

How is the "Very Good" of Genesis 1:31 to be Interpreted?

And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good....
(Gen 1:31 ESV)

Evidence from Genesis 1:28:

And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Who was Adam to subdue? The Hebrew word *kabash* translated "subdue" assumes that there is something to be subdued. What would that have been? Revelation 12:3-4 informs us that when Satan fell, one-third of the angels fell with him to the earth. We know from Genesis 3:1 that Satan indwelt a snake. Thus we can assume that the other fallen angels indwelt other creatures who had not been created in the image of God. In other words, outside of the Garden of Eden there were thousands of demons that needed to be subdued.

Evidence from Genesis 2:15:

Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.

The Hebrew word in Genesis 2:15 translated "keep" is the same one translated "guard" in Genesis 3:24: "So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life. It was Adam's responsibility to guard the garden against demonized animals.

Conclusion: Although everything that God created was "very good," nevertheless there were Satan and his demons outside the Garden of Eden indwelling animals.