

How did the “crafty snake” come to be in the Garden of a God who made all things good?

So the “serpent” is to be identified with Satan. The Bible does not give us definitive pre-history background on Satan, Lucifer, the devil, Apollyon etc. as he is known by many names. But we do get some hints from a number of passages.

Do you know the Commentary on *Genesis 1-11* by Dr. James Montgomery Boice? It has a good chapter on the origin of Satan. I do not have space to copy that here. Three passages in Scripture give us some indications. Revelation 12, Ezekiel 28. 12-15, and Isaiah 14. Ezekiel 28.12-15. Ezekiel prophesies against “the King of Tyre” who in this passage can not be the literal monarch of the city Tyre. So the image is used to describe Satan:

You were in Eden, [*clearly the King of Tyre could NOT literally have been in Eden*]
the garden of God;
every precious stone adorned you:
carnelian, chrysolite and emerald,
topaz, onyx and jasper,
lapis lazuli, turquoise and beryl.^[b]
Your settings and mountings^[c] were made of gold;
on the day you were created they were prepared.
¹⁴ You were anointed as a guardian cherub,
for so I ordained you.
You were on the holy mount of God;
you walked among the fiery stones.
¹⁵ You were blameless in your ways
from the day you were created
till wickedness was found in you.

So the personification of Satan here gives us some indications, though they are not perfectly clear. The same can be said of the Isaiah passage 14. 12-15. And Revelation 12: 3-9. War in heaven and then on earth against the son of the Woman. Sounds like echoes of Genesis 3.15:

And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel.”

How did he get to the Garden of Eden? Apparently God did not keep him out. I say apparently because he got in and we have no other information. Maybe it was part of the goodness of Eden that it was open and not behind walls of protection against the serpent? In any case God did not prevent temptation. And he did not control the human response. Apparently he did not control the angels either?

And again apparently, the serpent was the enemy of God and trying to extend his “influence” to destroy the work of the Creator in his good creation. But he had to have the help of those who had the power to resist temptation but succumbed anyway. And as they say, the rest is history.