness (2 Thess 2:9-10). But God can and will protect his church (2 Thess 3:3). Furthermore, as witnessed in 2 Thess 2:2-12, God is somehow in control, a fact that diminishes any potential overestimation of Satan's power.

3.4.2 First and second letter to the Corinthians

Throughout the two letters to the Corinthians, we encounter the Satan-figure on a number of occasions. Our first encounter is in 1 Cor 5:1-5, where we are provided with insight into a delicate matter of the Corinthian church. Here we read that one of its male members "is living with his father's wife" (v. 1), that is, having sexual relations with his stepmother.¹⁹⁷ Because this sin is not taken seriously enough (v. 2), Paul rebukes the Corinthian church for their lack of church discipline and requests them to "hand this man over to Satan [τῷ σατανᾷ] for the destruction of the flesh [τῆς σαρκός], so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord" (v. 5). The exact nature of this action Paul requests of the church is, however, somewhat uncertain. Some scholars argue that it is a non-deadly form of excommunication, with the result of restoration of the man's faith in his present earthly life.¹⁹⁸ Other scholars opt for the possibility of a more lethal (and excommunicative?) consequence of the discipline, hopefully with the result of salvation in the afterlife.¹⁹⁹ Whatever the nature of this discipline, it is very clear that Satan functions here as some sort of "tool" of God in the disciplinary process.²⁰⁰

In 1 Cor 7:5, Paul introduces to married couples a suggestion of arranging a time off from the marital intimacy to focus on prayer.²⁰¹ But the absence of sexual relations with one's spouse can produce unfulfilled desires, and the lack of self-control may lead to the dangers of falling into

¹⁹⁷ C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*. Second Edition. BNTC (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1971), 121; Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians*, 53; Craig Blomberg, *1 Corinthians*. The NIV Application Commentary: From Biblical Text ... to Contemporary Life (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 104.

¹⁹⁸ Blomberg, *1 Corinthians*, 105-106; Talbert, *Reading Corinthians*, 16-17; Wink, *Unmasking the Powers*, 15.

¹⁹⁹ Barrett, *the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 127; William F. Orr and James Arthur Walther, *1 Corinthians: A New Translation: Introduction with a Study of the Life of Paul, Notes, and Commentary*. AB 32 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc, 1976), 188-189.

²⁰⁰ Barrett, *the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 126.

²⁰¹ Blomberg, *1 Corinthians*, 133.

adulterous conducts.²⁰² Paul therefore writes that married couples who choose this time off for prayer must not prolong this agreement, but join together again “so that Satan [ὁ σατανᾶς] may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control” (1 Cor 7:5). Accordingly, Satan seeks to lure humans to misconduct, here specifically married persons into sexually illicit behavior.

In 2 Cor 2:5-11, Paul addresses a specific issue as he speaks about a person who “has caused pain” to the Corinthian church (v. 5). The majority of the Corinthian church have somehow punished this man (v. 6), but they are now urged to forgive him, “so that he may not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow” (v. 7). Paul continues by stating the importance of forgiveness (v. 10), and he explains that “we do this so that we may not be outwitted by Satan [τοῦ σατανᾶ]; for we are not ignorant of his designs” (v. 11). It is debatable who this offender is and what his offences are.²⁰³ However, the interesting element for us is that forgiveness appears to be a considerable part of the resistance against Satan’s activity (v. 11). To deny forgiveness would therefore be to give into Satan’s “designs,” namely his plans to outwit the Corinthian church in some way.²⁰⁴

Later in 2 Corinthians, we read that “the god of this world [ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος] has blinded the minds of the unbelievers” (2 Cor 4:4) from the message of the gospel.²⁰⁵ In other words, Satan, “the god of this world,” prevents unregenerate humans, “those who perish” (2 Cor 4:3), from being saved (2 Cor 4:3-6).²⁰⁶ We should additionally recognize that Satan’s activity of blinding minds is possibly directly under God’s rule.²⁰⁷

Two chapters later we encounter a unique verse of the New Testament. In 2 Cor 6:14-16a, Paul writes about several contrasting elements, such as: “righteousness and lawlessness” (v. 14b) and

²⁰² Orr et al., *1 Corinthians*, 209; Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians*, 67; Barrett, *the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 157.

²⁰³ See Brown’s brief presentation of the two major stances on this issue: Brown, *The God of This Age*, 158.

²⁰⁴ Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 233-234; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 39; Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians*, 186.

²⁰⁵ There is possibly also a direct parallel here to apocalyptic ideas, such found for example in the Qumran community’s thought world (Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 220; Hans Johansson. *Andra Korintherbrevet 1-7*. KNT 8a (Uppsala: EFS-förlaget, 1999), 88-89, 104; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 78). Brown provides us with a more thorough treatment of Paul’s use and understanding of ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος in 2 Cor 4:4, which is particularly enlightening in regard to Paul’s apocalyptic thought’s, see: Brown, *The God of This Age*, 130-140.

²⁰⁶ Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 247; Johansson. *Andra Korintherbrevet 1-7*, 104; Danker, *II Corinthians*, 62; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 327.

²⁰⁷ Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 329; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 78.

“light and darkness” (v. 14c). He then continues with contrasting “Christ” and “Beliar [Βελιάρ]” (v. 15a). This is the only occurrence of “Beliar” in the New Testament canon, despite this name’s popular use in the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha (cf. 2.2; 2.5). Nevertheless, Paul is undoubtedly referring to the Satan-being.²⁰⁸ We can with certainty consider this text to display a hostile relationship between God and Satan (“Christ” and “Beliar”), and it may even portray for us a possible (dualistic?) influence on Paul from the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and Qumran texts.²⁰⁹

In 2 Cor 11:12-15, Paul writes about Satan and his “ministers” (v.15), “boasters [who] are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ” (v.13). It is therefore of “no wonder” that “Even Satan [ὁ σατανᾶς] disguises himself as an angel of light” (v.14).²¹⁰ Satan and his ministers thus possess the possibility of using camouflage for their deceptive activity (vv. 14-15). It is also noteworthy that in verse 15 it is said that the false apostles’ “end will match their deeds,” hence Martin comments that “They have done Satan’s work; to Satan’s fate they will go.”²¹¹ To this we may recall Paul’s message in Rom 16:20 of Satan’s (and most likely the false teachers’) fate to be crushed.²¹² Additionally, earlier in chapter 11, in verse 3, we encounter briefly the story of Eden from Gen 3 and the serpent’s luring of Eve. Although we remember that Paul might be familiar with the association between the serpent of Eden and Satan, it is uncertain to what extent he followed this direct identification himself.²¹³ On this basis, I will exclude 2 Cor 11:3 from any further consideration, albeit its closeness with verses 12-15.²¹⁴

Our last verse of 2 Corinthians is 12:7b. Since this verse has been dealt with in great details above (3.1), it will only very briefly be repeated now. In 2 Cor 12:7b, Satan, i.e., his messenger, functions

²⁰⁸ Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 503; Danker, *II Corinthians*, 98. Paul probably has the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the Dead Sea Scrolls in mind with his use of the word here (Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 199-200).

²⁰⁹ Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 502-503; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 199-200, see further: Brown, *The God of This Age*, 170; Bietenhard, “Satan, Beelzebul, Devil, Exorcism: διάβολος,” 471.

²¹⁰ It is worth noticing the striking similarity between that “Satan disguises himself as an angel of light” in 2 Cor 11:14 and the story of Satan’s deception of Eve in the garden of Eden from Life and Adam and Eve, where “Satan came in the form of an angel” (LAE 17:1 [apocalypse]), before later transforming “himself into the brightness of angels” (LAE 9:1 [Vital]); see further: Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 774; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 351-352.

²¹¹ Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 353; see further: Johansson, *Andra Korintherbrevet 8-13*, 300.

²¹² See detailed exegesis of Rom 16:20 above (3.2.2.2).

²¹³ See 3.2.2.2 and the detailed exegesis of Rom 16:20.

²¹⁴ Some scholars suggest a connection between Satan and the story of Eden in 2 Cor 11:3, e.g., Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 486-487; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 741.

as a disciplinary agent of God toward Paul to prevent him from exalting himself. Although Satan's (indirect) activity (i.e., Paul's unidentified thorn) is itself an unpleasant experience, it is still ultimately given by God.

These two Pauline letters to the Corinthian church provide us with a vast spectrum of Satanological ideas. Satan is a deceiver, who uses clever tactics (2 Cor 11:14) and seeks to lure people into his traps at the right opportunities (1 Cor 7:5; 2 Cor 2:11). He appears as an anti-thesis of Christ, "Beliar" (2 Cor 6:14), and he blinds the eyes of humans for the good news of the gospel (2 Cor 4:3-5). Yet, he also functions as some sort of disciplinary instrument of God (1 Cor 5:5; 2 Cor 12:7-10).

3.4.3 The letter to the Romans

As noted earlier, Rom 16:20 is the only place in the letter where Satan is mentioned (3.2.1.1) and will only be briefly addressed since it has been analyzed in more details above (3.2). Here Satan is portrayed as an evil being who will be crushed by "the God of the peace" himself (v.20a). But we read that this will happen "under the feet" of the church (v.20a), and that it possibly includes the false teachers as well.

3.4.4 The letter to the Ephesians

The letter to the Ephesians presents itself as somewhat difficult in regard to the process of eliminating the textual selection. In light of what we might call "principalities and powers" in the Pauline letters, in which Satanology plays a major part, more passages could be included (e.g., Eph 1:21-23; 3:10).²¹⁵ Nevertheless, I find the following five selected verses to be sufficient for our subject matter, namely the overall Satanology of the epistle.

²¹⁵ For a treatment of the topic of "principalities and powers," see: D. G. Reid, "Principalities and Powers," *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters*: 746-752; Noll, *Angels of Light*, 137-144. Concerning Eph 1:21-23, we should recognize that "he [God] has put all things under his [Christ's] feet and has made him [Christ] the head over all things for the church" (v. 22), much in line with what we discussed above concerning Rom 16:20 and the Old Testament and Old Testament Pseudepigraphic language of "trampling under feet/on enemies" (3.2.2.2) (see further: F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*. NICNT [Grands Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991], 273-275). In Eph 3:10, "the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places" (Eph 3:10) may not be confined to hostile powers only, (Bruce, *Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians*, 321). However, Eph 3:10 may also be a reference to the evil powers as

In Eph 2:1-10, the author writes to the recipients of the letter that prior to their salvation, they were “following the ruler of the power of the air [τὸν ἄρχοντα τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ ἀέρος], the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient” (v. 2).²¹⁶ It is plausible to identify “the ruler of the power of the air” as Satan. He therefore possesses some sort of power over or even influence on the unbelievers, and possibly also leads them to sinful behavior.²¹⁷

Our second verse of concern is Eph 4:27. Here the author of the letter advises the recipients of the letter not to sin if they experience anger and to prevail from letting their anger sustain overnight (Eph 4:26). To remain (excessively) in anger (and sin) would be a dangerous choice, as this “make[s] room for the devil [τῷ διαβόλῳ]” (Eph 4:27), opening up for his deceptive activity.²¹⁸ Accordingly, one must limit one’s anger, as this is a circumstance that Satan may use for the benefit of his devious schemes. Wink points out that this text does not consider anger to be of Satan per se. Satan does not cause the anger here described, he only uses it.²¹⁹

I will deal with the last three of our five selected verses of Ephesians collectively (i.e., Eph 6:11, 12 and 16), considering that they all belong to the same textual unit Eph 6:10-17, concerning “the whole armor of God” (vv. 11, 13). Satan is twice explicitly referred to in this text: “the devil [τοῦ διαβόλου]” (v. 11) and “the evil one [τοῦ πονηροῦ]” (v. 16).²²⁰ “The cosmic powers of this present darkness [τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας τοῦ σκότους τούτου]” and “the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places [τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις]” (v. 12) are not identical with Satan. They should, however, probably be taken in association with Satan, considering that they apparently are part of “the wiles of the devil” (v. 11). We therefore encounter Satan and his lot in

elsewhere in the epistle (Eph 2:2; 6:12), hence the verse further confirms that God, through his church, proclaims his glory, salvific plan and victory over evil (Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*. BECNT [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010], 216-217).

²¹⁶ Best understands “the spirit” as a reference to Satan (Ernest Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians*. ICC [Edinburg, Scotland: T&T Clark Ltd., 1998], 203, 205). However, several other scholars (with whom I agree) do not; see: Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*. WBC 42 (Dallas, TX: Words Books, 1990), 94, 96; Bruce, *Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians*, 283; Thielman, *Ephesians*, 123-124, 129-130; James Montgomery Boice, *Ephesians: An Expositional Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Ministry Resources Library, 1988), 49-50.

²¹⁷ Best, *Ephesians*, 202-205; Bruce, *Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians*, 282; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 94-95; Leslie C. Mitton, *Ephesians*. NCB (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983), 83; Thielman, *Ephesians*, 123-124.

²¹⁸ Best, *Ephesians*, 449-451; Bruce, *Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians*, 361-362.

²¹⁹ Wink, *Unmasking the Powers*, 20-21.

²²⁰ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 419, 427; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 442-443; Best, *Ephesians*, 590-592, 601; Bruce, *Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians*, 404, 408.

these verses of Eph 6:10-17 as an evil force against which one must protect oneself.²²¹ The spiritual armament of Eph 6:10-17 is, however, not of human origin but is provided by God himself (v. 11, 13; see further vv. 14-17). The message of this passage is therefore clear: Satan, the devil, with his lot, is fighting against the Christian church, but the church has been granted a weaponry which is (of) God himself. Its defense is impeccable, and with their “shield of faith,” the believers “will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one” (v. 16). Following Reid, this capability that the church has been given to stand in defense against Satan is “founded on the ‘already’ of the defeat of the devil and his forces.”²²² God is therefore not portrayed as equal in strength with Satan in this battle; he is already victorious (cf. Eph 1:17-23; perhaps also 3:10).

Throughout the letter to the Ephesians, Satan is clearly depicted as an evil being who, along with his army (i.e., cosmic powers, spirits, spiritual forces of evil), has some sort of power over unbelievers (Eph 2:2) and searches for opportunities to lure the Christians into wickedness (Eph 4:26-27). He has his tactics and weaponry, with which he attacks the church (Eph 6:10-17). But the church answers with a force and a defense that exceeds Satan, for it possesses the weaponry and armor of God himself (Eph 6:10-17; see further Eph 1:17-23).

3.4.5 First and second letter to Timothy

The last two letters we shall deal with in regard to the Satan in the Pauline letters are the two letters to Timothy.

In 1 Tim 1:19-20, we learn that the author has “turned over to Satan [τῷ σατανᾷ]” (v. 20) two men named Hymenaeus and Alexander. Since they have rejected to follow their conscience and lost(?) their faith (v. 19), the author has done this “so that they may learn not to blaspheme” (v. 20).²²³ The exact nature of being “turned over to Satan” is somewhat uncertain (cf. discussion of 1 Cor 5:5 above [3.4.2]), but it may be understood as excommunication with or without a physical or

²²¹ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 444-445; Thielman, *Ephesians*, 420-422; Mitton, *Ephesians*, 222; Best, *Ephesians*, 593-595.

²²² Reid, “Principalities and Powers,” 751.

²²³ I. Howard Marshall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*. ICC. In Collaboration with Philip H. Towner (London, U.K.: T&T Clark Ltd, 1999), 411-412.

even deadly discipline.²²⁴ What is clear from the text, though, is that Satan here functions as a sort of agent or instrument (of God) to discipline humans in certain cases.²²⁵ Evidently, the purpose with this act is repentance for these two men (v. 20).²²⁶

The first letter to Timothy also includes instructions in regard to the appointment of church offices (1 Tim 3:1-13). Verses 1-7 concern bishops in particular, who “must not be a recent convert” (v. 6), as this might make him overly (self-)proud and easily “fall into the condemnation of the devil [τοῦ διαβόλου]” (v. 6).²²⁷ The use of the genitive of τοῦ διαβόλου in verse 6 is debatable,²²⁸ but the message is, nevertheless, clear: condemnation by God (because of or [together] with Satan) is the dangers of conceit in the bishop office.²²⁹ Additionally, a bishop must have a good reputation among the community outside the Christian church, “so that he may not fall into disgrace and the snare of the devil [τοῦ διαβόλου]” (v. 7). In other words, Satan lays snares for the bishops, somehow related to the reputation of the outsiders of the church. This shows the importance of the qualifications listed in the preceding verses 2-6.²³⁰

In 1 Tim 5, the author provides with a longer section of instructions in regard to different groups in the church, including a message concerning young widows (vv. 11-15). These widows are warned about the hazards of not conducting themselves in accordance with what is right (vv. 11-14), for they are in real danger of becoming “alienate[d] (...) from Christ” (v. 11). Instead of immoral conduct (vv. 11-13), they are instructed to be occupied with another lifestyle, which is “[to] marry, bear children, and manage their household, so as to give the adversary [τῷ

²²⁴ Several scholars suggest excommunication (possibly without physical harm or death), see: Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*. NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 161-162; George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. NIGTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992), 111-112; A. T. Hanson, *The Pastoral Letters*. NCB (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), 66. Bernard (first published in 1899) also suggests excommunication, although he opens up for the consequence of physical inflictions or even death as a consequence (J. H. Bernard, *The Pastoral Epistles*. Thornapple Commentaries [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1980], 36-37).

²²⁵ Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 414-415; Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistle*, 111-112.

²²⁶ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 162.

²²⁷ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 257-258; Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 482-483.

²²⁸ Marshall suggests subjective genitive, “as the ‘doom which the devil has contrived for him by tempting him to be proud’” (Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 483). Knight III, however, suggests objective genitive, hence the condemnation would be the same given to the devil (Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 164).

²²⁹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 257-258.

²³⁰ Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 484.

ἀντικειμένῳ] no occasion to revile us” (v.14).²³¹ This warning is further grounded on a specific experience, “For some have already turned away to follow Satan [τοῦ σατανᾶ]” (v. 15). Therefore, to turn away from Christ into the behavior described in verses 11-13, would be to “follow Satan” (whatever the implications of this are). In this sense, this passage portrays for us a sort of antithetical image between Christ and Satan.²³²

Our last selected verse of the two letters to Timothy is 2 Tim 2:26. Here we encounter a parallel to 1 Tim 3:1-13, as the author gives several instructions on qualities that “the Lord’s servant” (2 Tim 2:24) should cherish and behave according to (2 Tim 2:22-25a).²³³ He is encouraged to “correct(...) opponents with gentleness” (v. 25a), for God may one day grant these opponents (possibly persons with erroneous teachings²³⁴) repentance and correct understanding (v. 2:25b) “and (...) they may escape from the snare of the of the devil [τοῦ διαβόλου], having been held captive by him [the devil] to do his [the devil] will” (v. 26).²³⁵ Accordingly, Satan may hold captive humans. False teachings may even be understood as part of what it means to be captivated by him. It is, nevertheless, evident that God is the one who may (and is surely able to) free them out of this sightless state.

To summarize, in 1 and 2 Timothy, Satan is portrayed in various ways. On the one hand, he functions as a disciplinary agent or tool of God, in order that sinners may repent (1 Tim 1:19-20). On the other hand, his activity is unquestionably wicked, as he lays snares for bishops (1 Tim 3:7) and traps humans (into false teachings?) (2 Tim 2:25-26). Satan is closely connected to sinful behavior, and to follow Satan would be the opposite of following Christ (1 Tim 5:11, 15). However, that God is ultimately in control need not be questioned. He is the one who grants sinners

²³¹ Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 605-606; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 357-358. Whether τῷ ἀντικειμένῳ is a reference to Satan or not is uncertain (Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 229; Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 604-605). Nevertheless, Satan is still unquestionably understood as an adversative figure elsewhere in 1 Timothy (cf. 1 Tim 3:6-7).

²³² Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 229; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 358.

²³³ “the Lord’s servant [δοῦλον δὲ κυρίου]” (2 Tim 2:24) is probably a general reference to people who have a (leading) office within the church (Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 423; Hanson, *The Pastoral Letters*, 141).

²³⁴ This is suggested by: Hanson, *The Pastoral Letters*, 142; Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 424-425; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 547-549.

²³⁵ The Greek here is difficult, but I find it most reasonable to understand both “him” and “his” as references to the devil. This is supported by: Hanson, *The Pastoral Letters*, 142-143; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 549-551; Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 767-768.

the gift of repentance and truth (2 Tim 2:25-26), and as pointed out above, uses Satan for disciplinary work (1 Tim 1:19-20).

3.4.6 The overall Satanological picture in the Pauline letters

Throughout our brief examination above, we have encountered a vast spectrum of ideas and implications concerning Satan in the Pauline letters. I find it best to divide the findings from the selected verses into four categories: 1. Satan as a deceiver; 2. Satan as a disciplinary agent; 3. Satan as a blinder; 4. Satan as God's enemy.

3.4.6.1 Satan as a disciplinary agent

A repeated aspect with Satan's function in the Pauline letters is his role as God's disciplinary agent. On two occasions he is given the task to be part of the church's discipline on sinning members (1 Cor 5:5; 1 Tim 1:20). Additionally, he functions as a disciplinary instrument on Paul, which hinders him from exalting himself (2 Cor 12:7). Common for all these three cases is that the goal is repentance or/and preservation, which possibly positions Satan as a tool or even an agent of God.

3.4.6.2 Satan as a deceiver

Throughout the Pauline letters, Satan is again and again portrayed as a cunning deceiver, ready to strike humans, particularly the Christians, in vulnerable situations. He has even been given the epithet "the tempter" (1 Thess 3:5), and accordingly, he tempts believers to fall from faith (1 Thess 3:5) and into sin (1 Cor 7:5; 2 Cor 2:11; Eph 4:27; 1 Tim 3:6-7). He may also use sly methods (2 Cor 11:14).

3.4.6.3 Satan as a blinder

On a few occasions Satan is depicted as a blinder of unregenerate humans. Accordingly, he blinds

the unsaved from seeing the truth, the gospel of Christ (2 Cor 4:4; 2 Tim 2:26), and he functions as the (indirect?) ruler or captivator of the non-believing humans (Eph 2:2).

3.4.6.4 Satan as God's enemy

Finally, and possibly the most adversative Pauline image of Satan, “the evil one” (Eph 6:16), is the sharp and unmistakable portrayal of him as God’s enemy. Satan opposes indirectly God himself by hindering Paul’s travel plans (1 Thess 2:18), and he gives power to the lawless one (2 Thess 2:3), who shall “take(...) his seat in the temple of God, declaring himself [blasphemously] to be God” (2 Thess 2:4). Satan, “Beliar,” is portrayed as the anti-thesis of Christ (2 Cor 6:15), and the opposite of following Christ may be defined as following Satan (1 Tim 5:15). Additionally, Satan and his company make war against the people of God (Eph 6:11-12, 16), although God has provided an armament that unquestionably surpasses Satan’s forces (Eph 6:10-17). Ultimately, Paul promises that Satan will be crushed by God himself (Rom 16:20).

3.4.6.5 Conclusion

From the Pauline letters, we encounter an image of Satan that is diverse. We concluded that 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20 may be considered compatible with each other, but is this still correct when we take the overall impression of Satan from the Pauline letters into consideration? I believe so. In continuance with the conclusion in 3.3.3, it is God’s sovereignty that renders this complex picture of Satan to be reasonable. Throughout several of these selected texts (2 Thess 2:2-12; 1 Cor 5:5; 2 Cor 12:7; Rom 16:20; 1 Tim 1:20),²³⁶ God is depicted as the one who is in control. Surely Satan appears to be powerful, but it is unmistakable that his activity is somehow confined within certain limits. This is, however, not to say that this whole affair is simple and uncomplicated. Therefore, despite our conclusion that this portrayal of Satan is reasonable or harmonious, it is still mysterious and, in a way, inexplicable. 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20 fits therefore well with the overall Satanology of the Pauline letters.

²³⁶ See further: 2 Thess 3:3; 2 Cor 4:3-4; Eph 6:10-17; 2 Tim 2:25-26.

4 Summary

I introduced this thesis by highlighting two Pauline verses, 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20, with the goal of establishing Satan's function in these two verses (1.2). We then questioned if these two verses and their Satanological implications are compatible with each other and how they belong to the Satanological outlook as presented in the Pauline letters. But Pauline theology is not an isolated system of ideas; it is part of, or at least influenced by, the thoughts and writings of both the Old Testament and Second Temple period. Therefore, to better understand the Satanology of the Pauline letters, we began our study by introducing the Satanological ideas of the Old Testament, Second Temple Judaism and the New Testament (2).

We learned that the Old Testament Satanology is rather modest, with limited relevant passages (2.1). Here, Satan is not necessarily a malevolent, evil creature who actively works against God; he is simply God's angel who performs his duties. There may even be several Satans. Nevertheless, we do recognize that a certain adversative attitude toward Satan(s) is present in the Old Testament (Job 2:3; Zech 3:2). As we further observed, throughout the Old Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, as well as the sectarian texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the aspect that Satan is an evil creature came to be emphasized immensely (2.2). He is in these writings depicted as the leader of the rebellious and hostile angels and demons (Jub 10:8; 1 En 6:2; Test.Dan 1:7; 1QM 13:2, 4-6, 11-12), and he and his lot do all sorts of wickedness toward the humans (Jub 1:20; 11:4-5, 11; 1 En 7:1-6; Test.Reu 4:7; Test.Zeb 9:8). He may even be identified as the one who deceived Eve in the Garden of Eden (Wis 2:23-24). As a result of this increase in Satan's evil characteristic, God and Satan were more sharply presented as enemies, in contrast to the fairly neutral tone of the Old Testament. However, there are two aspects of this Satanological image of the Second Temple literature which are essential. First, although Satan is repeatedly presented as hostile to God (by attacking the humans) in these writings of the Second Temple period (cf. 1 En 6:1; 1 QM 1:1), several texts still portray God as not only superior, but as (the) one who even appoints certain tasks for Satan (Jub 10:8; 1QS 21-26; CD 4:10-20; 1QM 13:1-18). This is very similar to the Old Testament. Second, because of his wicked behavior, Satan is punished with the fate of eternal condemnation (Jub 50:5; 1 En 10:12-13; Test.Jud 25:3; 1QM 1:5), which strongly claims that God is the most powerful.

When we finally examined the New Testament, we saw that the Satanological image displayed in the Old Testament and the Second Temple literature was generally preserved. Satan is portrayed as evil (John 8:44; cf. “the evil one” [Matt 13:19]), he tempts (Luke 22:31-32), captivates (Heb 2:14-15), and accuses humans before God (1 Pet 5:8-9), and he is also in the New Testament understood as the leader of the demons (Mark 3:22). Satan is probably identified with the serpent of Eden (Rev 12:9; 20:2), and we learn that he will eventually be defeated and eternally judged (Matt 25:41; Rev 20:7-10). That God uses him for certain tasks is also not alien to the New Testament, as there are examples of this perspective as well (Matt 4:1; Luke 22:31-34; see further Jude 9). Additionally, as our excurses of בליעל in the Old Testament portrayed for us (2.5), there is a tendency in the Second Temple period to appoint certain Old Testament words and names to the Satan-figure, a feature which is also present in the New Testament.²³⁷

Our study of Satan in the Pauline letters uncovered a diverse and complex image. From our exegetical work with 2 Cor 12:7 (3.1), we learned that Paul needed to be kept from exalting himself and in order to do so, God bestowed him with a thorn. We do not know for sure the exact identification of this thorn, but it is clear that the it was for Paul both highly unpleasant and demeaning. But the thorn was also a blessing, as this continuous suffering that Paul underwent was a way to preserve his faith. A significant element in this text is, however, that the thorn was in fact understood as an angel of Satan. In other words, Satan functions in 2 Cor 12:7 (indirectly?) as God’s disciplinary agent. The parallel here with certain Old Testament and Second Temple texts is unmistakable, especially the idea that God uses Satan for specific purposes.

What our exegetical work with Rom 16:20 displayed for us (3.2), in particular its Satanology, diverges to some extent with 2 Cor 12:7. Although information about Satan’s activity in this verse is limited – albeit his influence of false teachers is probably suggested – we received some highly valuable information of his relation with God and the church and what his end will be. For we learned that Satan is to be crushed by God himself, under the feet of the church. This informs us that he is also evil. The language used here, namely that Satan will be crushed under the feet (of the church) strongly reflects both Old Testament and Second Temple ideas of God trampling or crushing (under foot) his enemies. Rom 16:20 may even reflect the language used in Gen 3 that

²³⁷ See particularly 19n51.

Eve's offspring shall strike the serpent's head (Gen 3:15), although a direct identification between Satan and the serpent of Eden in this verse is only plausible.

We compared the Satanology of 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20, and we recognized both differences (3.3.1) and similarities (3.3.2) between them. However, there appears to be a conflict with Satan's function in these two verses. Could Satan both function as God's agent and have a future to be crushed as God's enemy? I argued that these two verses are indeed compatible with each other, despite the difficulty with their diverse portrayal of the Satan-figure (3.3.3). Therefore, what remains the most crucial with 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20 is that God is in both cases portrayed as supreme. He may both use Satan for his will and in the end crush him, which demonstrates for us that a theocentric focus may provide us with the right tool to better understand these two verses together.

In our final part of this thesis (3.4), we expanded the comparative study to include all of the most essential Pauline passages in regard to the Satan-being. Here we encountered a vast spectrum of texts, which we divided into four categories (3.4.6): 1. Satan as a disciplinary agent; 2. Satan as a deceiver; 3. Satan as a blinder; 4. Satan as God's enemy. The issue that Satan is both God's disciplinary agent and his enemy to be defeated, as seen with 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20, continued with the overall portrayal of Satan in the Pauline letters. But as with our conclusion with the compatibility between 2 Cor 12:7 and Rom 16:20, we may regard this as harmonious. Despite Satan's manifold functions, one particular element echoes through these Pauline texts, namely that God is in control. However, this aspect is not unique for the Pauline letters. As we observed with the Satanological outlook of the Old Testament, the Second Temple Judaism and the New Testament in general, God somehow governs this world. He therefore allows or even appoints Satan to do certain adversative tasks, he protects his people from Satan's attacks, and ultimately, he have decided Satan's outcome; to be crushed, trampled on and defeated.

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