CHAPTER 2

DEMONOLOGY IN THE FIRST-CENTURY JEWISH WORLD

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the light of the purpose of this study and in order to establish the proper significance of the New Testament demonology within the whole context of the biblical revelation, it is necessary to examine its antecedents and its development to the stage at which it appears in the New Testament. Such an effort, hopefully, will provide a reconstruction of demonology which is the background against which Jesus' ministry of exorcism would have been viewed by his contemporaries.

2.2 THE DYNAMICS OF THE FIRST-CENTURY WORLD-VIEW

Craffert (1999:12f) describes the first-century world as inhabited by people who believed in a small, three-storied universe in which a flat earth is vaulted by a dome, heaven, which houses the sun, moon and stars. Somewhere underneath the earth is a region called the underworld, which was some kind of place with gates and bars. Heaven was a vast expanse, only a few hundred metres above the earth, where gods dwell in their homes. The whole universe was believed to be densely populated by an enormous number of agents - among them being gods, demons, spirits of the dead and angels. Most of these agents could influence human affairs in some way. They were responsible for the well-being and misfortune of human beings while sickness, negative weather patterns and the like were influenced by them also. Most of these beings could be manipulated, bribed, persuaded or controlled (Craffert 1999:13). Even the least of gods had the supernatural powers and people who could intervene or call into effect such powers, were in great demand. What was needed, was the necessary or access to stronger and more effective power.

The first-century, like any other conception of the universe, operated in very specific ways. According to Craffert, the most important principle operative in

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that world is apathy described as the great chain of being (see also Riley 1999:236). Everything is linked to everything else, both above and below. Nothing happens by chance - it happens by design where some power is involved or responsible. (cf. also Malina *et al* 1994:14; Lloyd-Jones 1977:44). Not only the extraterrestrial beings (divine agents) but also substances (such as minerals) could influence the elements of agents higher in the chain (Craffert 1999:13). The essential element was power or access to power which could control this chain.

Power was an intrinsic feature of this world and without a proper balance of power, the universe would lose its distinctive character and without access to power or proper protection against malignant forces, a person was vulnerable. In this world people or objects with alleged power were in great demand (Craffert 1999:13). Not only human beings but also agents (gods, demons, angels and the like) and 'natural' elements (such as crops and the weather) could be influenced and affected. Given the harsh conditions and circumstances (Craffert 1999:14) and the inadequate medical services (Green 1970:227), healers, healings and exorcisms played an incalculable role in the cope-mechanism in the people living in the first-century world. But before we continue with this chapter, it is of importance to examine what materials and which dates, period and times are relevant for the present study in order to reconstruct the background against which the exorcism ministry of Jesus should be interpreted.

2.3   MATERIALS AND DATES

Twelftree (1993:14) points out, and rightfully so, two problems in our desire to reconstruct the literary background of the exorcism of Jesus, namely, the materials and dating. Firstly, the question that confronts us is whether to use only Palestinian or Jewish material. The tendency among scholars is to concentrate on either the 'Hellenistic' or the 'Jewish' millieu of Jesus and earliest Christianity. Twelftree believes that such a rigid approach is now seen to rest on doubtful premise. There is ample evidence to support the ideal that Palestine, and not least Galilee, was far from insulated from the outside world (see Safrai 1974; Hengel 1974:104). In the opinion of Ferguson (1993:375), the traditional distinction between Palestinian Judaism and Diaspora Judaism is often only a geographical one, not a language or religious description, for there were Diaspora

Jews who maintained the Hebrew language and, like Paul, received a strict Pharisaic upbringing. Ferguson maintains that there were strong Hellenistic influences in Palestine, even in conservative rabbinic circles. According to Ferguson (1993:375), the Jewish matrix of early Christianity was itself Helleninised.

However, Millar (1978:9) cautions that we cannot conclusively just speak of Hellenistic Judaism because we need to be aware of the uniqueness of the phenomenon of an original and varied non-Greek literary activity developing in a small area only a few miles from the Mediterranean coast. Twelftree (1993:15) also adds that there is not only a distinction between Palestinian culture and the rest of the Hellenistic world but the Galilean culture had its own distinctive characteristics. The Maccabean Revolt and the attitudes and practices of the Qumran Essenes and the Pharisees are clear signs that not all Palestinian Jews so readily accepted imported cultures. For the purposes of our construct, this means that the material we use to provide the background to Jesus' ministry of exorcism cannot be limited to that of Palestinian origin or even to Jewish material alone. Nevertheless, it also means that we need to pay particular attention to Palestinian material and traditions that may help to understand exorcism in the first-century Galilee. As a broad generalisation, subject to many qualifications of course, one can say that Palestinian Judaism is the most important background for the ministry of Jesus and the gospels, and the Judaism of the Greek Diaspora is the most important background for the ministry of Paul and his epistles and the book of Acts (see Ferguson 1993:375).

The second problem that Twelftree (1993:15) points out relating to the question of what material we should use, is that of dating. In Twelftree's view, it is essential that each story, ideal or body of tradition which is of potential value in contributing to our study can be reasonably established as part of the intellectual currency of first-century Palestine. This applies to material that antedates and is contemporary with Jesus as well as later literature. For this material often contains themes and ideas that predate the literature in which they are now found. Vermes (1983), on the other hand, correctly reminds us that the problem of using material as Twelftree suggests, is that of ascertaining which ideas belong to the time of publication of the literature and which ideas can be traced back to the times referred to in the literature.

In response to these problems of suitable material and dating, Twelftree (1985), in *Christ Triumphant*, argues that 1 Enoch, Tobit, Jubilees, the Qumran Scrolls, Josephus, Philo of Alexandria, Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* (LAB), the magical papyri, Lucian of Samosata, Apollonius of Tyana and rabbinic literature can, with varying degrees in case of reliability, be used to provide material to reconstruct first century understandings of spirits, demons, possessions, magic, healing, healers, exorcism and exorcists (cf. also Twelftree 1993:16-17). On the broader spectrum of understanding customs in the first-century Jewish world, Vorster (1998:376) in addition to the apocrypha and pseudepigrapha (see also Du Plessis and Lategan 1983:16f), also includes both the talmudic literature, that is, the Mishnah, Tosephta and the Talmuds, as well as the Midrashim. Twelftree (1993:17f) is also of the opinion that other bodies of material, namely the Prayer of Nabonidus (*4QPrNab* or *4QsNab* - see also Dupont-Sommer 1961:322f; Knibb 1987:206), the Testament of Solomon (see also Lowe 1998a:82) and data from the New Testament Apocrypha are generally thought to be useful for the reconstruction of demonology in the first-century Palestine.

From the foregoing review of evidence, it is clear that the Jewish literature which forms part of the background of the New Testament can be of help for the purposes of our study. It is important also to look at the post-biblical (for the lack of a better term) data, for example, the rabbinic literature, for the purposes of our study. It is agreed that the rabbinic literature was written later than the New Testament, but it often preserves teachings and traditions earlier than the time of writing. Thus, the rabbinic literature deserves consideration here, both as part of the possible background of the New Testament times and as a completion of early Jewish thought on the subject of demons.

2.4   DEVELOPMENT OF DEMONOLOGY IN JEWISH THOUGHT

2.4.1   THE INFLUENCE OF THE NEAR EAST

The Biblical idea that God and the righteous angels confronted the opposition of a great spiritual enemy, the devil backed by the army of the demons, had a long history and development in the ancient world (see Riley 1999:244f; Nel 1987:1f). Very old stories of conflict among the gods are found in each of the cultures

which influenced the biblical tradition, and these stories (known among scholars as Combat Myth) coupled with dualism encountered during and after exile, contributed to the concept of the devil. To cite but a few examples, in the Babylonian story, Enuma Elish, Marduk combats Chaos in Tiamat, the great primeval sea, conceived of as a monstrous sea serpent or dragon. Tiamat is defeated, and out of her body Marduk creates the cosmos. In the creation myths the chaos and the powers of evil were seen as being in ontological opposition to created order or cosmos (see Jacobsen 1976:97).

In similar, though not identical fashion, the Canaanite storm god Baal, son and agent of the highest god El, facing opposition in the council of the gods, is forced to battle Yam (the sea). He defeats Yam (and also Lotan [Leviathan], the dragon in the sea) and obtains a palace from which he thunders forth against the enemies in the council and on earth. Next he faces Mot (Death), the ruler of the underworld, a monster with a huge mouth and appetite who swallows the dead, swallowing evil Baal for a time. He is nevertheless rescued from Mot and gains supremacy.

The stories of Yahweh in pre-exilic Israel draw upon these and other myths (e.g. the battles of Zeus; see also Nel 1987:3) to describe the conflicts against his enemies, both divine and human (Riley 1999:245), and his gaining of sovereignty over other gods of the nations in the council (cf. Yahweh and the council - Dt 32:8-9; Ps 29:1; 89:5-8; his mountain palace - Ps 18:6-15; 68; 48:1-2).

The ancient Babylonian myth of a combat between the divine Creator and the great sea monster is echoed in a number of passages in the Old Testament where the monster is variously described as the dragon, Leviathan, Rahab or the serpent (Dragon - Job 7:12; Ps 74:13; Rahab - Job 9:13; Ps 89:10; Is 30:7; 51:9; Serpent - Job 26:13; Is. 27:1; Amos 9:3). In Babylonian and Hebrew forms alike, the great monster symbolises the chaotic deep or cosmic ocean (Hebrew *Tehòm,* Babylonian *Tiamat* - cf. Russel 1960:98), which is regarded as the place of mystery and evil. In the Bible, the power of God over the chaotic deep is unquestionable (cf. Ps 33:6-8; 93:1f; 107:23-32; Jonah 2:2-9). In Genesis 1:2, God the Creator saves the world from the power of chaos in the form of the primeval ocean (see Müller-Fahrenholz 1995:passim - "annihilative powers of chaos").

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In the pre-exilic period the world was conceived as a unified whole, with each member, divine and human, fulfilling a proper function. There was no devil, and the lesser spirits fulfilled their appointed roles. Demons were terrifying but legitimate spirits of calamity, disease, and death, who served the will of the greater gods (Riley 1999:245). However, during and after the Babylonian exile, Israel was influenced by the cosmological dualism of Persian Zoroastrianism (cf. Green 1981:24; Hume 1959:211; Riley 1999:238; Boyce 1975). This cosmology postulated two warring spiritual camps controlled by their leaders, the Zoroastrian god and the devil, and commanded by archangels and archdemons and their descending ranks of lesser spirits. They fought over the loyalty of human beings, expressed in righteous or unrighteous behaviour and eventuating in eternal life or fiery destruction. The old gods of the nations and their servant divinities, the lesser spirits of nature and cosmos, were 'demonised', demoted to the class of wicked spirits, tempting humans to sin and enticing them from the true faith by the false doctrines of the other religions.

The historical link of the biblical belief in the devil and demons with the cosmological dualism of Persian Zoroastrianism has led skeptics to submit that, since the concept of the devil has roots in pagan mythology and in religious traditions, such as Madzaism, biblical demonology should be taken as extraneous or foreign to biblical demonology. The argument goes that the post-exilic Hebrews injected the devil into their tradition in an effort to shift responsibility for evil from the Lord to another being. Kelly (1968:125), therefore, is persuaded that we must conclude that a great deal of demonology that has evolved in the name of Christian teaching, should be characterised as untheological levity. For Kelly and others, the representations of the spirit world in scripture betray signs of simple folkloristic origin, and the modifications that these images and myths underwent when they came into contact with later cultures and philosophies are no longer convincing, however satisfying they may have been in past ages. In the view of Kelly, a continued adherence to these views, as if they constituted an essential part of divine revelation, runs the risk of exposing the Christian mission to ridicule.

Against indications in the New Testament that Jesus took the devil seriously, the sceptics respond variously, for example: Jesus did not himself refer seriously to

the devil, for the evangelists merely put such words in his mouth; Jesus and the apostles referred to the devil only because they had to communicate to people in terms of the first-century worldview; Jesus and the apostles did believe in the devil, but their belief was part of the first-century worldview, along with the belief that the sun revolves around the earth; the ideas of Jesus can be divided between those having universal significance and those, such as the reality of the devil, that are ephemeral and relevant only as historical curiosities (cf. Van Aarde 1987:34f; Crossan 1994:85).

However, in the opinion of Russel (1986:263), the suggestion that Jesus' belief in the devil was only part of the primitive worldview poses serious dangers. Each culture and each age seems determined to believe its worldview the absolute truth, but if history shows anything, it shows that worldviews shift and that all are equally precarious. Russel says that there is no reason to assume that either the first- or the twentieth view is the true one. He points out that the fallacy of chronocentrism is dangerous for all scholars, but for scholars of a Christian per-suasion it is particularly odd to maintain that Jesus and the apostles were primi-tive people who were not as enlightened as we are. Russel goes on to say that, since belief in the devil permeates the New Testament, it follows that, if belief in the devil is rejected, any other belief expressed by the New Testament, including belief in the incarnation and the resurrection, is subject to the same treatment, and some theologians have not shirked this implication.

In the face of intensive intellectual scepticism about the existence of the devil, believers in the sixteenth century responded by saying *"nullus diabolus nullus redemptor"* (no devil, no redeemer). Believers suspected that if the devil, the second best-known figure in Christianity, could be excised from the Christian tradition, then any other figure might be eliminated as well. If Christ did not come to save us from the power of the devil, as the New Testament says, then he did not come to save us at all (cf. Russel 1986:33). Since Christian epistemology is primarily based on scripture and tradition (cf. Joubert 2000:197), and to some degree reason and experience (see Russel 1986:299), it makes little sense to call oneself a Christian while affirming a view contrary to these bases of Christian understanding, namely scripture and tradition (Russel 1986:299).

2.4.2   ETYMOLOGY OF 'DEMON'

2.4.2.1   FROM PRE- TO POST-EXILIC PERIOD

Riley (1999:235) defines 'demon' as a rendering of the cognate Greek words *daimon* and its substantivised neuter adjective *daimonion*; post-classical Latin borrowed the words in the forms *daemon* and *daemonium*. The original meaning of the term *daimon* from the time of Homer (cf. Ferguson 1993:139) onward was 'divinity', denoting either an individual god or goddess. The word could designate one's 'fate' or 'destiny' or the spirit controlling one's fate or one's genius. Commonly the word designated the class of lesser divinities arranged below the Olympian gods, the daimones. Hesiod described them as the souls of those who lived in the Golden Age, who now invisibly watch over human affairs (Erga 122-124; cf. Ferguson 1993:146 - for the African equivalent in ancestral mediation and worship refer to Khathide 1999a:74).

As nearly all the deities in the classical period were morally ambiguous, the daimones could be described as either good or evil, and the same daimon could bring both good or evil according to one's piety or fate. Not until post-exilic times in interstamental literature, with the rise of dualism and the concept of the devil, did the word begin to display the meaning 'evil demon' in league with the devil and take on an entirely negative connotation (e.g. 1 Cor 10:20; cf. LXX Ps 105:37). Christian writers use it almost entirely in the negative sense (e.g. Augustine in the *City of God* book xxii ch 10; Justin Martyr - cf. Benko 1994:115).

The related term *daimonion* in the classical period meant similarly 'divine power' or divinity (Plato, *Rep.* 382e; cf. Acts 17:18). It could mean the class of lower divine beings between gods and mortals, who mediated between the human and divine sphere. In *Symposium*, Plato writes that, "the whole of the demonic is between the divine and the mortal ... interpreting and conveying human things to the gods and divine things to men; prayers and sacrifices from below and ordinances and punishments from above. Being midway between, it makes each to supplement the other, so that the whole combined in one. Through it are conveyed all divinations, and all soothsaying and sorcery. God with man does not mingle; but the demonic is the means of all association and converse of men with

gods and gods with men, whether waking or asleep" (Plato, *Sym.* 202e-203a; Epinamis 984e). So, it designated the famous daimonion of Socrates (Plato, *Apol.* 24b, 40a). Plato may have drawn this idea from Pythagoras, but the source which attributes a similar view to him may have been describing the Neo-pythagoreans who were active at the beginning of the Christian era (cf. Arnold 1992:46; Ferguson 1993:360-361).

Again, after the Jewish exile and the rise of dualism, it came to be used for Satanic demons, especially among the Jewish (cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 8.2.5; Shabbath 67a), Christian writers (cf. Justin, *Apology* 2.5; 1.5; Origen, *Against Celsus* 7.69; Tertullian, *Shows* 13) and in non-Christian magical texts (cf. Plutarch, Table Talk 5; Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius* 4.20; Lucian, *Lover of Lies* 16). The New Testament writers, almost without exception, use 'demon' in a negative sense.

2.4.2.2 PHILO AND JOSEPHUS

Hellenistic Jewish authors of the first century who wrote in Greek show an aware-ness of the Jewish ideas on demons, but their terminology reflects Greek usage. Hence our consideration of the writings of Philo and Josephus will serve as a review of the material on the meanings of the words for demons in Greek as well as providing a more immediate context for New Testament teaching (see Ferguson 1984:81).

One of the most important, "if not the most important representative of Jewish-Hellenism" (Vorster 1998:399), was Philo of Alexandria (20BC - 45AD), a contemporary of Jesus and Paul. He lived and wrote mainly in Egypt. Educated in the Alexandrian philosophical thinking as well as the synagogal interpretation of scripture, with Greek as his mother tongue, he was simultaneously Jew and Greek. He is especially known in theological circles on account of his allegorical way of interpretation. However, he was much more than an allegorist. In the last few decades New Testament scholars are increasingly giving special attention to his work.

It was especially the Pentateuch that stimulated Philo's thinking, and as someone

who was not only a defender of faith, he went to a lot of trouble, particularly to make the Pentateuch understandable. Philo was simultaneously a philosopher, exegete (theologian) and an apologetic historian. His philosophical writings, among which there are works such as his *De aeternitate mundi (=Concerning the everlasting world)* and *De providentia (=Concerning providence)*, are strongly influenced by Greek philosophy. Philo was convinced that Jewish history had to be interpreted and did everything in his ability to make the Jews and their religion, although in Greek philosophical garb, to be acceptable to the contemporary world (Vorster 1998:399-400). His religious books on the Law *(De specialibus legibus I-IV)*, Genesis *(cf. Legum allegoriae 1-111)* and the Decalogue *(De decalogo)* display an extensive use of his allegorical interpretation. Philo also produced a number of writings about the persons in the Bible, among whom are Moses *(De vita Mosis 1-111)* Abraham *(De Abrahamo)*, Joseph *(De Josepho)* and Cain and Abel *(De sacrificiis Abelis et Caini)*. With a view to the study of the New Testament, Philo's writings are of particular significance regarding the religio-historical information they offer (cf. Vorster 1998:400).

Of special interest to our study, Philo used 'demon' as did pagan authors, in reference to deities. Certainly there was nothing negative when Philo was quoting a Greek author's reference to "a certain demon or a god" *(Every God Man is Free 130)*. The most distinctive use of 'demon' in Philo and the meaning which apparently was significant to him, was an equivalent to the biblical word 'angels', further equated by him also with souls (cf. Arnold 1992:83). Thus Philo speaks of two kinds of bodiless souls: some enter bodies, but others exist on high. The latter, he explains, were called by the Greek 'heroes', and Moses called them 'angels' (*Life of Moses* 1.276).

Philo's treatise, *On the Giants*, gave him the fullest opportunity to correlate the Jewish and Greek ideas on demons. He does so in commenting on Genesis 6:2: "It is Moses' custom to give the name of angels to those whom other philosophers call *daimonas*, souls, that is, which fly and hover in the air" (*On the Giants* II.6). But he avoided taking the "sons of God" in Genesis 6, however, as angels who had intercourse with women (*On the Giants* xiii.58).

Philo accepted an intermediate class of spiritual beings which might be good and serve God or be bad and oppose (*On the Giants* iv.16). Philo testified to the ordinary usage at the beginning of the first century by which demons might refer to either or both kinds. However, Philo's synthesis did not prevail because Christian usage came to apply angels to the good beings in God's service and demons to the evil rebels. Occasionally, Christians made reference to bad angels, as when the New Testament speaks of "the devil and his angels" (Mt 25:41).

Another person of similar importance to our study of the first-century Jewish world is Flavius Josephus (37-95AD). The writings of Josephus may be regarded as the most important source for the study of the history of the Jews during the time of the origination of the New Testament (see Vorster 1998:401). Josephus was born in Jerusalem from a family of priests who descended from Hasmonaeans. From a young age he studied the Jewish intellectual currents, specifically those of the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Essenes and eventually, after an ascetic existence of three years in the desert, he joined the Pharisees. In 64 AD he went to defend a group of priests in Rome who had been arrested by procurator Felix and who were sent to Rome. Through the mediation of a friend, he won the favour and help of the empress, Poppaea. Because of the favour that he enjoyed from the Flavian emperors Vespasian, Titus and Domitian, he was known as Flavius Josephus. He even obtained Roman citizenship. During the Jewish war he was the commander of Galilee. He was captured by Vespasian and predicted that the latter would become emperor of Rome. When this happened, he was freed and was granted Roman citizenship. After the fall of Jerusalem, he established himself in Rome, where he wrote his works.

Four works by Josephus survive, preserved and much read by Christians. He originally wrote *The Jewish War (Bellum Judaicum)* in Aramaic and then translated it into Greek with the assistance of collaborators; it was published between 75 and 82. *The Jewish War* follows the tradition of military and political history represented by Polybius.

The second voluminous writing by Josephus, *The Jewish Antiquities (Antiquitates Judaicae),* deals with the history of the Jews from the earliest

times until the outbreak of the war against the Romans in 66 AD. It consists of twenty books, and it was published in 93 or 94. The first ten books are a retelling of the biblical data. The rest deals with the time between Cyprus and Nero. It was firstly intended for the Greeks and the Romans, and written when Josephus no longer enjoyed the protection of his guardians. This work bears an apologetic character and its intention was to propagate the Jewish religion and history.

Besides his extensive history, Josephus also wrote a biography *(Vita)* as well as an apology about the image of the Jewish people *(Contra Apionem)*. The first is not a complete description of his entire career, but it mainly deals with the era (66/67 AD) when he was the commander of the Jewish army in Galilee. In his description of this war, Justus of Tiberius described Josephus as the organiser of the insurrection in Galilee. Josephus had to correct this image in the light of his relationship with the Romans, and for this reason, had to reject Justus' version of his role.

Contra Apionem (Against Apion) consists of two books. It is not directed against Apion only, but against all who, like Apion, tried to break down the image of the Jews. This work, like his *Vita* and *Antiquitates*, is dedicated to one Epaphroditus, who possibly was a secretary of Nero's, or the linguist who lived in the period between Nero and Nerva.

As touching the topic under study, it can be stated that Josephus has, if anything, an even more varied usage of the 'demon' family of words but lacks a distinctive explanation comparable to Philo (see Ferguson 1984:84). He can use *daimonion* to mean "the deity" or "the divine" *(War* 1.69). This divine power is particularly the dispenser of fate - "In truth the divine power *(daimonion)* had given (Herod) a great many instances of good fortune, even more than he had hoped for, in external affairs, but in his home it was his fate to meet with his greatest misfortune" *(Antiquities* xvi.76). Or, the word may mean the destiny, fate or misfortune itself *(War* 1.233). Often it is difficult to decide whether one should translate in the personal sense, 'the deity', or impersonal, 'fortune' (see Ferguson 1984:84). Josephus says, "My victory that day would have been complete, had I not been thwarted by some demon, or should we say misfortune?" Thus it is surprising

that the word was also used for a demonic, evil spirit without any qualification (*War* 1.613; *Antiquities* xiv.291).

Josephus could use demon for personal good spirits, but perhaps it is significant that when he does he qualifies them as 'good demons' (*Antiquities* xvi.20). His most frequent usage of demons is in reference to the souls of the departed (*Antiquities* xiii.317; 415; 416; *War* 1.521; 599; 607), and popular belief is shown in that the reference is usually to avenging spirits.

Evil spirits could enter a person and take possession of him, but they could also be driven out. Thus Josephus uses *daimonia* to interpret 'evil spirit' that tormented Saul and that was driven out by David's music (*Antiquities* vi.166, 168, 211; cf. 1 Sam 16:14-23). Josephus knew of the so called *daimonia*, in other words, the spirits of wicked men which enter the living and kill them unless aid is forthcoming (see Ferguson 1984:85).

From the above evidence, it is clear that the value of the Jewish-Hellenistic literature cannot be ignored as reliable informing sources in our understanding of the linguistic literacy, historical and theological milieu in which the New Testament is founded (cf. Vorster 1998:403). In our understanding of New Testament demonology the Jewish-Hellenistic writings remain indispensable.

2.4.2.3   'DEMON' IN THE SEPTUAGINT

Commonly denoted by 'LXX', the Septuagint is the most important Greek translation of the Old Testament, and the oldest known influential translation in any language (see Gunner 1962:1258). The translation of the Hebrew scriptures into Greek made the Old Testament faith available to Greek speakers and it was thus the beginning of the conceptual translation of biblical thought into the Greek view of reality (see Ferguson 1993:580). Jews who lived in the Greek world had begun the process of defending biblical religion, propagating its virtues, and making intelligible its central affirmations. The synagogues in the Diaspora provided a base of operations for Christian preachers in the early years of the church. Moreover, they attracted many Gentiles who proved to be prime prospects for the Christian gospel the beachhead into the wider Gentile world (see Ferguson 1993:580).

By the time of Jesus, the Septuagint held the place of 'the Authorised Version' and as such is so often, although freely, quoted in the New Testament (see Edersheim 1971:23). Nor need we wonder that it should have been the people's Bible, not merely among the Hellenists, but in Galilee, and even in Judea. In the words of Edersheim (1971:29), "in such manner the LXX version became really the people's Bible to that large Jewish world through which Christianity was afterwards to address itself to mankind."

Against this background it is understandable that we mention a few examples of 'demon' in the LXX, especially in relation to idols. Idols in Hebrew become 'demons' in the dualistic sense found in the LXX (see Riley 1999:238). In LXX Psalm 95:5, the national deities of other peoples, said to be idols (*'ezizim*) in Hebrew, become demons (- "All the gods of the nations are demons"); in LXX Deuteronomy 32:17, the foreign divinities whom Israel worshipped, properly described in the Hebrew text as *édîm* (tutelary spirits), are called 'demons' (- "They sacrificed to demons and not to God"; cf. LXX Ps 105:37; *Bar.* 4:7); in LXX Isaiah 65:11 *daimon* renders the Hebrew name of the pagan god of Fortune, where the Israelites are said to have been 'preparing a table for the demon'. This concept of table worship with pagan gods which in reality are demons, carries over into the New Testament (cf. 1 Cor 8). The author of Revelation identifies the worship of idols with the worship of demons (Rev 2:14, 20).

Undoubtedly, the term 'demon' assumes a negative meaning in the LXX due to the influence of dualism. Even the *śãtãn* of the Hebrew Bible becomes the devil (rendered *diabolos* in LXX) who is the archenemy of God at war over the loyalty of humanity.

2.4.2.4 <u>CONCLUSIONS</u>

The concept and word 'demon' underwent fundamental change in antiquity caused by the rise of dualism in the essentially monistic cultures of the Near East. Though Jewish Hellenistic thinkers might have used 'demon' to denote good and bad spirits, by the time of the New Testament, the word had developed a wholly negative connotation, and it is in this sense that it is used in the New Testament.

2.4.3   CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS TO DEMONIC BELIEF

A sharp increase of interest in the realm of angels, spirits and demons is observable in Jewish literature during the two centuries leading up to the time of Jesus. This preoccupation with the spirit world can be traced in virtually all facets of its literature - The Old Testament apocryphal writings, the Qumran literature, the pseudepigraphal testamentary literature and particularly in the Jewish apocalyptic writings. Jews of this period give details of numbers, names and hierarchies of powers or angels. Where the Old Testament was silent about the rebellion of the evil angels, Jewish writings of the second temple period provided a full account. There is also much discussion on the nature of angelic influence over the destiny of nations as well as over the daily life of the individual.

Several factors can be cited as contributing to the burgeoning curiosity about the spirit realm among the Jews. Firstly, there was a growing tendency to distance God from direct involvement in daily life (see Arnold 1992:64). God's perceived transcendence led many Jews to begin postulating the intermediary role of angels. Secondly, the silence of prophecy - an intermediary channel between God and his people - could have led to the increased inquisitiveness about the spirit world (cf. Russel 1964:73f). Israel needed something for her sustenance and revival (Arnold 1992:65). As a spirit-sensitive community, like other Greco-Roman communities in the first-century world, Israel sought to get answers by focusing on the spirit world.

Thirdly, perhaps the most significant factor leading to the heightened interest in the spirits was the problem of suffering. The illegitimate rule of Palestine by Roman usurpers could now be explained from a demonological perspective; the kingdom of Satan had gained temporary victory (see Arnold 1992:65). But this did not start in the period of the Roman occupation. The dualistic thinking, based on Zoroastrianism which postulated different myths of origin for the great spirits of Light and Darkness: the first being that the two were co-eternal twins without sources, essentially two opposite gods; the second claiming that Time (Zervan) as source generated the two in eternity past as opposing aspects of the original and ambiguous One, provided an explanation for the sufferings of the exile among the people who saw themselves as (relatively) righteous and undeserving of their

plight (see Riley 1999:245; cf. Ps 44:17; Jer 31:29-30; Ezek 18:25). The people of God believed that it was the devil who persecuted the innocent and brought disaster as a trial of faith and character, attempting to turn them from God and goodness. The belief was that there were malevolent forces in the universe that exercise a baneful influence in the socio-political realm, especially where the people of God are concerned (cf. Page 1994:64; Pfeiffer 1959:121f).

According to some scholars, among these Rofé (1988), Koester (1980) and Pagels (1995), there is belief that it was the sectarian group of Essenes who took the idea of the holy or eschatological war forward and thus contributed largely to our present understanding of the devil/Satan and his cohorts. These passionate sectarians saw the foreign occupation of Palestine as evidence that the forces of evil had taken over the world, and in the form of Satan or the prince of darkness, infiltrated and taken captive God's own people, turning most of them into allies of the evil one (cf. *CD* 1:13-20). The Essenes saw themselves involved in the war of the "sons of light" against the "sons of darkness" (1 *QMi*). The "sons of light" are the "exiles of the wilderness"; the "sons of darkness" are the traditional enemies of Israel in the Old Testament, plus their Jewish allies ("the wicked of the covenant", "the congregation of traitors") and the *kittim* (probably a coded epithet for the Romans or the Greeks - cf. Ferguson 1993:442; Pagels 1995:58; 4*QpNab*). The Essenes retold the whole history of Israel in terms of the cosmic war (cf. Freyne 1980:108). Even in earliest times, they say "the Prince of Light raised up Moses" (*CD* 5:18) but the evil one, here called Beliar (or Belial), aroused opposition to Moses among his own people. Individual angels are often named, some of whom are Michael, Gabriel, Sariel and Raphael (1*QM* ix.15-16) and it is assumed that the angelic army is hierarchically structured. Belial, "the angel of darkness", stands opposed to the forces of good. Belial is both the enemy of God and the tempter of the human race (see Khathide 2000:82). His angels or spirits are called "spirits of wickedness" or "spirits of error".

Pagels (1995:58) correctly observes that, "had Satan not already existed in Jewish tradition, the Essenes would have invented him". It is also noticeable that in their sacred books, such as the great *Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness*, they are assured of victory and that God had given them

the Prince of Light as their supernatural ally to help them contend against Satan, and against his human allies.

> The Prince of Light thou has appointed to come to our support: but Satan, the angel Mastema, thou has created for the pit; he rules in darkness, and his purpose is to bring about evil and sin (1 *QM* 19:10-12).

The "sons of light" eagerly awaited the day of judgement, when they expected that God would come with all the armies of heaven to annihilate the corrupt majority along with Israel's foreign enemies (cf. Pagels 1995:58).

Thus, the suffering of God's people in Palestine by Roman usurpers could be cited as one of the critical reasons that led to the proliferation of demonic belief in their quest to seek for answers in explaining their predicament. The persecution literature of the intertestamental period attests to this fact.

2.5   DEMONOLOGY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

2.5.1   YAHWISM AND EVIL

Nel (1987:4) maintains that the monotheism of Yahwism brought a peculiar problem about the notion of evil to the fore. According to Nel, the closed paradigm of mythological thinking could easily accommodate the existence of evil alongside order (cosmos) without any essential contradiction in belief. Israel shared mutually the mythological cosmology with her neighbours, but - and this created a problem - the advocates of Yahwism deliberately opposed the religious implications. Consequently, Nel (1987:5) writes that certain harmful phenomena of existence which were attributed to demons within the mythological context had to remain unexplained or had to be imputed to Yahweh himself. The character of Yahwism tolerated no rivals (see Ling 1961:4; Nel 1987:5).

The intolerance of Yahwism towards opposing gods can be clearly discerned in the way it addressed itself to the two types of Zoroastrianism which postulated different myths of origin for the great spirits of Light and Darkness: the first held

that the two were co-eternal twins without source, essentially two opposite gods; the second claimed that Time (Zervan) as source had generated the two in eternity past as opposing aspects of the original and ambitious One. The latter concept of an original One melded most favourably with developing ideas of monotheism and the sovereignty of God in Israel (see Riley 1999:245). The eternal dualism of the former view is rejected by Second Isaiah (- Isa 45:5 - "I am the Lord and there is no other; besides me there is no God"), and the God of Israel is seen as was Zervan, the source of both opposites: "I form light and I create darkness; I make wholeness and I create evil" (Isa 45:7). This idea that God created two divine spirits, good and evil, is clearly expressed in texts from Qumran (cf. 1QS 3:25 "[God] created the spirits of Light and Darkness").

That God should be the source of evil, however, or was in competition with another power, was difficult given the old view of God as sovereign and righteous (Dt 32:4; 1 Jn 1:5). Consequently, Yahweh became responsible for illness and suffering (Nel 1987:5; cf. e.g. Ps 6, 51, 88; Ex 12:23; 2 Sam 24:16ff; 2 Ki 19:35). Yahweh's activity was sometimes seen in conjunction with hostile forces (e.g. Gen 32:23-33; Ex 4:24-26; 12:21-23) and evil spirits could be in his service (e.g. Jdg 9:23; 1 Sam 16:14f; 18:10f; 19:f; Isa 19:14; 29:9-10). At times Yahweh almost became the cause of harmful forces in human existence (e.g. 1 Sam 2:6-7; Isa 45:7; Lm 3:38; Am 3:6; 1 Sam 26:29 and the prologue of Job 1-2). Despite the possibility of a justified logical deduction by which Yahweh himself would become the sole source of evil and in fact evil itself, such an assumption nevertheless did not occur (Nel 1987:5; cf. Lindstrom 1983:239f).

The innate contradiction that arose from an assumption that an all-good Yahweh was also responsible for illness and suffering, was left unsolved (Nel 1987:5). Other creative thinkers produced an alternate view which melded dualism with the old traditions of the Combat Myth which took Yahweh as El, head of the heavenly council (see Riley 1999:246). In all versions of the Combat Myth (see also Mavromataki 1997:13) and Zoroastrian doctrine, the upper world forces of Light ultimately defeat the forces of Darkness; the enemies, the formidable, were weaker and lesser beings. Thus, the one God, the God of Israel, could stand as the sovereign God of light, presiding over the lesser divine beings of the heavenly council (the angels), some of whom were righteous, others of whom (as Baal's

enemies in El's council), by their own choice, were sources of evil. This allowed the origin of evil in heaven to be removed one stage from God: evil was the result of some feeling in lesser divine beings (see Riley 1999:246). These were led by a great opponent similar to the great enemies in the Combat Myth. The devil, followed by his hosts of demons, assumed characteristics of the mythic opponents of the heavenly gods destined for defeat. He could be opposed by a great champion of righteousness, the Angel of the Lord (Zech 3:1; Jub 17:15 - 18:16), or Michael, the archangel (cf. Jude 9), or in later Christian thought, by Jesus.

Nel (1987:5) is of the opinion that one could, therefore, assume that the binary opposition of good and evil without essential conflict (typical of the mythic context), might still prevail over the logical consequences of a monotheism in the Old Testament in explaining the existence of both good and evil. Consequently, Nel concludes that Yahweh never became all-evil. Although Yahweh allowed evil, he himself did not become evil. The manipulation of evil forces were still for the sake of good ends. Nel also concludes that it is also evident from the Old Testament that the poles of binary opposition had not yet developed into metaphysical and ontologically opposed entities, in other words, into an absolute dualism in cosmological conception. The maintenance of the binary opposition of good and evil had effective and heuristic powers to explain the existence of both good and evil in human existence without hampering the individual's responsibility of choice (cf. Nel 1987:5). In the context of Yahwism, "Man himself is to blame that he is overtaken by the consequences of evil" (Van Aarde 1987:24).

2.5.2 SATAN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

2.5.2.1 REFERENCES TO SATAN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

In this subsection, our interest is not an elaborate discussion on the origin, and etymology of *śātān* but rather on the functional meaning where it appears in the Old Testament (more specifically the Hebrew Bible). In her monograph, *An Adversary in Heaven: śātān in the Hebrew Bible*, Day (1988) investigates in a somewhat intensive way the meaning of *śātān* in the Hebrew Bible and comes to some conclusions which are of interest to this study.

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The problem with Day's findings is that she does not see a link between the Old Testament texts on *śātān* and the Judeo-Christian view on Satan (see Day 1988:63). In fact, she adopts a negative opinion towards the idea of the development of the *śātān* concept. For Day, the notion may be said to have evolved on its own soil and within its own thought-world, and may be said to evolve in Judeo-Christian thought after its introduction. Day contends that it cannot be said to have developed in Israel prior to the time it was introduced into the biblical stream of consciousness. While Day's argument is both a formidable and attractive one, it cannot be said to be totally convincing because it does not take seriously the non-canonical Jewish literature on the subject and especially the New Testament interpretation of the Old Testament. Perhaps, to be precise, the unity of the scriptures does not seem to appeal that much to Day in her discussion on *śātān*. On the other hand, such criticism may be labelled as unfair and unjustified, as it may fall beyond the scope and purpose of her study.

The thing that most scholars on the subject agree on is that of the ideal of a heavenly council that Israel shares with the nations of the Near East (cf. Mullen 1980). The consensual view is that the concept of *śātān* in the Old Testament needs to be understood against the backdrop of the divine council in the nations of the Near East (cf. e.g. Page 1995:25; Day 1988:79; Robinson 1944; Wright 1950; Cross 1953).

The first appearance (chronologically, that is) of a heavenly *śātān* is found in the story of Balaam. In this episode (Nm 22:22-35), Balaam sets out with his two attendants on a journey, an act which incurs God's wrath. God responds by dispatching a messenger, the *mal'ak yhwh*, described as a *śātān,* who stations himself on the road upon which Balaam is travelling. Balaam is blissfully ignorant of the sword-wielding messenger, but Balaam's ass sees the danger and avoids the messenger by going off the road and into a field for which Balaan beats the animal. The messenger moves further along the road and takes up a position in a hollow between two walled vineyards. Balaam's ass once again sees the messenger and presses against one of the walls to avoid him, thus crushing Balaam's foot against one of the walls and earning another beating. Foiled yet again, the *mal'ak* moves ahead to a place in the road that affords no way to circumvent him; perceiving this, the ass lays down, for which she receives another beating.

At this point Yahweh gives the ass the power of speech (see Day 1988:46), and the ass asks Balaam why he has beaten her. Balaam responds that she has been sporting with him, and that if he had a sword in his hand, he would kill her. The ass points out that she has been his mount since time immemorial and she has never behaved like this before. Balaam admits that she has not. At this juncture Yahweh uncovers Balaam's eyes so that he can see the sword-wielding messenger standing in the road, and Balaam falls down to the ground. The messenger asks Balaam why he has struck the ass, and asserts that he has come forth as a *šātān* because Balaam's journey was taken as contrary to God's will. The ass had seen the messenger and avoided him; had she not done so, the messenger would have killed Balaam. Balaam then admits his guilt, stating that he did not know that the messenger was standing in the road; if the messenger judges the journey to be wrong, Balaam offers to turn back. The messenger gives Balaam permission to continue, but adjures him to speak only as instructed. Thus Balaam proceeds with the princes of Balak (Nm 22:35). Reading the episode of the Balaam cycle, it is clear, according to Day (1988:147) that the *šātān* of Numbers 22 that he is the *mal'ak yhwh*, who was dispatched because Balaam piqued divine anger by embarking on a journey against Yahweh's will. Kluger (1967:39) also remarks that *šātān* as used in Numbers 22 is a functional concept and not a mythological figure.

Day (1988:25) also briefly investigates the meaning of *šātān* in the context of I Samuel 29:1-5. In this chapter, the Philistines are mustering in preparation for battle against Saul. When David and his troops pass in review before the Philistine commanders, they object to David's participation in the upcoming combat on the basis that David would become a *šātān*, turning against them on the battlefield in order to ingratiate himself to Saul. Day comes to a conclusion that the noun *šātān* in this episode must be understood to mean an adversary, in this case referring to David.

In another episode in II Samuel 19:16-23, David is enroute to Jerusalem, after the rebellion of Absalom had been successfully put down. Shimei, a Saulide who cursed David on his initial flight from Jerusalem (II Sam 16:5-8), meets David and his entourage at the Jordan with the purpose of seeking legal pardon for his crime of cursing the king. Abishai, a member of the royal court, insists that Shimei

be put to death for cursing Yahweh's anointed. To this, David responds by calling Abishai a *śāṭān*. In Day's (1988:26) view, given the clearly forensic context of both Shimei's plea for pardon and Abishai's formal charge against him, *śāṭān* should be best understood here to mean "legal accuser" (see also Day 1987:543-547). Day draws attention to the fact that Abishai, a member of the royal court assumes the role of the accuser in this specific situation and therefore the term *śāṭān* does not designate an office, but rather is a function that Abishai performs. Abishai's accusation is completely justified; Shimei did in fact curse David. Hence *śāṭān* here has no slanderous connotation (Day 1988:26).

When we read 1 Kings 5:2-6 we are presented with a message sent by Solomon to Hiram, King of Tyre requesting skilled labourers to assist in the temple-building project. Solomon states that David was unable to build a temple for Yahweh because he was engaged in numerous battles against the surrounding peoples. To Solomon, however, Yahweh has given peace; there is neither adversary nor misfortune - there is no *śāṭān,* and therefore Solomon is able to undertake the building project. Again in this passage *śāṭān* means "adversary", and like 1 Samuel 29 the context is military (see Day 1988:26).

The next context in which the term *śāṭān* is used of human beings is 1 Kings 11. At the beginning of that chapter we are told about Solomon's many foreign wives who, when Solomon had grown old, turned his ear away from Yahweh (v. 1-6). As a result of this apostasy it is announced that Yahweh will tear the kingdom out of Solomon's hands, all but one tribe (v. 9-13). Yahweh raises up Hadad of Edom as a *śāṭān* against Solomon (v. 14) as well as Rezon in Damascus in the same capacity (v. 23, 25).

Day (1988:27) is of the view that both I Kings 5 and 11 must be set within the Deuteronomistic understanding of history as a vehicle through which divine judgement is expressed. After ridding himself of royal rivals and other nuisances and thus establishing his grip on the kingdom (I Ki 2), Solomon settles into a reign of peace and prosperity. As an introduction to his reign, it is stated (I Ki 3:3) that Solomon kept the covenant stipulations of Yahweh, and thus the theological ground is established for a period of stability and prosperity (I Ki 4:24-25). Indeed, it is not until Solomon's old age, when he is portrayed as being corrupted by the

worship imported by his foreign wives (I Ki 11:1-8) that the purported tranquility is broken. Because Solomon had done evil in the eyes of the Lord (I Ki 11:6), Hadad and Rezon were raised up by Yahweh to harass Solomon. While Solomon had remained faithful to Yahweh, there had been no *śātān* to disturb his peaceful reign (I Ki 5:4).

Although noting that *śātān* in I Kings 5 and 11 may simply be translated "adversary" (see Day 1988:28), Von Rad (1964:73) suggests that there also be a legal dimension to the Deuteronomist's use of the term in these two chapters. Solomon had sinned, and because of this sin Yahweh raised up Hadad and Rezon as adversaries against him and are, therefore, according to Von Rad, concrete illustrations of divine judgement and thus *śātān* has been drawn into the Deutoronomist's legalistic conception of sin and punishment. Day (1988:29) questions whether it is on this basis correct to characterise Hadad and Rezon as accusers. In spite of the observation of Von Rad, the adversarial function of *śātān* appears to be the best interpretation within the context of I Kings 5 and 11.

Another context in which *śātān* has a terrestrial referent is Psalm 109. Psalm 109 is an imprecatory psalm in which the psalmist prays that his enemy may be brought to trial and found guilty (see Page 1995:23-24). In connection with this, he says:

> Appoint a wicked man against him; let an accuser (*śātān)*
> stand at his right hand (v. 6).

What presents a problem in this psalm is the abrupt change from a plurality of enemies in verses 1-5 to a single opponent in verses 6-19, followed by a return to the plural in verses 20-31. Scholars differ as to the actual meaning and identity of the *śātān* in Psalm 109:6 (see Leahy 1975:77-79; Page 1995:24; Day 1988:30f). Page comes to a debatable but yet reasonable conclusion that the context of the psalm suggests a temporal court scene, and the psalmist probably used the word *śātān* in this instance to refer to a human prosecutor (cf. Day 1988:31).

The five contexts in which the noun *śātān* is found (one celestial - Nm 22 and four terrestrial referents - I Sam 29; II Sam 19; I Ki 5, 11; Ps 109) give a broad and general understanding of how the word was used in the Old Testament. But it needs to be said that the debate on the historical development of the personal devil/Satan is focussed on the three passages, namely, the prologue of Job; Zechariah 3:1-2 and I Chronicles 21:1. In these texts, the word refers to a celestial being, and it is primarily from these that the Jewish and Christian conceptions of Satan developed (see Page 1995:24) and to these passages of scripture we now turn.

2.5.2.2   THE SATAN IN JOB

The focus of our interest in the book of Job is not to discuss whether the book is a hypothetical situation, folktale or factual. Our focus is the role of *śātān* in the that book. The word *śātān* occurs in Job 1:6-9, 12; 2:1-4, 6-7. In each of these verses, it appears with the definite article, so that it could be translated "the satan". At this stage, the word was not used as a proper name, rather it described function (Page 1995:24).

Job 1:6-12 and 2:1-6 describe two scenes in which Satan, along with other supernatural beings, presents himself before Yahweh. The setting is that of a heavenly council or divine assembly (cf. Nel 1987:6), a familiar feature of ancient Near Eastern religion (see Mullen 1980; Page 1995:25). In Israel, however, the concept differs significantly from that found in the mythology of its polytheistic neighbours, since the members of Yahweh's court are represented as subordinate beings who simply carry out his will (see Page 1995:25). Satan appears as an angel, "son of God" (*ben elohim*), a term that, in Hebrew idiom, often means "one of the divine beings" (see Pagels 1995:41). Clearly the phrase refers to celestial beings who are subservient to God.

According to the storyteller, Satan accompanied the angels when they came to present themselves to Yahweh (Job 1:6). Whether Satan's presence was thought to be usual is unclear. Some think that Satan is represented as a regular member of Yahweh's entourage, perhaps a member of particularly high standing (cf. e.g. Jacob 1958:71). Others think that the way Satan's presence is described implies

that he did not usually join the other angels for the divine assembly, and is, there-fore, an intruder on this occasion (cf. e.g. Ball 1922:103). In the two accounts of Satan's appearance in the celestial council, Yahweh opens the conversation by asking from whence he has come. Satan responds in both cases with, "From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it" (Job 1:7; 2:2). Some think that "roaming" indicates Satan's exercise of greater freedom than the an-gels, who generally are represented as entering the human realm only to execute specific, divinely given tasks. Though wandering may express the idea of aimless wandering, it is generally agreed that here it refers to purposeful activity (cf. Page 1995:26). Pagels (1995:41) perceives the storyteller in Job as playing on the similarity between the sound of the Hebrew *śāṭān* and *shût*, the Hebrew word "to roam", suggesting that the *śāṭān's* special role in the heavenly court is that of a kind of roving intelligent agent, like those whom many Jews of the time would have known - and detested - from the king of Persia's elaborate system of secret police and intelligence officers (cf. Tur-Sinai 1957:38-45). Known as "the king's eye" or "the king's ear", these agents roamed the empire looking for signs of disloyalty among the people (see Pagels 1995:41).

In the first meeting of the divine assembly in Job, Yahweh boasts about one of his most loyal subjects: "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is no one like him on earth, a blessed and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?" (1:8). Significantly, it is God, not Satan, who singles Job out for consideration (Page 1995:26). That the initiative comes from God immediately establishes that he is in control and creates a difficulty for the view that God and the devil are the eternally co-existent forces opposing each other. In his response, Satan claims that Job worships God because God ensures his material well-being by encircling Job with the protective hedge. It is only when Yahweh agrees to remove that protective hedge and allows *śāṭān* to touch Job's family and possessions that Job is plunged into suffering. Yet in chapter 3, Job attributes his suffering to the fact that God hedges him around. Because Job is not privy to the celestial machinations, like a modern reader - a process that set into motion his fall and prosperity; thus his statement in 3:23 cannot be said to contradict 1:10 (see Day 1988:74).

That Job 1:6-13 and 2:1-7 portray meetings of the divine council is clear. The image of Yahweh surrounded by the celestial court is the traditional setting for council scenes (e.g. I Ki 22:19; Is 6:2-3; Zech 3:4, 7). In Job, the notion is fostered that the council has gathered with the purpose of determining human fate, specifically the lot of Job (1:8; cf. Day 1988:80). In the opening verses (1:1-6) the audience has been introduced to Job as a paragon of human piety. The scene switches to the heavenly assembly, with Yahweh touting Job's outstanding virtues. But, instead of acquiescence, Yahweh's testimony is met with an atypical challenge (1:9-11). Yahweh is charged by a celestial accuser with protecting Job, his family and his possessions. The response of the celestial accuser implies that God is wrong in thinking so highly of Job and he was wrong to reward Job's piety with prosperity. If, Satan suggests, there would be a reversal in Job's fortunes, the hypocrisy of his professed piety would become apparent. God has only to remove the blessings that prop up Job's faith, and it will collapse and be revealed as a sham. Not only does Satan assail Yahweh's confidence in Job, he also proposes a test whereby it may be demonstrated that such confidence is misplaced. While questioning God's assessment of Job, Satan implicitly acknowledges that Job's fate is in God's hands and Satan himself has no power to do anything independently of God's will (cf. Page 1995:27).

In proposing a test for the piety and righteousness of Job, Satan is implicitly challenging Yahweh's blueprint for world order (cf. Day 1988:80); if the righteous always prosper, how can it be ascertained that their behaviour is not motivated by material gain? Satan is not accusing Job, or at least not directly. He is attacking the problem at its source, by accusing the Creator of perpetrating a perverse world order (cf. Day 1988:80-81). In Job 1:12, Yahweh consents to the test proposed by Satan (the śãtãn) and grants him permission to attack Job's possessions, but Yahweh lays down the condition that Satan is not to touch Job's person. Here we see that Satan does not merely dispute Job's integrity; Satan is the one who puts it to the test by inflicting Job. The condition put by Yahweh implies, moreover, that Satan might get carried away with this task if clear limitations are not prescribed. The text portrays Satan as one who brings about human distress; in addition, it suggests that he takes pleasure in doing so and thus must be restrained (Page 1995:27).

When Satan (the *śātān*) appears again among the sons of God on the appointed day, Yahweh points out that "Job still holds fast to his integrity, although you incited me against him, to harm him without cause" (2:3b). Then the *śātān* asks that he increase the pressure:

> Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life. But
> put forth your hand now, and touch his flesh and his bone,
> and he will curse you to your face (2:4-5).

According to the story, Job withstands the test, the *śātān* retreats, and "the Lord restored the fortunes of Job ... and he gave him twice as much as he had before" (42:10). In the story we learn that Satan (the *śātān*) terrifies and harms a person but he remains an angel, a member of the heavenly court, God's obedient servant (cf. Pagels 1995:42). Yahweh's granting of permission to Satan to wreak havoc in the life of Job and insisting on limits further reinforces how circumscribed the sphere of Satan's influence is. There is no metaphysical dualism. Unmistakenly, Satan is subject to Yahweh's will (cf. Page 1995:28). At the most, Satan's role is limited to the mediation of evil in the natural realm (Page 1995:30). As far as the author of Job is concerned, Yahweh exercises absolute control over his creation. Nothing falls outside God's dominion - on earth or in heaven. The use of the definite article ("the" *śātān*) also helps us to realise that during the period of the writing of the book of Job, the devil concept had not yet developed into the Satan we know in modern times.

At least three characteristics of the Joban Satan reappear in the New Testament. Firstly, the thought of Satan as one who roams the earth bringing affliction is found in I Peter 5:8, where the devil is said to prowl around "like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour". Secondly, the description of the devil as one who accuses Christians before God in Revelation 12:10 goes back to the role of Satan as Job's accuser. Thirdly, Jesus' comment in Luke 22:31 that Satan desired to sift Peter like wheat recalls the testing of Job's loyalty to Yahweh (cf. Page 1995:30).

2.5.2.3   THE SATAN IN ZECHARIAH

The reference of Satan in Zechariah 3:1-2 is found in a vision that the prophet had in the second year of Darius (Zech 1:7), which can be dated quite precisely to 520 or 519 B.C. (cf. Page 1995:30). The Babylonian captivity had come to an end, and the returned exiles were now being led by the governor Zerubbabel and a high priest named Joshua. Joshua was the son of Jehozadak and a descendant of Seraiah, who had been the high priest at the time of the destruction of the temple and had been taken into exile by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25:8-11, 18). Joshua was probably born in Babylon, but he returned to Judah with Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:2), and they worked together on the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 3:2, 8).

Zechariah 3:1-10 describes the fourth in a series of eight visions revealed to the prophet. In this particular vision, Zechariah sees Joshua, dressed in filthy clothing, "standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him" (v. 1). It is generally thought that the scene is another example of a meeting of the heavenly council, though not all scholars concur (cf.. Page 1995:31). Nel (1987:6), in support of the heavenly council idea in Zechariah, says that the *śātān* was part of a heavenly tribunal where the justification and sanction of Joshua as high priest was at stake. In Zechariah's vision, Satan (the *śātān*) is rebuked before he has an opportunity to speak (v. 2) and Joshua is assured that his sin has been removed (v. 4). His filthy clothes are taken off and replaced with clean clothes and the angel of the Lord (*mal'ak yhwh)* says to him, "This is what the Lord Almighty says: 'If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements, then you will govern my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you a place among these standing here'" (v. 7).

This passage of scripture (Zech 3:1-7) has received different interpretations by different biblical scholars. Some scholars who have worked with Zechariah 3:1-7 maintain that Joshua is a cypher for the restored community and that his change of clothes represents the change in the community's status from impure to pure (or sinful to forgiven) in the eyes of Yahweh (see Page 1995:31; Day 1988:117). Joshua's filthy clothing, it is asserted, represents the people's sin and guilt, which led to exile. The *śātān*, they say, is objecting to this change in the community's

status. Yahweh wishes to pardon his people; the *śātān* is opposed. The *śātān*, therefore, represents the strict observance of legality that precludes pardon; he is the relentless accuser who rigidly interprets retributive justice. He is opposed to the plan of salvation (cf.. e.g. Kluger 1967:144). The *śātān* is, in this instance, seen as the justice of Yahweh as contrasted by Yahweh's grace (e.g. Mitchell 1912:151).

Another interpretation of the Zechariah portion as represented, among others, by Hanson (1977:195-233) and Pagels (1995:43f) is that of seeing the *śātān* as inciting factions among the people. Zechariah's account is said to reflect the conflicts that arose within Israel after thousands of Jews, many of them influential and educated, whom the Babylonians had captured in war and exiled to Babylon, returned to Palestine from exile. Cyrus, king of Persia, having then recently conquered Babylon, not only allowed these Jewish exiles to go home but intended to make them his allies. Thus he offered them funds to reconstruct Jerusalem's defensive city walls, and to rebuild the great temple, which the Babylonians had destroyed. Those returning were eager to re-establish the worship of "the Lord alone" in their land, and they naturally expected to re-establish themselves as rulers of the people. But, they were not warmly welcomed by those whom they had left behind. Many of those who had remained saw the former exiles not only as agents of the Persian king, but as determined to retrieve the power and land they had been forced to relinquish when they were deported. Many resented the returnees' plan to take charge of the priestly offices and to "purify" the Lord's worship. In this line of thought, the prophet Zechariah is said to be siding with the returning exiles in this heated conflict and recounts a vision in which the *śātān* speaks for the rural inhabitants who accuse the returning high priest of being a worthless candidate. Here the *śātān* speaks for a disaffected, and unsuccessful party against another party of fellow Israelites. In Zechariah's account of factions within Israel, the *śātān* takes on a sinister quality and his role begins to change from that of God's agent to that of his opponent (see Pagels 1995:44).

The majority of scholars understand the scene presented in Zechariah 3:1-7 as one of investiture (cf. e.g. May 1938:179; Day 1988:118). That priestly consecration involved a change of clothes is demonstrated by Exodus 29:4 and Leviticus 8:7; it is also accompanied by the donning of a turban (*misnepet* Ex 29:6; Lv

8:9). Furthermore, Zecharia 3 is drawing on a genre of the prophetic call, a genre which implies a change of role and status (cf. Day 1988:118). Proponents of this line of thinking draw parallels between Zechariah 3:1-7 and Isaiah 6. Both passages depict a human being at a meeting of the divine council. Both human beings are impure and both are cleansed by a heavenly intermediary. As a result of this action, both characters acquire authority. Isaiah is empowered to deliver God's message, and Joshua gains ongoing access to the divine council. Both Zechariah 3:1-7 and Isaiah 6 show parallels that are too close and too abundant to be accidental; Zechariah 3:1-7 must be purposely drawing on the call genre (Jeremias in Day 1988:119).

Having established the contextual bearings of the passage under focus, an endeavour can be made in understanding the role of the *śāṭān*. Day (1988:121) proposes that the *śāṭān* in the passage is depicted as objecting to Joshua's investiture because in fact his assumption of office was not univocally supported within the restoration community (cf. Vanderkam 1991:553f). Zechariah 3:1-7 proclaims that the divine council itself has sanctioned Joshua's appointment as high priest, and presents his exercise of office as a divine commission (v. 7). The presence of a celestial *śāṭān* tells us that the objections to Joshua's candidacy had been aired even in the heavenly assembly, and had been overruled. The *śāṭān* is described as standing at Joshua's right hand, a position which conforms to that of the prosecutor in Psalm 109:6. The text itself does not delineate the precise charge(s) brought against Joshua in the heavenly court, either the original audience knew them well enough that they did not need to be repeated, or the author is being intentionally vague (cf. Day 1988:121). In the passage (v.1) the reason is identified for Satan's presence - to accuse Joshua - but Satan is not given an opportunity to do so. We are left to infer what the substance of the charges might have been (cf. Page 1995:32). In any case, before Satan could speak, he is silenced with the words: "The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?" (v. 2). The account then goes on to describe the removal of the high priest's filthy clothes and the replacement of them with clean ones. This is then followed by the recommissioning of Joshua and the promise of a successor who will bring greater blessing in the future (vv. 8-10).

In conclusion, it is noticeable that the role of the *śāṭān* in Zechariah 3:1-7 is very brief and somewhat obscure. The main focus of the vision in the changing of Joshua's clothing or status, the *śāṭān* is mentioned only incidentally. In this passage the role of the *śāṭān* is that of a prosecutor or accuser. Though the *śāṭān* might have had legitimate accusations to make, in that function of prosecutor/accuser, he is rebuked by the *mal'ak yhwh* - a celestial intermediary who acts both as intercessor and witness (cf. Day 1988:123). Appearing in Zechariah 3 as one who seeks to remind God of human sinfulness, the *śāṭān* is antagonistic to God's gracious disposition towards his people. Although the *śāṭān* is hostile to God, he is also completely subordinated to him. Satan does not even utter a word before he is rebuked for being opposed to the divine will regarding Joshua. The image of Satan as accuser of God's people found in the prologue of Job and in Zechariah 3:1-7 is also found in Revelation 12:10. In all these instances the ultimate authority and sovereignty of God is not in question.

2.5.2.4   SATAN IN 1 CHRONICLES

Another reference to Satan in the Old Testament is found in 1 Chronicles 21:1. The whole narrative in 1 Chronicles 21:1-22:1 is parralleled in the Deuteronomistic history by 2 Samuel 24. The narrative describes a census ordered by David during his reign, an ensuing plague and an altar built on the threshing floor of a Jebusite named Araunah. Day (1988:132) draws our attention to the fact that the introductory verse in 2 Samuel 24 links with 2 Samuel 21. In 2 Samuel 24:1, the story begins, "Again the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and he incited David against them saying, 'Go and take a census of Israel and Judah'". In 2 Samuel 21, another natural disaster is related that occurred during the reign of David, namely a three year famine. The historian in 2 Samuel attributes this famine to bloodguilt incurred by Saul's treatment of the Gibeonites, and thus the two chapters taken together originally functioned as an apologetic, exonerating David from any blame for the respective catastrophes (see Day 1988:133).

In her observation, Day (1988:133) thinks that the Chronicler included the census plaque story in his history of the reign of David because he understood the altar built by David in response to the plague to be the altar of the Solomonic temple (1 Chr 22:1). In his narrative, the Chronicler was highly selective in terms

of the material he chose to transmit concerning the reign of David. On the one hand, he generally deleted material (such as the Bathsheba incident, Nathan's rebuke and the revolt of Absalom) as counterproductive to his goal of demonstrating that David was an ideal monarch. On the other hand, he rearranged the order of his source material, for instance to give the impression that David's first act after securing Jerusalem was to attend to the ark. Day goes on to state that the Chronicler had three primary objectives in his treatment of the reign of David: to show that David was the legitimate king for all Israel, to smooth over any reference to internal opposition (e.g. Bathsheba, Nathan, Absalom), and to portray David as the founder and organiser of Israel's cultic life (1 Chr 23-27). It was for the third reason that the Chronicler included the story of the census, plague and altar building (cf. Day 1988:134; Fohrer 1983:90-91).

In both 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles, it is to be recognised, the census is represented as a sinful act that brings punishment upon the nation. However, neither book explains what makes it so reprehensible. Biblical scholars have proffered a variety of hypotheses to account for the negative assessment of the census. Some suggest that the census might have been perceived as a threat to the liberties of the various tribes under David's control (cf. McKane 1963:302). Gaster (1969:483f) speculates that David's census was opposed because of the superstitious fear that knowledge of the exact number of things gives the one who knows power over these things. Another view is that David took the census for the purpose of instituting taxation which aroused vehement and immediate opposition (cf. Pagels 1995:42-43). More attractive than these suggestions is the view that taking a census represented reliance on human military might, rather than on Yahweh (Mauchline 1971:332; cf. Page 1995:34-35; Myers 1965:71). This hypothesis seems attractive and reasonable because a census was normally a vehicle for military conscription. Indeed, 1 Chronicles 21:5 indicates that, after completing the census, Joab reported to David the number of fighting men. What made the census so heinous was that David was abandoning the complete trust in Yahweh (cf. Jer 17:5; 2 Chr 32:7-8) that characterised his early victories over the Philistines, as described in 1 Chronicles 14:8-17, and instead was placing his confidence in the size of his army (cf. Page 1995:35).

Of special interest to our study is the reason why the court historian slips "satan" into an account concerning the origin of census taking. It is said in 1 Chronicles 21:1 that śātān incited David to the sin of taking a census. In the Deuteronomistic counterpart of this episode (2 Sam 24:1) it was the "wrath of the Lord" that caused the national census to be undertaken by David. Although the notion that God could cause evil and sin (cf. Jdg 9:23; 1 Sam 2:25; 16:4; 1 Ki 12:15; Isa 6:10) was not altogether alien to Old Testament belief, it was in direct conflict with the theological viewpoint of the author of Chronicles who emphatically emphasised the transcendence of the Lord as well as human responsibility and accountability for one's conduct (cf. Nel 1987:7; Haag 1974:207). By replacing the reference to the "wrath of Yahweh" (2 Sam 24:1) with a reference to śātān, the Chronicler (1 Chr 21:1) has altered his source in a surprising way. In the view of Page (1995:35), probably this emendation reflects a growing awareness that God is not the immediate instigator of evil. Page says the change also reflects a developing conception of Satan, which sees him as one who directly encourages human sin. Nel (1987:7) also draws our attention to the fact that it is important to note that śātān does not substitute for Yahweh himself, as proposed by Page (1995:35), but for the "wrath of Yahweh" (2 Sam 24:1). Satan was, therefore viewed as a kind of demon which personified or substituted for the "wrath of Yahweh" (cf. Von Rad 1964:73; Nel 1987:7).

The major problem, according to Nel (1987:7) and Day (1988:127) arises from the fact that one cannot be absolutely sure whether śātān, without the definite article in 1 Chronicles 21:1, is a proper noun or not. The major English translations of the Hebrew Bible (e.g. KJV, RSV, etc.) interpret the lack of the definite article to mean that śātān in 1 Chronicles 21:1 is being used as a proper name, and the vast majority of modern commentators concur (cf. e.g. Myers 1965:145; McCarter 1984:509). There have been dissenting voices, though. Tur-Sinai (1957:44-45) and Kaupel (1930:105f) have maintained that śātān in 1 Chronicles is an indefinite noun referring to a human adversary, while Gaster (1976:225) and Lemke (1963:61) take śātān to mean an unspecified celestial adversary. Haag et al (1974:214) note in passing that the noun śātān in 1 Chronicles 21:1 may be indefinite, but develop their treatment of the passage with the understanding that it is a proper name. Day (1988:128) disputes the fact that śātān in 1 Chronicles 21:1 may be referring to a proper name, citing the earliest datable

evidence that Satan as a proper name comes from Jubilees 23:29 and *Assumption of Moses* 10:1, both of which can be dated to the persecutions of Antiochus.

Our focus, though, limits itself to the role of *śāṭān* in 1 Chronicles 21:1. Day (1988:143) says that the alternative to understanding the Chronicler's *śāṭān* as a human military adversary is to understand the term as referring to an unspecified member of the celestial assembly. Day postulates that understood in this manner, this celestial *śāṭān* could be construed either as an unnamed adversary who, like the *ruah śeqer* of 1 Kings 22 who proposed to the divine assembly a plan whereby Ahab could be lured to his death, rises up against Israel and provokes David to take a census, or as a divine accuser who brings an unspecified charge against Israel to the heavenly assize. Day comes to a conclusion that, given the extreme terseness of 1 Chronicles 21:1, it is difficult to choose between these two possibilities. However, in Nel's (1987:7) view, one fact seems to be beyond doubt: This *śāṭān* acted as Yahweh's instrument (cf. the version of 2 Sam 24:1) and not his antagonist or rival. Page (1995:36) concurs with this view when he concludes that, "Although Satan plays the part of the tempter in 1 Chronicles 21:1, he does not act independently of the will of God."

In conclusion, it can be stated that nothing in the text suggests a metaphysical dualism. Satan appears to be part of the heavenly entourage, playing an accusing or prosecuting role. By altering the tradition, the Chronicler made certain that Yahweh's sovereignty and transcendence were secured. Furthermore, David takes full responsibility for his sinful behaviour (cf. 1 Chr 21:8, 17). Finally, the divine judgement following the census demonstrates that God held David accountable for his actions.

Unlike the other instances where *śāṭān* is mentioned, the Chronicler presents us with a more developed angeology (cf. Day 1988:138); In 1 Chronicles 21 and 2 Samuel 24 Yahweh has retreated to a higher heaven, and his will is carried out through intermediaries. The *mal'ak yhwh* plays a larger role in 1 Chronicles 21 than in 2 Samuel 24. The specific fact that the *mal'ak yhwh* in 1 Chronicles 21:16 is described as hovering in mid-air (as opposed to standing on the ground) and this has been used widely to support the contention that the Chronicler had an advanced notion of angels.

Having completed our survey of the Old Testament passages related to Satan, we can go on to draw some conclusions. Satan, as a product of the Jewish and Christian interpretation of the Old Testament *śātān* texts, is not a figure of major importance. An investigation into the scriptural references to *śātān* in the Old Testament does not reveal Satan as a distinctive demonic figure, opposed to God and responsible for all the depravity of humankind. Although the Septuagint (LXX) renders the last three post-exilic occurrences (i.e. Zech 3:1; Job 1-2; 1 Chr 21:1) with *ho diábolos,* it nevertheless does not confirm the notion of a superhuman being who is absolutely antagonistic of God. Even the mentioning of *śātān* in 1 Chronicles 21:1 in the Hebrew Bible without a definite article does not shed conclusive evidence that Satan had acquired a proper name in the Old Testament. In the instance where there is a *śātān* referent in the Old Testament he appears to be playing sometimes a role of the *mal'ak yhwh,* executing divine punishment as in Numbers 22. At some other times he assumes a legal-adversarial role in the heavenly tribunal, accusing the righteous before God, trying their faith by afflicting them with misfortune and enticing them to commit sin. Throughout the references of Satan in the Old Testament he is subordinated to God and he is never depicted as capable of thwarting God's purposes. Nor is Satan's influence over humankind such as to cause any human person to deny responsibility for sin.

2.5.3 <u>DEMONS (POWERS) IN THE OLD TESTAMENT</u>

According to Verkuyl (1978:95), in what he calls the "motif of antagonism", the whole Old Testament (and the New Testament as well) is filled with descriptions of how Yahweh-Adonai, the covenant God of Israel, is waging war against these forces which try to thwart and subvert his plans for his creation. He battles against those false gods which human beings have fashioned from the created world, idolised and used for their own purposes. To illustrate this Verkuyl quotes the Baals and the Ashtaroth, whose worshippers elevated nature, the tribe, the state, and the nature to a divine status. God fights against magic and astrology which, acccording to Deuteronomy, bend the line between God and his creation. The whole of the Old Testament, according to Verkuyl, burns with a feverish desire to defeat those opposing powers.

However, Ling (1961:3) correctly notices that the references to hostile evil powers as far as the Old Testament is concerned are remarkably few. On the other hand, Langton (1949:35) makes a case for saying that there are more allusions to evil spirits in the Old Testament than is commonly supposed and he points out that when these seperate allusions are brought together and studied in relation to each other, they become much more impressive and significant. In his list of demons in the Old Testament, Langton mentions the seraphim, which he takes to be demonic serpents (see Langton 1949:35). In this belief of viewing the seraphim as demonic, Langton does not seem to garner much support. In the Old Testament foreign gods are called *shedim* (Dt 32:17; Ps 106:37; cf. 1 Cor 10:20), rendered "demons" or "devils" in most translations. The word is related to Akkadian *šêdu* ("demon", good or evil - see Hillers 1971:1523). In concurring with this, Page (1995:66) says that the word appears to have been borrowed from Assyro-Babylonian religion in which *šêdu* could denote both good and evil spirits. Its meaning is uncertain, though it may come from a root that means "rule" (see Unger 1994:59; Brown, Driver and Briggs 1906:994). When the word is used in the Old Testament it is definitely in the negative light.

The list of creatures mentioned with the *se'irim* ("hairy demons, satyrs" - see Hillers 1971:1523) in Isaiah 13:21f, some of which are mentioned in Isaiah 34:14, all of which, as Langton (1949:35) suggests, share the same character, and are conceived to be either demons or incarnations of demons. The word *se'irim* is applied contemptuously to foreign deities (Lv 17:7; 2 Chr 11:15). The *se'irim* are said to haunt ruins, along with Lilith (Isa 13:21; 34:14).

The description of the ultimate desolation of Edom in Isaiah 34:14 includes at least two words with demonological associations. Edom is portrayed as being the habitation, not only of the *se'irim* but also of *lîlît*. The latter is rendered "night creatures" in the New International Version (RSV - "night hag"; NASB - "night monster"), but it would probably be best simply to transliterate the Hebrew word as "Lilith" (see Page 1995:72), as the Jerusalem Bible does. The word is generally understood as the name of a female night demon. Lilith appears to have been a familiar figure throughout the ancient Near East. In post-biblical times, Lilith became the object of a great deal of speculation in Judaism. Lilith was originally said to be a succubus, believed to cohabit with mortals, but in the

Arslan Tash incantation she is identified with the child-stealing demon, a character she retains in later folklore. The tradition that the name means "screech-owl" (in so many translations) reflects a very ancient association of birds, especially owls, with the demonic (see Hillers 1971:1523).

Mavet or *mawet* is an ordinary Hebrew word for death but it is also used as the proper name of a Canaanite underworld god (Mot), the enemy of Baal in a Ugaritic epic (see Hillers 1971:1524). The proper name, not the common noun, in Hilliers' view, should probably be understood in Isaiah 28:15, 18 in the following manner: "We have made a covenant with Death" and Jeremiah 9:21: "Death has come in through our windows."

Resheph is another major god of the Canaanite religion which becomes a demonic figure in biblical literature. Resheph was known as the god of plague over much of the ancient Near East, in texts and artistic representations spanning more than a millenium from 1850 BC - 350 BC (see Hillers 1971:1524). In Habakkuk 3:5, Yahweh on the warpath is said to be preceded and followed by Dever and Resheph Just as some other names of deities are used as common nouns in biblical Hebrew (Dagon, *dagon* - "grain"); Ashtaroth (*ashtarot*, "increase [of the flock]" etc.), so Resheph *(reshef)* has come to mean simply "plague" (Dt 33:29; Ps 78:48), and the fiery darts of the bow (Ps 76:3; cf. Hillers 1971:1524).

Dever or *deber* ("Pestilence") is another demonic herald who inexplicably is mentioned as marching with Yahweh to battle (Hab 3:5). Dever or *deber* is also mentioned in Psalms 91:5-6.

> "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror *(pahad)* by night;
> Nor for the arrow *(Hez)* that flieth by day;
> Nor for the pestilence *(Dever)* that walketh in the darkness;
> Nor for the destruction *(Ketev)* that wasteth at noonday."

Not only Dever but also the other words italicised above have been plausibly identified as names of demons (see Hillers 1971:1524).

Az'azel which occurs in the ritual for the Day of Atonement (Lv. 16:8, 10, 26) is regarded by Langton (1949:35) as a Semitic god of the flocks and was later degraded to the level of a demon. In the Old Testament, Aaron casts lots over two goats, and the one for *Az'azel* is presented alive before the Lord, and then released into the wilderness. Most of the rabbinic commentators and some moderns take Azazel as the name of the place to which the goat is driven. The great majority of moderns regards Azazel as the personal name of a demon thought to live in the wilderness (cf. Hillers 1971:1524). *Alukah ('aluqah')* mentioned in Proverbs 30:15 may be explained as a vampire-like female demon of the Lilith type (see Langton 1949:35) which had two daughters, crying "give, give" (see also Hillers 1971:1525).In the Old Testament we find that demons live in deserts or ruins (Lv 16:10; Isa 13:21; 34:14). They inflict sickness on human beings. They afflict the human mind. This is illustrated in the Old Testament narrative that mentions an evil spirit that afflicts Saul. Appearing in the account of the transfer of power from Saul to David, references to the spirit are found in 1 Samuel 16:14-16, 23; 18:10; and 19:9, Saul had been the first king of the united kingdom. In connection with his assumption of power, there are two occassions when the Spirit of God came upon him (cf. 1 Sam 10:6, 10; 11:6). Saul did not, however, live up to the promise of these early experiences. Because of his failure to obey the command to destroy the Amalekites, he was rejected by Yahweh as king of Israel (1 Sam 15:26). Samuel subsequently anointed David and then the Spirit of Yahweh came upon David (1 Sam 16:13). The Spirit of Yahweh left Saul and an evil spirit came upon him (1 Sam 16:14). For Page (1995:75), the coming of the evil spirit was not a capricious act, for the narrator clearly represents it as a consequence of the departure of the Spirit of God from Saul and his coming upon David. The narrative indicates that the evil spirit came upon Saul repeatedly and that it tormented him. The experience obviously caused Saul a great deal of anguish, for he sought relief from its distress. Ironically, David, who had been selected as Saul's successor, was brought in to play the harp in an effort to alleviate his suffering (1 Sam 16:15-23).

In ancient times, music was regarded, as it is today, as having therapeutic value for those with psychological afflictions, and it did have a beneficial effect. When David played, Saul experienced relief, and the evil spirit left him. Not only was

Saul's condition distressing to him personally, but on two occasions he became violent and made attempts on David's life (1 Sam 18:10-11; 19:9-10). It has been suggested that Saul displayed symptoms of both paranoia and a manic-depressive condition (see McCarter 1980:280-281). But Page (1995:76) contends that it would be a mistake to reduce Saul's ailment to the psychological level. In Page's opinion, there is an important theological dimension to Saul's experience that is highlighted in the biblical account. The contrast between the Spirit of Yahweh and the evil spirit, according to Page (1995:77), demands that the evil spirit be understood as an external power that existed independently of Saul. Some have even suggested that the story of Saul's affliction should be taken as an Old Testament account of demon possession (see Alexander 1902:20; Payne 1962:290).

Another activity of the evil spirits in the Old Testament appears to be that of deceiving (see 1 Ki 22:19-23; 2 Chr 18:18-22). These passages record a vision of the prophet Micaiah in which he saw a "lying spirit". Ahab, the king of Israel, was seeking to form an alliance with Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, in order that together they might attack Ramoth Gilead and wrest it from Aramean control. Jehoshaphat insisted that they seek the counsel of the Lord before going into battle. Ahab brought together four hundred of his prophets, who advised proceeding with the attack, assuring Ahab of victory. Jehoshaphat asked whether there was a prophet of Yahweh who could be consulted. Eventually Ahab called Micaiah. Micaiah told of a vision he had had of a meeting of the divine council. In the vision, Yahweh asked who would go to entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead, where he would be killed. A spirit, not necessarily an evil one, came forward and offered to do so by being a lying spirit in the mouths of Ahab's prophets. Yahweh agreed to this plan, and so it was that Ahab's prophets urged him to engage in the battle that cost him his life.

In both cases, namely, in the narratives of the evil spirit tormenting Saul and the lying spirit to the four hundred prophets, the spirits appear to be agents of divine punishment. The spirits do not act outside God's control. Even in the reference to an evil spirit found in Judges 9:23, the evil spirit is in subordination to God. What makes the spirits evil in these episodes is not that they are inherently wicked but their function makes them evil.

Some features of the Israelite religion bear resemblance to apotropaic measures employed in other religions (see Hillers 1971:1523). Thus, the bells on the robe of the high priest (Ex 28:33-35) recall the use of bells in other cultures in the belief that their tinkling keeps demons away. So, also horns (Ex 19:16; Lv 25:9), incense (Lv 16:12-13) smearing of doorposts (Ex 12:7), the colour blue (Nm 15:38), written scripture-texts (phylacteries; cf. Dt 6:8; 11:18) - all have parallels elsewhere as devices to ward off evil spirits (see Hillers 1971:1523).

The Old Testament teaching on (evil) spirits or powers would be incomplete if there is no reference to "supernatural rulers" over nations. Green (1981:79) observes that sometimes in the Old Testament we read of the *kedoshim*, or "holy ones", a heavenly court presided over by the Lord himself (Ps 89:6, 8; Job 15:15; Dt 33:2; Zech 14:5). Frequently God is called *Yahweh Sabaoth*, "Lord of the powers", and here the gods of polytheism are seen as captives under his suzerainty. We also read of the *bene elohim* or "sons of God" in Job, the Psalms, and Genesis 6:3. But perhaps the most important passage of all is Deuteronomy 32:8 where we read that God fixed the bounds of all the peoples according to the number of the *bene elohim*, the sons of God. As for the children of Israel, they were the Lord's portion. Green (1981:79) sees the meaning as given more elucidatively in Deuteronomy 4:19 which speaks of the moon, stars and hosts of heaven which the Lord has alloted to all the peoples under heaven, with the exception of Israel whom he had appointed for himself. Thus, "He appointed a ruler for every nation, but Israel is the Lord's own portion" (Ecclus 17:7).

Green (1981:79), among others, believes that the nations which ruled the ancient world were under the supervision of their angel-princes, who in turn were under the ultimate control of Yahweh, the Lord of heaven and earth, who had entered into a covenant relationship with his people Israel. In an endeavour to support this position, Page (1995:54f) cites two examples, namely, the gods of Psalm 82 and the powers in the heavens above in Isaiah 24. In the Isaiah 24:21-22 passage we read:

In that day the Lord will punish the powers in the heavens

above and the kings on the earth below. They will be
herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon; they
will be shut in prison and be punished after many days.

By his own admission, Page (1995:60) believes that the identification of "the
powers in the heavens above" is one of the exegetical conundrums of Isaiah
24:21-22. Despite some dissenting voices, a widely held view of Isaiah 24:21-
22 identifies the powers as suprahuman beings allied with the kings of the nations
(cf.. e.g. Delitzsch 1892; Young 1969; Clements 1980:205f). The powers may
have been viewed as gods by these nations, but from Israel's perspective, they
were fallen angels (cf.. Page 1995:61; Oswalt 1986;454). Also, there is a rab-
binic tradition that Isaiah 24 refers to patron angels (cf. Urbach 1987:138).

According to Page (1995:63), the clearest Old Testament references to angels
who exercise influence over specific nations are found in Daniel 10:13, 20-21
and 12:1 (see also Jub 15:31). Daniel had a vision of a man dressed in linen (ch.
10-12). From the description in 10:5-6, it is obvious that this man was an angel.
The unnamed angel's message to Daniel includes information about the "princes"
of Persia and Greece and one named Michael, who is identified in 12:1 as the
prince who protects Israel. Michael also occupies the role of the prince of the
people of God in the Qumran *War Scroll* (1 QM 14) and has a similar function
in Revelation 12:7. Apparently, these princes are not human, although the word
by which they are designated (*sar*) can denote human rulers (Dn 9:6, 8 - see
Green 1981:79; Page 1995:63). There appears to be similarities between the
princes in Daniel and the patron angels mentioned in Deuteronomy 32:8 and
Isaiah 24:21. Although this is a general view of many scholars on the "princes" in
Daniel, especially among the spiritual mapping school, there are others who dis-
pute the fact that "princes" in Daniel may have any references to (fallen) angels
(see Shea 1983:225f).

On the issue of princes, Page (1995:64) believes that the fact that Daniel's three-
week fast coincides with the three-week struggle between the unnamed angel
and the prince of Persia demonstrates a relationship between human intercession
and what happens on a higher plane. Daniel's prayers to God appear to influence
angels who play a significant role in shaping the destiny of nations (Otis 1997:182;

Page 1995:64). It is the conviction of Page that the portrayal of the princes of the nations in Daniel reveals that the unfolding of human history is not determined solely by the decisions made by human beings, for there is an unseen dimension of reality that must be taken into account. According to Page, obviously there are malevolent forces in the universe that exercise a baneful influence in the socio-political realm, especially where the people of God are concerned. This conviction grew more vividly in post-exilic Judaism, perhaps due to Zoroastrian influence (Green 1981:24; Hume 1959:211; cf. Khathide 2000:82). Wagner (1996) and others of the spiritual warfare paradigm, based on the conflict of the angelic forces and the intercession of Daniel, believe that the church ought to audaciously engage the evil forces that influence the direction and affairs of nations today. Nevertheless, Page (1995:65) cautions, and rightly so, that such otherwise noble and legitimate endeavours as intercession (see Eph 6:10-18), spiritual mapping and spiritual warfare, should not run the risk of indulging in the sort of speculation that scripture consistently avoids, and also that we need to be aware that in such exercises there is ever a danger of exaggerating the role of territorial spirits in such a way that the biblical teaching on divine sovereignty is compromised (for a critique of spiritual mapping and warfare see Lowe 1998a; Bresheare 1994:13f; Van der Meer 2001:47f). Nevertheless, in the Daniel conflict of celestial powers, if we so interpret them, we realise that the power of these evil agencies is limited, for the transcendent powers of good oppose them, and the faithful prayers of believers are also effective against them.

On the whole, we need to restate the observation of Langton (1949:8) who says that even the full extent of Old Testament demonology is very slight compared with the religious texts of the surrounding peoples. Ling (1961:4) says the comparative scarcity in the Old Testament of references to demonic beings can be attributed to the strong influence which prophetic Yahwism has had upon the Old Testament writings. Robinson (1913:47) concurs that the scantiness of Old Testament demonology can be explained in the character of Yahwism which would tolerate no rivals. Against this background, Hillers (1971:1523) says, therefore, one must not overestimate the importance of the numerous small traces of belief in the demons in the Old Testament, or underestimate the difficulties involved in interpreting them. At this junction, for the purposes of our study, we need to turn to what the Old Testament has to say about witches, mediums, magic and spirits (ancestral or otherwise).

2.5.4   WITCHES, MEDIUMS AND SPIRITS

According to Aune (1986:214f), the occultic practices were common among the neighbours of Israel, and they proved to be a great temptation. It is for this reason that we find numerous commands and admonitions throughout the Old Testament, warning Israel to stay away from every form of magical practice (see Arnold 1994:58).

Some of the spiritistic practices, sometimes called sciences, were developed and used by the ancient Chaldeans of Babylonia. Isaiah, in the eighth century B.C., tells us that the Babylon of his day was rife with sorceries of all sorts (Isa 47:12-15). More than a century later, in the days of Daniel, the magic-practising priests were still part of the Babylonian court (Dn 1:20; 2:2, 10, 27; 4:7; 5:11). Magic-practising priests, witchdoctors, medicine men and women, and sorcerers of all sorts were found among many places, the prime example being the Egyptians in the days of Joseph (Gen 41:8, 24). In the time of Moses, the magic-practising priests of Egypt showed their power by seemingly duplicating the first two miracles performed by Moses (Ex 7:11, 22; 8:7). But their powerlessness or limitation of their power was demonstrated when it came to the producing of gnats, having to admit that it was "the finger of God" (Ex 8:19; cf. Lk 11:19). The magicians of Egypt were following a known concept of magic-working sorcery that was, and still is, based on the belief that evil spirits can be induced either to help people or to harm them.

In the ancient Near East, according to the inquiry of Arnold (1994:59), many forms of divination were practised. One of the most popular forms was liver inspection (hepatoscopy). Perhaps, because the liver was thought to be the seat of the blood, and thus the centre of life, it was especially important in popular belief as an object that could help determine the future. Another well-known divination was necromancy, the conjuring of the dead (cf. 1 Sam 28:3-25). Since divination was closely associated with magic in all its forms, biblical teaching soundly condemned it (see Lv 19:26, 31; cf. Aune 1986:971f). Unger (1994:108f) believes that the wickedness and illegitimate nature of magic - the art of bringing about results beyond human power through the enlistment of supernatural agencies - appears when it is realised that the supernatural agencies are evil spirits.

Throughout the Old Testament different kinds of occultic practices are often cata-
logued, either in a list of prohibitions or in a historical narrative where the sins of a
key figure are mentioned. For example, Manasseh, one of the kings of Judah, was
guilty in the eyes of the Chronicler for breaking the occultic prohibitions of the
Torah. He worshipped the Canaanite gods, practised astrology or a form of astral
religion ("bowed down to all starry host and worshipped them" 2 Chr 33:3).
Manasseh also "sacrificed his sons in the fire in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, prac-
tised sorcery, divination and witchcraft, and consulted mediums and spirits" (2 Chr
33:1-6). The Chronicler concludes by saying that Manasseh did much evil. Like-
wise, Hosea, the last king of the northern kingdom, led Israel away from God to
pursue the worship of foreign gods and engage in occultic practices, including
astrology. The narrator says they set up sacred stones and Asherah poles, they
worshipped idols, they imitated the nations around them, they bowed down to all
the starry hosts, they worshipped Baal, they sacrificed their sons and their daugh-
ters in the fire, and they practised divination and sorcery (see Arnold 1994:58).
The biblical author interprets their action as selling themselves to do evil in the eyes
of the Lord, provoking him to anger and as a result, the Lord was "very angry with
Israel", removing them from his presence (2 Ki 17:7-23).

In the Old Testament, none of these occult practices are ever described in any
detail. Instead they are mentioned in a list and condemned. There was a clear
assumption on the part of the various Old Testament writers that the readers would
know precisely what was being referred to. In the Torah, the most comprehensive
list of occultic prohibitions is given:

> Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or
> daughter in the fire, who practises divination or sorcery,
> interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or
> who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead.
> Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord
> and because of these detestable practices the Lord your
> God will drive out those nations before you (Dt 18:10-
> 12).

Various methods of divination are condemned in scripture. There were different

divining methods that were prevalent in the ancient world among the Babylonians and other Semites and among the Greeks and the Romans (see Unger 1994:131). In Ezekiel's prophecy about the king of Babylon (see 21:21), he is said to have been involved in three kinds of divination common among the Semitic nations, namely, hepatoscopy ("looking in the liver") and consulting the teraphim - a form of divination which may have been effected by consulting the dead (see Unger 1994:132). There is no evidence which is available that these three kinds of divination which was prevalent among Semites, were practised among the Israelites. Rhabdomancy or divination by the use of the divining rod, is referred to by Hosea as practised by the Israelites in their defection and apostasy. The prophet condemns it (Hos 4:12). Although no explicit mention is made of it in the Deuteronomic list (Dt 18:9-15), astrology or astromancy is to be closely associated with Moloch-worship (see Amos 5:25-26 and Acts 7:41-43). Leahy (1975:71) writes that the orgiastic rites of the priests of Baal (1 Ki 18:28) are strongly suggestive of demon-possession; and it is significant that Jezebel, that patroness of Baalism, was known to dabble in magical incantations (A.V. witchcraft, 2 Ki 9:22). Against these God said through Micah, "I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand, and thou shalt have no more soothsayers" (5:12). Unger (1994:112f) also goes on to mention charms and amulets which were demonstrative of the apostasy and occultism of Israel (e.g. Gn 30:14-24; Isa 3:18; Jdg 8:21,26). Unger (1994:113) believes that the condemnation of the custom of wearing amulets and of trusting in the defence of mere material objects is implied in Proverbs 6:21. A young man is exhorted to "bind" parental admonitions continually upon his "heart" and to "tie" them about his neck. Unger also shows that it is significant that the Talmudic word for "an amulet" *(gemia)* denotes something tied or bound to the person. Leahy (1975:73) remarks that throughout the centuries, charms have always been associated with adolatry, demon-worship and the resulting superstition. Thus, magic and divination, Unger (1994:109) concludes, are in the strictest and truest sense, a departure from the biblically revealed religion.

Insofar as the ancestors are concerned, Craffert (1999:79f) maintains that in most of the Old Testament books the dead were not only absent but remained excluded from God's presence. They were aligned with the powers of chaos (see Müller-Fahrenholz 1995) and a threat to holiness. This is clearly seen in the

laws forbidding contact with a dead body (cf. Nm 19:11f). In the Old Testament, the living can praise God while the inability of the dead to do that put them outside God's sacred order (cf. Isa 39:18; Ps 6:5). The priestly tradition systematically tried to dissociate the tombs and the dead from the cult of Yahweh. It is also an interesting observation that the Bible states that, "So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord, and he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-pëor; but no man knows the place of his burial to this day" (Dt 34:5-6). The fact that no one knew the tomb of Moses, was it not, perhaps, a divine design to discourage the idolatry-prone Israelites from taking holy pilgrimages to the shrine of Moses, the greatest leader and liberator of the Israelites? As touching the dead in the Old Testament, Craffert (1999:80) says that the priestly tradition taught that the deceased persisted in sheol, which lies beyond the world of gods or human beings.

However, Craffert points out that side by side with this trend in the Hebrew Bible is another, which acknowledges the presence of function occupied by ancestors in community affairs. That is the veneration of the dead as a means of divine power. The ancestors were, so to speak, a gateway to the divine realm and were considered a continuous infuence in human affairs. The development of the idea in ancient Judaism of the importance of the bones and tombs of the elite dead can be traced from Abraham and Jacob to the burial of Saul and his sons. At these tombs, as at the altar, heaven and earth met (see Lightstone 1984:85; Craffert 1999:81). The fact that Jews in later periods were allowed to offer prayers at these tombs confirms the insight that the ancestors (and their tombs) achieved the status of intermediaries with the divine world. In fact, prayers could even be addressed to the deceased rather than to a divine being. Put differently, the ancestors themselves had become divine beings of a kind (see Craffert 1999:81). The case of Rachel, the matriarch, bears this fact. According to tradition, she had remained barren for a long time. Her tomb at Bethlehem (recently excavated) became a place of pilgrimage for barren women to pray for progeny. Craffert says that it is not surprising that the early church also adopted this line of tradition from their faith ancestors. In the very early stages in the life of the Christian church, the cult of the dead originated, in which the shrines of the Christian martyrs played a major role. Almost thirty localities in Palestine from the fourth cen-

tury CE have been identified as Christian holy places which were associated with the life of Jesus while the tombs of the saints and martyrs of the church became focal points for early Christian worship (see Craffert 1999:81).

The cult of the dead, to a greater or lesser degree, still remains a bone of theological contention in the process of Christian discipleship in Africa and other affected regions in the world.

In spite of the fact that the Old Testament invariably condemned the practice of consultation with the spirits of the departed dead as something completely at variance with the true spiritual worship of God, there is evidence, as Craffert notices, that the children of Israel dabbled in the ancestral cult. The children of Israel were obviously influenced by the nations of the ancient Near East. Unger (1994:143) corroborates this fact when he says that among various nations of antiquity, consulting with the spirits of the dead, was not only allowed, but abetted and widely practised. Necromancy was rife among the Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks and Romans. The diviner stood in the service of the states and was consulted before important decisions were made, or wars waged (see Jastrow 1911:150; Miller 1944:338).

Central to the question of ancestral worship and consultation of spirits and mediums is whether the dead are able to contact the living. According to Burnett (1988:65), the two common assumptions made by Christians are that the dead are unable to contact the living and that the materialisations are evil spirits in disguise. In the opinion of Burnett, the first assumption is based on verses such as Job 7:9, "So he who goes down to the grave does not return", which do not necessarily lead us to convincing conclusions. In his view, a more reliable basis is the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31. Even so, he argues, we cannot conclude that departed spirits are unable to communicate with the living. A careful reading shows that Abraham does not tell the rich man that it is impossible for the dead to return, but that it is spiritually useless (see Lk 16:31).

On the contrary, Burnett (1988:65) points out that a case can be made for the reality of the spirits of the dead or ghosts from the Bible. In the well-known story of the so-called witch of Endor in 1 Samuel 28 (see Angert-Quilter and Wall

2001) the medium was surprised that Samuel actually came back to life for a moment. This did not seem what she expected. Also in the New Testament, one finds Moses and Elijah conversing with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. Although these are unique cases, they do not discount the possibility of spirits or ghosts (see Bauer 1966:69f). Burnett 1988:66) feels that we must therefore conclude that the Bible does leave open the possibility that the dead may communicate with the living. However, Burnett shows that the Bible is emphatic that any attempt to communicate with the departed is sin. In Israel there was to be a total ban on anyone who "consults the dead" (Dt 18:11). One of the sins of Israel condemned by Isaiah is that the people tried to consult the dead: "When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people enquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living?" (Isa 8:19). As much as the Scripture encourages and stresses the obligation of children to "honour your father and your mother" (Ex 20:12), it forbids the communication with ancestral spirits and consulting the mediums.

In the case of Saul, Brueggemann (1990:193) concludes, "So Saul when approved religion will not reassure, goes elsewhere; against the religion of Samuel, against the prohibition of Deuteronomy, against his own royal edict. His decision to seek help from a medium is a measure of his moral exhaustion, his despairing faith, his failed life". According to Leahy (1975:71), the factor that counted against Saul was that generally whether in Israel or in heathen lands, the medium was thought to be in league with sinister forces of darkness.

2.5.5.   CONCLUSIONS

As far as the Old Testament is concerned, the references to hostile evil powers are remarkably few. The influence of prophetic Yahwism reduced the proliferation in the belief and practice of demonic activities, especially when compared with the religious texts of the surrounding peoples. The strong influence of prophetic Yahwism ensured the minor role played by the Satan-figure in the Old Testament. In the same vein, the consultation and communication with mediums and spirits, of whatever nature, were forbidden in the Old Testament.

2.6   DEMONOLOGY IN THE APOCRYPHA, PSEUDEPIGRAPH AND SOME OTHER JEWISH AND GRECO-ROMAN WRITINGS

2.6.1   THE ORIGIN OF SATAN AND DEMONS

The biblical idea that God and the righteous angels confronted the opposition of a great spiritual enemy, the devil backed by the army of the demons, had a long history and development in the ancient world. Many old stories of conflict among the gods are found in each of the cultures which influenced the biblical tradition (see Riley 1999:244).

In post-exilic and subsequent literature more than one account of the origin of the devil and fall of the angels is found. Insofar as the origin of the devil is concerned, one account seems to have been inspired by the oracles against the king of Babylon (Isa 14:4-20) and the king of Tyre (Ezek 28:11-19). The story goes that on the second day of creation, one of the archangels, in fact the highest of all, had through pride attempted to set himself up to be worshipped as an equal to God. The Latin translation of Isaiah 14:12 names this individual "Lucifer". In the book of Enoch 29:4-5 we read:

> One from out of the order of angels, having turned away
> with the order that was under him, conceived an impos-
> sible thought, to place his throne higher than the clouds
> above the earth, that he might become equal in rank to my
> (God's) power. And I threw him out from the height with
> his angels and he was flying in the air continuously above
> the bottomless [pit]".

Though the Old Testament never explicitly addresses the origin of Satan or how or when he turned against God, Arnold (1992:61) states that it is possible that couched in the prophecies against the king of Tyre and the king of Babylon are insights into the original state and fall of Satan. Arnold bases his argument on the fact that this is how early Jewish interpreters understood these passages.

In the *Life of Adam and Eve* (12-17), dating from the first century B.C., one encounters a detailed narrative of Adam and Eve's expulsion from Paradise and of Satan's downfall (cf. Nel 1987:12). After Adam and Eve are driven out of Paradise, they decide to do penance in the water, Adam in the Jordan river and Even in the Tigris. Once again Satan approached Eve to stop her mourning and lamenting. Together they go to Adam. When Adam sees Satan accompanying Eve, he asks Satan why he does not leave them alone. Adam is surprised to hear Satan's account of the events: "O Adam! all my hostility, envy, and sorrow is for thee, since it is for thee that I have been expelled from my glory, which I possessed in the heavens in the midst of the angels and for thee was I cast out in the earth ... It is for thy sake that I have been hurled from that place. When thou wast formed, I was expelled out of the presence of God and banished from the company of angels ... And Michael went out and called all the angels saying; 'Worship the image of God as the Lord God hath commanded'. And Michael himself worshipped first; then he called me and said: 'Worship the image of God the Lord'. And I answered, 'I have no [need] to worship Adam'. And since Michael kept urging me to worship, I said to him, 'Why dost thou urge me? I will not worship an inferior and younger being [than I]. I am his senior in the Creation, before he was made was I already made. It is his duty to worship me' ... And God the Lord was wrath with me and banished me and my angels from our glory; and on thy account were we expelled from our abodes into this world and hurled on the earth. And straightway we were overcome with grief, since we had been spoiled of so great glory. And we were grieved when we saw thee in such joy and luxury. And with guile I cheated thy wife and caused thee to be expelled through her [doing] from thy joy and luxury, as I have been driven out of my glory."

According to this account, therefore, Satan was expelled from God's presence and the heavenly realm of angels, because he refused to adore Adam, created in the image of God. Consequently he envies Adam and will in future not hesitate to cause Adam's disobedience. Nel (1987:12) also draws our attention thereto that the document of the *Life of Adam and Eve* is reminiscent of the first attempt in history of the deception of Genesis 3 that relates the fall of humankind with the activity of Satan in a causal fashion (see also the *Apocalypse of Moses, Wisdom of Solomon* 2:24, Josephus *Anti.* 1:41f). When it comes to the origin of demons,

the speculation in the post-exilic writings is as rife. In the *Life of Adam and Eve* we read that when the devil refused to worship and reverence Adam who had been made in the image of God, the Lord God was wroth with him and he banished the devil and his angels from their glory (16:1; cf. Tertullian, *De Patientia* 5; *Qur'an* 15:26-35).

In the later period in the rabbinic writings another explanation is given for the origin of demons: "After the souls were created, the Sabbath came and prevented the completion of the work of creation and so they remained without bodies (*Midrash Rabbah* Gen 7:5). Another explanation of the origin of demons comes from the mythological attribution to the union of Adam with female spirits and Eve with male spirits (M/R Gen 20:11 "Throughout the entire one hundred and thirty years during which Adam held aloof from Eve the male demons were made ardent by her and she bore, while the female demons were inflamed by Adam and they bore"; cf. M/R Gen 14a; 24:6, 16:9). Another view that was commonly repeated was that the demons were a special creation on the sixth day (*Aboth* 5:6; cf. *bPesahim* 54a, *Mishnah*).

Another ancient theory of the origin of the demons was that they were the souls of the dead who, having been unjustly treated or killed, sought retribution (Tertullian, *De Anima* 57). Yet another conception was that they were ghosts of the wicked dead (Josephus, *Bel Jud* 7.185: "Demons [are] spirits of the wicked people who enter and kill the living"). Origen tells us that the church had no clearly defined teaching on the genesis of demons; his view was that the devil, after becoming apostate, induced many of the angels to fall away with him; these fallen angels were demons.

The most ancient of popular myth found in the Bible, intertestamental literature, the rabbis and the church fathers of the origin of demons is linked with the story of Genesis 6:2-4 that relates that the *bene ha 'elohim*, male deities (not generically 'children of the Gods' - see Parker 1999:796) find *benot ha 'adam*, female humans, attractive and take in marriage whomever they choose. Parker also notices the conspicuousness of the absence of Yahweh from these mythical events.

In the Jewish literature of the post-exilic or intertestamental period, the promi-
nent theme was the belief that demons came into the world as a result of unnatural
sexual relations between angels and human beings. Many Jewish writers inter-
preted the reference to sons of God as "angels" who rebelled against God. The
disastrous consequence of this unnatural union resulted in the birth of the Nephilim,
the source of demons and evil spirits (cf. Arnold 1992:66; Riley 1999:246; Nel
1987:11-12; Hendel 1993:168f). The Jewish apocalyptic book of 1 Enoch spends
thirty-one chapters elaborating on the fall *(1 Enoch 6-36)*. According to this
account, after the physical beauty of women on earth erotically tantalised some
200 angels (see the *Apocalypse of Baruch*), led by a certain Semyaz, the angels
made a joint decision to violate their divinely given boundaries by engaging in
sexual activity with women. While they were occupying the earth, they taught
people many evil arts, including alchemy, astrology, incantations and warfare.
The women made pregnant by these supernatural beings, gave birth to freakish
giants. These giants committed numerous atrocities and were drowned by the
flood *(1 Enoch 6-16*; Jude 6; 2 Pet 2:4). Their disembodied souls became the
demons. In *1 Enoch 15:8-12* it is stated:

> And now, the giants, who are produced from the spirits
> and flesh, shall be called evil spirits upon the earth, and on
> earth shall be their dwelling. Evil spirits have proceeded
> from their bodies; because they are born from men and
> from the holy watchers is their beginning and primal origin;
> they shall be evil spirits on earth; evil spirits shall they be
> called ... And the spirits of the giants afflict, oppress, de-
> stroy, attack, do battle, and work destruction on the earth,
> and cause trouble: they take no food [but nevertheless
> hunger] and thirst and cause offences. And these spirits
> shall rise up against the children of men and against the
> women, because they have proceeded from them.

The leader of this band of fallen angels, Azazel, although a messenger of Satan in
1 Enoch 54:6, was identified as the devil *(Jub* 10:1-11) and as the serpent who
deceived Adam and Eve *(Apol. Abr.* 23). He is called Baalzebub, the Prince of
the demons, who was formerly "the highest ranking angel in heaven" *(T. Sol.* 6:1-

2). In the *Jubilees* (a kind of midrash of Gen 1-Ex 12) it is explicitly stated that demons were responsible for the corruption of the sons of Noah. After listening to the prayer of Noah, God decided to expel these demons, who were actually created to tempt and to lead people astray. The "Prince of the spirits", Mastemah, pleaded with God to show mercy and to exclude but a tenth from the verdict. This was granted and so it came about that a tenth of the evil spirits reunited on earth to serve Satan (*Jub* 10:3-11). They would remain on earth and would be responsible for the sin and impurity of humans (*Jub* 11:3-6) until the time of final judgement, when there would be no Satan or evil spirits (Jub 23:29).

In both *1 Enoch* (ch. 64) and *Jubilees* (ch. 10-11), it is stated that the fallen angels revealed the heavenly hidden secrets to the people and caused them to commit sin. The fallen angels or demons were actively involved in the transgression of humans. A form of causality had thus begun to replace human responsibility in ethical conduct (Nel 1987:11).

In regard to the origin of evil, Ling (1961:11) concludes that the apocalyptic writings may be said to stand in a dialectical relationship to earlier Hebrew thought. The thesis was the primitive explanation of the evils of life in terms of exterior forces only, capricious evil spirits who operated at random and for whose operations human beings themselves were considered to bear no moral responsibility. The antithesis was the prophetic insistence upon the fact that it is an interior condition, namely, a human being's own sin, which is the cause of the evils which they suffer. The synthesis, according to Ling, is found in the apocalyptic view, which allows for the fact that evil may befall a human person for which he or she is not personally responsible; but which also points to the fact that such experiences may be due to an exterior collective force which is itself a consequence of sinful human existence. The conception of Satan, which represents the full development of Jewish demonology, Ling argues, in no way conflicts with the prophetic insistence that the root cause of a human being's condition is their own sin. Such a view, therefore, provides no moral outlet by which humankind may be excused from their own responsibility for the evils which they suffer.

Insofar as the origin of Satan and demons is concerned, the apocryphal and pseudepigraphal writings, like the Old Testament, do not give a clear and com-

plete picture. At most, these writings remain speculative. Nevertheless, these writings provide a necessary background of belief that we may approach the reference to the demonic power found in the New Testament. Even though most of the writings that lead up to the New Testament display theological indefinite-ness concerning the origin of Satan and demons, one factor can be detectable throughout: the whole complex of spiritual evil is subject ultimately to the over-ruling power of God.

2.6.2   NAMES, CLASSES AND NUMBERS

In the Jewish extrabiblical literature the demons were believed to be under the dominion of a king or chief, either Ashmodai (*Targ. to Eccl.* 1:13; *Pes.* 110a; *Yer. Shek.* 49b) or, in the older Haggadah, Sammael ("the angel of death") who kills his people by his deadly poison ("*sam ha-mawet*"), and is called 'head of the devils' "*rosh satanim*"; Deut. R. 11; Pirke R. El. 13; see Hirsh 1903:514).

It is characteristic also of the intertestamental literature and the Dead Sea Scrolls to use other names for the leader of the evil spirits. Mastemah, which as a com-mon noun means approximately "enmity, opposition" in Hosea 9:7-8 and in some passages in the Five Scrolls, is a demon "Prince Mastemah" in *Jubilees* (11:5, 11; 17:16), and perhaps also in the *Damascus Document* (16:5; see Hillers 1971:1525; cf. *2 Enoch 31:4*). Belial (or Beliar, a corruption of the original form according to Hillers) is the most common name used for the leader of the de-mons in the Dead Sea Scrolls (e.g. 1 QM 13:4; cf. 2 Cor 6:15). Hillers explains Belial (Heb *Beliyya'al*) as a Hebrew compound word which etymologically means "no benefit" or "no thriving", and in liberal usages is often equivalent to "scoun-drel". Hillers also points out that already in the Bible, "streams of *Beliyya'al*" means "streams of destruction" (2 Sam 22:5; Ps 18:5) and in the intertestamental literature Belial is "the spirit of perversion, the angel of darkness, the angel of destruction" (Hillers 1971:1525). In the *Ascension of Isaiah,* the leader of the demons is referred to as Belial (4:2).

In the *Martyrdom of Isaiah*, the leader of the hosts of evil is called Sammael ('Blind god' - 1:8,11), Melkira ('King of evil' - 1:8), Satan (2:2, 7), Beliar (1:8;

2:4; 3:11). In the book of *1 Enoch,* the leader of the fallen angels is referred to as Semyaza (6:3). In the *Life of Adam and Eve,* Satan is called "the devil" (17:1).

What was also typical of the post-exilic intertestamental literature was a concern to name the evil angels and classify them according to their function. Equally prominent is the arrangement and naming of the good angels surrounding the throne of God (see Arnold 1992:67; Ferguson 1984:98). In the domain of evil, while there is a certain amount of diversity regarding the specific functions of each of the powers, there is a fairly common belief in Satan as the chief. These powers of evil are represented as each having a significant measure within the structured hierarchy. For instance, Semyaza is identified as the chief of those who cohabited with women. Of the 200 angels who came with him, they were divided into groups of ten, with a prince such as Arakeb, Rame'el and Tam'el, set over them (see *1 Enoch* 6:7-8). Interestingly, according to *1 Enoch*, it was one of the Satanic messengers named Gader'el who misled Eve in the garden.

Watchers are a type of angels mentioned in Daniel 4:10, 14, 20. To this class the intertestamental literature assigns angels who, according to Genesis 6:2, 4, co-habited with women before the flood and fathered the race of giants (*Test. Reub.* 5:6,7; *Test. Napht.* 3:5; cf. *Genesis Apocryphon* 2:1, 16). The flood is the fault of the Watchers (*Jubilees* 7:21-25; cf. Cotter 1999:98).

According to rabbinical writings, the demons are numerous. They surround a human being on all sides as the earth does the roots of the vine (cf. Hirsh 1903:516). Rabbi Abaye says the demons are more than we are and they surround us like the ridge round a field. Rabbi Huna says: "Everyone among us has 1,000 on his left and 10,000 on his right hand" (see Ferguson 1987:89; cf. Ps 91:7). The demons are so numerous that if human beings were to see them they would lack the strength to face them.

In assessing the proliferation of the demonic belief in the intertestamental period, the comment of Russel (1964:240) is notable:

> When we enter the intertestamental period we find that
> belief in angels has grown to proportions unknown in the

Old Testament writings. Details of their numbers, their names, their functions, their natures are given which, though in many cases having their beginning in the canonical scriptures, far outstrips anything to be found there.

2.6.3   THE NATURE

The nature of demons is a matter of much speculation among the rabbis. Demons were viewed as spiritual beings but with certain human-like characteristics (see Ferguson 1987:87). They are intermediary beings, inferior in some respects to angels, but in other respects superior to human beings *(bHagigah 16a; Aboth de Rabbi Nathan 37, 9a).*

As spirits, they are ordinarily invisible and "they change their appearance to any likeness they please; they see, but themselves are not seen" *(Aboth de Rabbi Nathan 37, 9a).* By virtue of their semi-celestial nature, demons were believed to be able to overhear the decrees of heaven. Demons may be consulted by human beings as to their future; this can be done by means of oil and eggshells; only on the Sabbath is this forbidden (*Shab.* 101a). In as far as the body-lessness of the demons is concerned, the rabbis believed that, "after the souls were created the Sabbath set in, and so they remained without bodies" (Gen R 7). In antiquity, demons were regarded as beings endowed with higher intelligence (see Hirsh 1903:517).

In summarising the nature of demons, Hirsh (1903:518) concludes that in the main, demonology among Jews preserved its simple character as a popular belief, the demons being regarded as mischievous, but not as diabolical or as agencies of a power antagonistic to God.

2.6.4   APPEARANCES AND FORMS

Demons assume the shape of human beings but have no shadow *(Yeb. 122a; Git. 66a; Yoma 75a).* At times they are black goat-like beings *(Kid. 72a)*; at other times, they appear like seven-headed dragons *(Kid. 29a).* Demons, like angels, "they have wings and fly from one end of the world to the other, and

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know the future; and like men they eat, propagate and die" *(Hag. 16b; Ab. R.N. 37).*

Demons appear in many forms and change into many colours *(Yoma 75a).* Through magical practices, a person can make demons appear, as well as make them disappear. For example, "If one wants to discover them (demons), let him take sifted ashes and sprinkle around his bed, and in the morning he will see footprints of a cock. If one wishes to see them, let him take the afterbirth of a black she-cat, the offspring of a black she-cat, the firstborn of a firstborn, let him roast it in the fire and grind it to powder, and then let him put some into his eyes, and he will see them" *(Ber. 6a).*

Demons were often envisioned as composite beings, made up of the frightening aspects of animals, sometimes including faces and bodies. The *Testament of Solomon* speaks of demons "with heads like formless dogs ... [others] in the form of humans or of bulls or of dragons with faces like birds or beasts or the sphinx" (18:1-2). The book of Revelation describes three demons as "unclean spirits like frogs" (Rev 16:13).

In the Old Testament, Lilith is depicted as a carrion bird that finds its nest in the desert wastes and is joined by wild desert animals, owls and kites. Resheph is also conceived as a carrion bird (cf. LXX Dt 32:24). The devil, 'ruler of de-mons', Riley (1999:237) reminds us, is called the serpent and dragon (Rev 12:9), recalling the serpent in the garden (Gen 3:1) and the dragon in the sea (leviathan; Isa 27:1). Riley interprets Jesus' giving of "authority to tread on snakes and scorpions" (Lk 10:19) to his disciples as referring to power over demons.

2.6.5   PLACES AND TIMES

The rabbinic literature specifies places and times where the demons are particu-larly active. The wilderness as the home of demons was regarded, even in the Old Testament, as a place where diseases like leprosy issued. In the case of leprosy, one of the birds set up to be offered as an expiatory sacrifice was released that it might carry the disease back to the desert (Lv 14:7, 52). The Septuagint (LXX) uses *daimonion* several times in the ancient Near Eastern sense of spirits

of the desert. It translates the Hebrew *se'irim* (wild goats, satyrs, goat demons; cf. Isa 13:21) and *siyyim* (desert spirits) as those that are to inhabit cities laid waste (cf. also *Ber. 4:35*). The book of Revelation describes the fallen city of 'Babylon' as a "dwelling place of demons and a haunt of every unclean spirit, a haunt of every unclean spirit and hateful bird" (18:2). It was common belief that demons frequented isolated wilderness areas and ruins (*Berakoth 3a-b; Tergum Jerusalem 1*; cf. Dt 32:10).

Rabbis also believed that places of ceremonial or other impurity were frequented by demons, particularly cited a number of times are toilets (*Ber. 65a; Shab. 67a; Pes. 111b; Yoma 77b; Kid. 72a; San. 65b*).

Water was also a place where the demons were thought to dwell; that meant that the top portion of water drawn from the well should be poured off before it was drunk (*Hullin 105b-106a; Pes. 112a*; Midrash on Ps 20:7).

The demons were especially active in dark places, so even familiar houses and fields could be dangerous at night time. If one slept alone in the house, one might be seized by Lilith, the most frequently named female demon (*Shab. 151b*; cf. Ferguson 1987:90; Hirsh 1903:517). It was forbidden to greet another person at night, for fear they might be another demon *(Sanhedrin 44a)*.

Demons would try to attack scholars at night *(Ber. 54b)*. There seemed to be the ordinary human fear of the dark and the unknown operative here (Ferguson 1987:90). An evil spirit is said to show himself or herself or to do harm to a person who is alone. To two persons the evil spirit might reveal himself/herself. It is stated that a torch is the equivalent of two persons, and a moonlight is equal to three persons *(Ber. 43b)*. The crowing of the cock in early morning would drive a demon away *(Yoma 21a)*. The evening of Wednesday and the Sabbath were times of special demon activity *(Pes. 112b)*. Actually any time of the day could be an awesome time, such as morning and midday (*Pes. 111b*; M/R Numbers 12:3 refers to "demons who hold sway at night" and to a midday demon).

Demons were believed to hover around the house and the field (Gen R 20), particularly in the lower regions of the air (Nm R 10). People were told of the

danger of walking between two palm trees *(Pes 111a)* or walking alone in the morning before cock-crow *(Ber. 43a; Yoma 21a)*. The reason why people were warned of the eves of Wednesday and of the Sabbath is because it was believed that Agrat bat Mahlat "the dancing roof-demon" (Yalkut Hadash, *Keshafim* 56), haunts the air with her train of eighteen myriads of messengers of destruction, "everyone of whom has the power of doing harm" *(Pes 112b)*. On those nights one should not drink water except out of white vessels and after having recited Psalm 29:3-9 (the verses mentioning seven times "the voice of the Lord" or other magic formulas *(Pes. 3a)*.

Another perilous season was believed to be midsummer noon from the 17th of Tammuz to the 9th of Ab. Then the demon Keteb Meriri was said to reign from ten in the forenoon to three in the afternoon. The demon Keteb Meriri was envisioned to be having a head of a calf, with one revolving horn in the middle, and an eye on the breast and the body covered with scales and hairs and eyes and whosoever saw him, whether a human being or beast, would fall down and expire *(Pes. 3b*; Lam R 3; Midrash Teh. to Ps 91:5; Nm R 12).

It is clear from the rabbinical writings that people in antiquity were gripped by excessive phobia of certain times, periods and places which in turn resulted in more magic which was meant to be a coping mechanism in a world beset with forces of hostility.

2.6.6. FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

2.6.6.1 THE LEADER OF DEMONIC FORCES

In the book of *Jubilees,* the chief of the spirits of darkness is Mastemah ('Hateful One' - see Riley 1999:246) and Satan who accuses Israel before God and also ensnares and corrupts them that they be destroyed (Jub 1:20). In the *Martyrdom of Isaiah* the leader of the forces of evil is called the Angel of Iniquity who rules this world and causes apostasy, sin, magic and the persecution of the righteous, "dwelling in the hearts" of the rulers of Israel (2:4-10). In the last days the children of Israel will abandon the Lord and ally themselves with the devil *(T. Iss. 6)*.

He rules the soul of the one perturbed by anger and falsehood, but flees from the one who avoids wrath and hates lying *(T. Dan 4:7-5:1)*. Beliar or Belial causes the righteous to stumble by promiscuity *(T. Reub. 4:7-11*; cf. *4 Macc 18:8* - "the seducing and defiling serpent'''; *Adv. Haer. 40.5.3)*. The "Prince of Error" blinded Simeon's mind so as to sell Joseph into slavery *(T. Sim. 2:7)* and caused Judah to go astray by the love of money *(T. Jud. 19:4)*. The "Prince of the demons" is Beelzebul, who causes wars, tyranny, demon worship, violence and lust, and resides in the evening star *(T. Sol. 6:1-7)*. The devil "inhabits as his own instrument" one who does evil *(T. Napht. 8:6)*. Whatever the activity of the devil, however, it is performed by permission of God and according to divine plan to test the righteous and demonstrate who among humans are evil (*Jub 10:8-12; T. Job 8:2-3, 20:1-3*; Rev 13:5; cf. 1 Cor 11:19).

2.6.6.2   DEMONS

(a)   AT INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

The powers of evil spirits were considered to be inimical to the purposes of God. They were believed to exert their supernatural influence to lead people astray from the revealed will of God. Demons were thought to be responsible for leading people to all kinds of moral impurity (see Arnold 1992:67).

It is for this and other reasons that the Qumran community could refer to this evil dominion as "the company of darkness". The Qumran *War Scroll* describes the activity of Satan and his demons in this way:

> Satan, the Angel of Malevolence, thou hast created the
> pit; his [rule] is in Darkness and his purpose is to bring
> about wickedness and iniquity. All the spirits of his com-
> pany, the Angels of Destruction, walk according to the
> precepts of darkness; towards them is their [inclination]
> *(1QM13:11-12)*.

In the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,* we are told about the common Jewish thinking about the influence of the evil spirits on people in their daily lives.

According to the Testaments, every individual must personally struggle against evil spirits of deceit, who are ruled by the devil or Beliar. The evil spirits exploit human drives and frailties to promote their evil ends (cf. Arnold 1992:68-69). Sexual promiscuity, in particular, is pinpointed as one of the areas of sinful activity instigated by evil spirits. In the *Testament of Reuben*, the sexual sin is called "the plaque of Beliar" and is inspired by "a spirit of promiscuity that resides in the nature and the sense" *(T. Reub. 6:3; 3:3)*. The *Testament of Reuben*, though, does not give the devil and his powers full responsibility for human lapses into sexual trysts; the involvement of the human mind and senses is given an equal role (see Arnold 1992:69).

In reflecting on Reuben's incestuous sin with his father's concubine, Bilhah (cf. Gen. 35:22), the Testament places more emphasis on Reuben's own lust and mental titillation, "For if I had not seen Bilhah bathing in a sheltered place, I would not have fallen into this great lawless act. For so absorbed were my senses by her naked femininity that I was not able to sleep until I had performed this revolting act" *(T. Reub. 3:11-12)*. Based on this regrettable experience, Reuben's advice to his offspring focuses on discipline in their mind: "Do not devote your attention to the beauty of women, my children, nor occupy your minds with their activity. But live in integrity of heart in the fear of the Lord ... until the Lord give you the mate whom he wills, so that you do not suffer as I did" *(T. Reub. 4:1)*. Nonetheless, in continuing to reflect on what he had learned from the event, he points to the devil's involvement: "For promiscuity has destroyed many. Whether a man is old, well born, rich or poor, he brings on himself disgrace among mankind and provides Beliar with an opportunity to cause him to stumble *(T. Reub. 4:7)*.

In the Testaments, we also discover that the evil spirits of error also take advantage of the debase human nature towards jealousy. The *Testament of Simeon* reflects on Simeon's role in the betrayal of Joseph by his brothers (Gen 37:12-36). Simeon relates how a powerful evil spirit exploited his jealousy towards Joseph: "In the time of my youth I was jealous of Joseph, because my father loved him more than all the rest of us. I determined inwardly to destroy him, because the prince *(archon)* of Error blinded my mind so that I did not consider him as a brother, nor did I spare Jacob, my father" *(T. Sim. 2:6-7)*. Simeon thus

advises his children to "beware of the spirit of deceit and envy" *(T. Sim. 3:1)*. If the influence of such a spirit is to be defeated, one must turn to the Lord. Simeon counsels, "If anyone flees to the Lord for refuge, the evil spirit will quickly depart from him and his mind will be eased" *(T. Sim. 3:5)*. Simeon holds Joseph as a positive example. Joseph was able to love his brothers, in spite of their treachery towards him, because he possessed the Spirit of God *(T. Sim. 4:4)*. In the words of Arnold (1992:69) these two examples help us gain insight into what Jews in the first century believed to be true regarding the role of evil spirits in the affairs of daily life especially with respect to personal morality.

But in the rabbinic writings, other functions and activities of demonic forces are mentioned. In these writings the focus is not only on personal morality. Demons were also believed to bring troubles and misfortune into the world *(Sirach 39:28-31; Berakoth 54b; Sifre Deuteronomy 32:17, 318; 32:24)*. They seduced people to sin *(Erubin 41b; Sota 3a)*. Resh Lakish said, "A person does not commit a transgression unless a spirit of folly enters into him". The evil spirits could also cause madness (Midrash Rabah Numbers 19:8), the impoverishing of humankind *(Hullin 105b)* and killed people *(Pesahim 110a)*. Demons could also imitate God, for example, God speaks through the dreams and so do the demons, though they do so falsely *(Berakoth 55b)*. As ministers of God demons were believed to carry out punishment due to men and women for their sins (Midrash on Ps 17:8; 66a; M/R Deut. 4:4; cf. *Sanhedrin* on the "Prince of Gehenna").

In the rabbinic writings demons are said to cause the faintness and fatigue of scholars. The wear and tear of the clothes of the scholars is due to their rubbing against them (*Berakoth 6a*; Midrash on Ps 17:8 [65b]).

Disease comes as a result of demonic influence *(Pesahim 112b; Hullin 105b; Gittin 67b)*. Midrash on Psalm 91:3 refers to a man who saw a demon, fell flat and became epileptic. Various diseases are ascribed to demons such as affect the brain and the inner parts. Hence there was a constant fear of "Shabriri" (lit. "dazzling glare"), the demon of blindness who rests on uncovered water at night and strikes those who drink it with blindness *(Pes. 112a; 'Ab Zarah 12b)*. Among the demons causing diseases we could mention the spirit of nightmare *(Bek 44b)*,

the spirit of delirious fever and madness befalling humans and beasts *(Pesik, Parah 40a; Yoma 83b;* Gen R 12). The spirit of leprosy *(Ket. 61b)*, the spirit of melancholy *(Yer. Git 48c)*, a demon of disease which attacks women in childbirth *('Ab. Zarah 29a)*. These demons were supposed to enter the body and cause the disease while overwhelming *(Sifre Debarim 318)* or seizing the victim *(Shab. 151b; Yoma 83a, 84a)*.

But Jews in the first-centurty world and their contemporaries did not just believe that demons were only malign spirits. There was also a positive understanding of the role of the demonic (cf. Graf 1997). This could be partly traced to some of the Babylonian amoraim who employed the shedim as friendly spirits and received useful instruction from them, calling them by familiar names such as "Joseph", "Jonathan" etc. *(Pes. 110a; Hul. 105b; Yeb. 122a)*.

Demons could be summoned to the aid of human beings. Solomon is quite prominent in rabbinic literature as one who knew the secrets by which to obtain mastery over the spirits. Solomon ruled over denizens of the upper world (of demons) as well as the lower *(Megillah 116;* cf. *The Testament of Solomon)*. Before Solomon sinned he ruled over the demons. After he sinned, he brought sixty warriors to protect his couch from terror by night *(Pesikta Rabbati 69a;* cf. Midrash Rabbah Exodus 30:16). Solomon's servant, Benaiahu, captured Ashmedai (Asmodeus), the prince of demons with a chain and a ring, each of which had graven on it the divine name. The demon's help was enlisted in the building of the temple *(Gittin 68a;* cf. *Sotah 48b;* Midrash on Psalms 78:12; Midrash Rabah Exodus 52:4; *Pesikta Rabbati 6:7)*.

Several of the rabbis, too, were believed to have authority over the demons, for example, Johanan ben Zakkai *(Baba Bathra 134a; Kiddushin 29b)*. Instructions were occassionally given about how to secure the services of demons. One rabbi fasted and spent the night in a cemetery so an unclean spirit might rest upon him and enable him to tell the future *(Sanhedrin 65b)*. It was forbidden to consult demons on the Sabbath *(Sanhedrin 101a)*. At least one day belongs to the Lord (cf. Ferguson 1987:92).

(b) AT MACROSTRUCTURAL LEVEL

The influence of the demonic, according to Jewish writers, did not only affect individual people but other spheres as well. Jewish authors ascribed the rise and fall of non-Jewish religions to the inspiration of evil powers (cf. Arnold 1992:69). In discussing the influence of the powers on the rise of civilisation after the flood, the book of Jubilees, a second-century B.C. writing, refers to the beginnings of idolatry. The inhabitants of Ur of the Chaldees "made for themselves molten images, and everyone worshipped the icon which they made for themselves as a molten image. And they began making graven images and polluted likenesses. And cruel spirits assisted them and led them astray so that they might commit sin and pollution. And the prince, Mastema, acted forcefully to do all this (*Jubilees* 11:4-5).

Likewise, the apocalyptic book of *I Enoch* speaks of the demonic root of idolatry: "The spirits of the angels ... have defiled the people and will lead them into error so that they will offer sacrifices to the demons as unto gods, until the great day of judgement in which they shall be judged till they are finished *(I Enoch 19:1)*.

Although the Old Testament is not so explicit about the involvement of the evil powers in the origins of idolatry, it does affirm that sacrificing to the idols is tantamount to sacrificing to demons:

> They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods; with abominable practices they provoked him to anger. They sacrificed to demons which were no gods, to gods they had never known, to new gods that had come in of late, whom your fathers had never dreaded (Dt 32:16-17).

Such a sentiment is also known in the New Testament (Rev 9:20). Many streams of Judaism also believed occultic practices were the work of the devil and his powers. According to *1 Enoch*, the fallen angels taught people magic, incantations, alchemy and astrology (*1 Enoch* 7-8; *Jubilees* 11:1-8).

Jewish writers also attributed civil unrest among the nations and their hostility towards Israel to the devious work of the evil powers (cf. Arnold 1992:70). The book of *Jubilees* ascribes a murderous tendency of people to the influence of the forces of Mastema, an evil angel corresponding to Satan: "And (Mastema) sent out other spirits to those who were under his hand to practise all error and sin and all transgression, to destroy, to cause to perish and to pour out blood upon the earth" *(Jubilees 11:5)*. All the weaponry of warfare was also inspired by fallen angels: "And Azaz'el taught the people the art of making swords and knives, and shields, and breastplates" *(1 Enoch 8:1)*.

Egypt's hostility to Israel, and especially to Moses, is interpreted by the book of *Jubilees* as stemming from the supernatural opposition of the evil Mastema (see Arnold 1992:70). It was actually Mastema who used the Egyptian Pharaoh in an attempt to kill Moses; it was also Mastema who enabled the Egyptian magicians to perform the great wonders in opposition to Moses. Furthermore, it was Mastema who exerted his evil-inspiring influence on the Egyptians to pursue Israel into the sea *(Jubilees 48)*.

The Qumran community, which produced the Dead Sea Scrolls, gives prominence to the demonic in their understanding of society (see Arnold 1992:70-71). According to *1QM*, it is Satan and his powers who are behind the Roman usurpers: "All those (who are ready) for battle shall march out and shall pitch their camp before the king of the kittim (Romans) and before all the hosts of Satan gathered about him for the Day (of revenge) by the Sword of God *(1QM 15:2-3)*.

The demonic, therefore, was believed to play a major role in the popular understanding of society and its diverse structures during the time leading up to the New Testament period. The spiritual and supernatural dimension in comprehending the dynamics and workings of society featured prominently in Jewish thinking. In the eyes of the writer of *Jubilees*, justice and freedom from oppression would have been impossible to obtain for Israel without addressing the powerful demonic hostility of Mastema. The people of Israel were freed from their terrible dehumanising conditions because Yahweh worked through his servant Moses as part of his larger plan for his people. The Qumran community was

anticipating the direct intervention of the mighty hand of God to deal an everlast-
ing blow to Satan and all the host of his kingdom (see Arnold 1992:71).

2.6.7   EXORCISM AND APOTROPAIC MEASURES

2.6.7.1   MAGIC

(a)   DEFINING MAGIC

Kitchen (1962:766) explains magic and sorcery as an attempt to influence people
and events by supernatural or occult means. They may be associated with some
form of divination, though divination by itself is the attempt to use sypernatural
means to discover events without influencing them.

As a universal phenomenon, magic may be termed 'black' or 'white'. Black
magic attempts to produce evil results through such methods as curses, spells,
destruction of models of one's enemy, and alliance with evil spirits and it often
takes the form of witchcraft (see Kitchen 1962:766; Hall 1988). On the other
hand, white magic tries to undo curses and spells, and to use occult forces for the
good of oneself and others. The magician tries to compel a god, demon, or spirit
to work for him or her (see Graf 1997; *Sanhedrin* 67b).

According to Craffert (1999a:84), a belief in magic assumes a specific worldview.
It is operative where people believe in the existence of powers greater than
themselves that can influence human affairs and can be persuaded or compelled
to act on someone's behalf. Smith (1996a:208) writes that in the first-century
period, people believed in natural magic (which deals with powers supposed to
be inherent in natural events and objects like certain plants, stones, parts of ani-
mals or celestial bodies) and demonic magic. Demonic magic had to do with
various sorts of beings or powers. It was believed that these powers and beings
(which included gods and their intermediaries and spirits of the dead) could be
invoked in a number of ways to intervene in human and natural affairs. Such
invocation could be by means of specific rituals, by simply calling them or by
compelling them by sacrifices (see Craffert 1999a:159-160).

(b)   <u>MAGIC TEXTS AND OBJECTS</u>

The magical texts tell us something about the beliefs and practices of people at grassroots level in the ancient world. Most of the literary remains from the ancient world, for example, texts on papyrus and parchments, come from a minority elite group of society (see Craffert 1999a:84). Those were the people, the ruling elite, who could afford writing material and controlled the official traditions in society. Many of the magical texts, however, reflect the hopes, desires and fears of the majority of people at grassroots level. Meyer and Smith (1994:14) say these texts and practices answered the needs of the people who employed them in times of crisis, hurt, or loss, or in the continual difficulties of everyday life.

Of the Jewish magical texts, the most well known, the *Sefer ha-Razim (The Book of Secrets)* was written in Hebrew, and is a handbook for magical practices (see Smith 1996a:212). This book contains a whole number of spells, curses and incantations. As with magical texts in other languages, the themes include the healing of illness, the elimination of enemies, the sinking of ships, insight into other people's minds and dreams, love charms, protection against the evil eye, etc. (see Schafer 1990:81; Klauck 2000:226).

The collections of ancient magical texts include texts written on many kinds of writing material and in a wide variety of styles. While most of the magical handbooks were written on papyrus, many of the inscriptions of curses or spells were on objects of clay, metal or animal skin. These objects included magical bowls and gems. The largest collection of magical texts from the Greco-Roman world is the Greek magical papyri (see Betz 1992:xli-xliv; Craffert 1999a:86f).

(c)   <u>CURSE TABLETS AND BINDING SPELLS</u>

Craffert (1999a:91) writes that more than 1500 curse tablets from the ancient world have been preserved. The majority were made of lead or lead alloys. Other materials could also be used, such as ostraca (broken postherds), limestone, gemstones, papyrus and wax, or sometimes the curse was written on the bottom of a ceramic bowl. A common description of curse tablets maintains that they are inscribed pieces of lead, usually in the form of small, tin sheets, intended

to influence, by supernatural means, the actions or the welfare of persons or animals against their will (cf. Versnel 1991:61). The common term for these curse tablets and binding spells is *defixiones*, from the Latin word meaning "to fasten" or "to nail down" (Gager 1992:30). The implicit or explicit purpose of curse tablets and binding spells is that the victim must be 'bound' or 'nailed down' and this includes a number of possibilities, for example, making the targeted victim powerless, unable to perform, making ill or affecting specific bodily parts.

Curse tablets were deposited in special locations where they took effect. They had to be buried in a river, land, sea, stream, coffin or in a well. Other places include the home of the desired target (often in the case of love spells) and for racing, they had to be buried in the stadium floor. Burying the tablet in areas governed by taboo, like graves or sanctuaries would prevent the victim from finding them and loosening the spell (see Craffert 1999a:92). Curse tablets and binding spells represent a cultural pattern which indicate to us something about the way in which divine power was mediated in the ancient world.

(d)　　CASTERS OF EVIL EYE

The power of the evil eye was feared in the first-century Mediterranean world and is feared up to this day (see Craffert 1999a:135). Its effects could be deadly, such as crop failure, disfigurement, enmity between family members and death itself (Eastman 2001:82). Craffert maintains that the belief in the evil eye includes faith in two seperate phenomena (see also Isbell 1978:11). The first is the belief that certain people have basic powers of an evil disposition inherent in their eyes. By casting a glance on you, you could be affected. The second phenomenon is related to a belief that the gods and spirits are basically envious of humans and their accomplishments. Children and persons of fortune were considered among the most vulnerable.

The dangers ascribed to the power of the evil eye were indeed serious. For example, Philostratus claimed that Apollonius of Tyana killed every living thing with one look *(Vita Apoll. 6.12)*. Pliny describes the destructive effect of the evil eye as a family trait:

There are families in the same part of Africa that wield the
Evil Eye, whose praises cause meadows to dry up, trees
to wither and infants to perish. Isogonus adds that there
are people of the same kind among the Triballi and the
Illyrians, who also injure by the evil eye and who kill those
at whom they stare for a longer time, especially with furious
eyes and that their evil eye is most felt by adults (H.N.
5.2.16-18).

In his 'Table Talk', Plutarch says that some people seriously hurt children by an
envious look, and that adults also have been caused to "fall ill and waste away".
He adds that even close relatives may cast the evil eye inadvertently on those
they love, such as fathers on their children. The discussion in 'Table Talk' pre-
sents a debate between holders of a rationalistic explanation of the causes of the
evil eye and those who understand it as demonic and wilfully malevolent. Thus
Plutarch's work gives us a window into the range of viewpoints in the first cen-
tury concerning the provenance and power of the eye, from the popular belief in
demonic spirits at work to a more rational accounting of the phenomena (see
Eastman 2001:83). Plutarch's discussion shows that he himself does not dis-
count the material effects of malicious looks, although he does dismiss popular
beliefs that they involve the casting of spells or the work of demons *(Moralia*
680C-683B).

Eastman (2001:76) writes that an association with greed and stinginess domi-
nates the concept of the evil eye in first-century Judaism. In the Sephtuagint, we
find occurrencies of 'eye' *(ophthalmos)* modified by 'evil' *(poneros)* and for
'envy' *(phthonos)* in Deuteronomy 15:9, Sirach 14:8, 10, 31:13, and Tobit 4:7,
16. All these passages, in Eastman's opinion, involve descriptions or criticism of
stingy behaviour or a 'greedy eye'. In the early rabbinic literature, the good eye
is associated with the generosity while the 'evil eye' is associated with greed (see
Ab. 5:19; cf. *4 Macc. 1:26*, 2:15; Delling, *'baskaino' TDNT*, I pp. 594-495).

The contrast between the generous 'good eye' and the stingy 'evil eye' also
occurs in the New Testament. In Luke 11:34 (Mt 6:22-23), Jesus contrasts the
'evil eye' *(ophthalmos poneros)* with the 'single eye' *(ophthalmos aplous)*. In

Mark 7:21 the 'evil eye' *(ophthalmos poneros)* is envy, part of a vice similar to that in *4 Maccabees* 1:26, 2:15. In Matthew 20:15, Jesus asks the jealous workers who want more money at the end of the day, "Is your eye evil because I am good?" (see Eastman 2001:77).

There can be no doubt that early Christians and first-century Jews shared their contemporary's firm conviction of the power of the evil eye and constant fear of its possessors and employed the conventional strategies of protection against it (see Craffert 1999a:136). The extent of the evil eye threat experienced by first-century Mediterraneans led them to develop many devices and strategies as protection against it. For example, the papyri frequently include *abaskantos* ('Unbewitched! May no harm befall you!') in the closing greetings as a kind of prayer for protection (see Moulton and Milligan 1930:106). Protective measures also included plaques on doorways, inscribed with incantations, and statuary images set up in gardens, fields, shops and public places (see Elliot 1994:57). Amulets were common, often contained in *bullas* worn by children or put on animals (Eastman 2001:83). Coral also was used as an amulet to protect children (Pliny H.N. 19:50). According to Pliny (H.N. 28:36, 39), 'spitting' was one method of protection against the evil eye. Paul's protest that, "you did not spit me out" (Gal 4:14), could be a reponse to an evil-eye accusation (see Elliott 1990:262-273; Neyrey 1988:72-100). In Paul's letter to the Galatians, it is clear that accusations of evil eye bewitchment play a significant role in the conflict between Paul and his opponents.

(e)   AMULETS

Amulets differ from curse tablets in the sense that curse tablets once they were inscribed, they were deposited in special locations where they took effect (see Craffert 1999a:92). Amulets, on the other hand, were literally called *things tied around* since they were tied around parts of the body, usually the neck, arm or leg (see Craffert 1999a:107). Amulets were intended to bring supernatural power to bear against persons or animals. The wearing of amulets served to shield the bearer from all forms of harm or danger, such as protection against the danger of serpents, the evil eye and demons. By virtue of their alleged ability to ward off unseen disasters, some also guaranteed success and prosperity. They were often

used to introduce desirable qualities such as love, wealth, power or victory for the bearer. With the passage of time the boundary lines between amulets, curse tablets and bowls with inscribed spells disappeared and they were all used for a variety of purposes (see Gager 1992:219-220; Kotansky 1991:107; Yamauchi 1983:195).

Amulets came in many shapes and sizes. They could be simple pieces of string, colourful embroidered bands, engraved stones or rings, or strips of metal, papyrus or other materials inscribed with special formulas, then rolled up and folded and carried about on a string, in a pouch or in tubular containers. They were small magical objects that could be inscribed or uninscribed. They were prepared and sold by specialists, who produced them according to traditional recipes and consecrated them through ritual acts and thereby endowed them with power (see Craffert 1999a:107-108).

Amulets were apparently well known in Old Testament times. A number of passages confirm this view. The earrings which Jacob buried under the oak at Shechem were probably not just ornamental, but also amuletic (Gn 35:4 - see Craffert 1999a-108). The ornaments which Gideon took off the camels' necks were amulets (Jdg 8:21) and it is known that amulets were worn by both men (Jdg 8:26) and women (Isa 3:18). Despite the condemnation of amulets, Jews of all periods continued to wear them together with their prescribed phylacteries. Pharisaism insisted that the observance of the law was the best prophylactic against demons. The wearing of the *Tefillin*, the Greek name, indicates that they were regarded by the Hellenistic Jews as amulets (cf.. *Targ. Cant.* 8:3; Gen R 35; *Men. 33b*).

Amulets and curse tablets were widely used in the ancient world. In search of honour and protection and for the sharing of the limited good in society, it was understandable that people used curse tablet and amuletic objects (see Gager 1992:218). The Jewish amulets that are available today are general adjurations against spirits and demons by which people were possessed. In most cases, the evil spirits were named as precisely as possible in order that no possible demon or spirit be overlooked and then be able to carry out the evil work (see Craffert 1999a:112; cf. Schäfer 1990:84; Betz 1992:313).

(f)   MAGICAL FORMULAE, WORDS AND NAMES

According to Craffert (1999a:92), the term 'mystical words or formulas' refers
to a number of features which appear on magical tablets. Often they are unintel-
ligible lines of letters or forms of speech which are unrecognisable in any lan-
guage of the time (see also Ferguson 1984:54). A fetching charm for an unman-
ageable woman which works on the same day, reads like this:

> Take the skin of an ass and write the following in the blood
> from the womb of a silurus after mixing in the juice of the
> plant Sarapis.

> The writing is this: SISISOTH, attract to me her (name of
> girl) on this very day, in this very hour, because I adjure
> you by the name CHYCHACHAMER MEROUTH
> CHMEMINOUTH THIONTHOUTH PHIOPHAO
> BELECHAS AAA EEE L'S'S'S'N'N'

> And put the magical material inside with vetch and place it
> in the mouth of a dead dog, and it will attract her in the
> same hour (PGM XXXVI 361-371 - see Betz 1992:278)

What apparently mattered, according to Craffert (1999a:94), was that these
strings of letters were understood by the spirits themselves. The same letters,
which occurred with the same deities and demons, ruled out the possibility of
free invention.

In many instances there are unintelligible characters or symbols. Because of their
wide usage, especially in the first-century world, it can be concluded that such
characters and symbols occupied a special place on curse and spell tablets (see
PGM 1.265-269). Another feature is the common practice of writing words
which can be read from either side, known as palindromes. They are mostly
magical words with no recognisable sense in any language, but can be read and
pronounced the same way forwards and backwards. The most common palin-
drome in magical literature from antiquity is ABLANATHANALBA. This magi-

cal name, usually invoked for beneficent results, has not yet been adequately explained but it is commonly thought to be of Jewish origin (Craffert 1999a:94). A special kind of palindrome is the SATOR-ROTAS square, which appears in many different versions (Yamauchi 1983:198) and another example is the ARABAOUARABA *(PGM XIII.757)* which can be written forwards or backwards.

The power of names is another important feature in the use of magic. The fundamental significance thereof is that the magical use of names of divinities or great men of the past is that such names share the being and participate in the power of their bearers (see Aune 1980:1546). This is well known from biblical texts, where it is often said that the name of God dwells in a certain place, which was a way of saying that Yahweh himself dwelled there. Elisha, for example, cursed the young men who mocked (2 Ki 2; cf. Mk 9:38; Lk 9:49; Acts 19).

The name of the Jewish God, Yahweh, was particularly famous for its usefulness in magic. Although most of these texts were pagan texts, the name of the Jewish God appears more than three to one when compared with any other deity mentioned in the magical papyri. The very common IAO in many of the texts is the Greek version of the Hebrew, Yahweh - the Jewish God, while El and Saboath (both referring to the Jewish God or his angels) are equally popular (see Craffert 1999a:90; *PGM VII 211-212*).

(g)   MAGIC ROOT (HERB?)

In *The Jewish War* (7.181-182, 185), Josephus tells of a magic root of the plant Baaras. Josephus says that with all the attendant risks associated with the plant like touching it which may be fatal, it possesses one virtue for which it is prized: The spirits of wicked people which enter the living and kill them unless aid is forthcoming - are promptly expelled by this root, if merely applied to the patients. In Josephus' own day, exorcism was performed in Solomon's name with a ring containing a magic root (*Anti.* 8.47). They could be exorcised by providing a host body, usually an animal, but also a figurine, or even a reed of the same size as the human sufferer.

(h)   THE BOOK OF TOBIT

The most striking book in the Old Testament apocrypha concerning magic and exorcism is *Tobit*. Tobias, the son of the righteous Tobit, was sent on a journey to collect some money which his father had left in trust with a friend. Tobias was accompanied on the trip by a man who was actually the angel, Raphael, in human disguise. On their way they stopped at Ecbatana, where lived Raquel, a kinsman of Tobit. Raquel had a beautiful daughter named Sarah, who had had a series of unfortunate experiences. Sarah had been engaged seven times, but each prospective husband had died in the bridal chamber before marriage was consummated, killed by the demon Asmodeus, who loved Sarah and would not let anyone have her. Before Tobias and Raphael arrived in Ecbatana, they had stopped at the Tigris River and caught a fish. The angel instructed Tobias to cut open the fish and take the heart, liver and gall out and save them with a promise, "As for the fish's heart and liver, you must burn them to make a smoke in the presence of a man or a woman afflicted by a demon or evil spirit, and every affliction will flee away and never remain with that person any longer" (*Tobit* 6:8; cf. Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* 28.63; PGM CXIV.1-14).

Tobias found Sarah very attractive and desired to marry her, but was fearful, because seven others had died attempting to marry her, but the angel Raphael reassured him that if he were to follow his instructions of expelling a demon, success would be guaranteed. It worked on Asmodeus. When the demon smelled the odour he fled to the remotest parts of Egypt. But Raphael followed him (Asmodeus), and at once bound him there hand and foot (*Tobit* 8:3).

According to Ferguson (1984:78), there are many motifs of folklore about demons that are combined in the tale of the book of *Tobit*: a demon's love for a beautiful woman, the mysterious and dangerous qualities of a new bride, the use of magic as a protection against demons, and the terminology of "binding" a demon. Something that is overlooked by commentators on the story, is the role played by prayer together with magic in the exorcising of demons: "Tobias got out of bed and said to Sarah, 'Sister, get up and let us pray and implore our Lord that he grant us mercy and safety" (*Tobit* 8:4-5; cf. 6:18; see also Seneca, *Hercules Oetaeus* 453-463).

(i)   CONCLUSIONS

The Jewish involvement in magic reflects the Jewish popular belief in demons, spirits and powers of evil in the period leading to the New Testament. Even in the New Testament times, there are instances confirming the widespread practice of magic, for example, the two Jewish magicians - Simon (Acts 8:9), and Bar-Jesus or Elymas (Acts 13:6-12). Luke also writes about certain itinerant Jewish exorcists, who had added the name of Jesus to their repertoire of magical names (Acts 19:13-20).

Contrary to Old Testament and official Jewish restrictions against the use of magic, many Jews throughout the Mediterranean world adopted and further developed these occult practices of their pagan neighbours.

2.6.7.2 SPIRITUAL MEANS

(a)   THE COVENANT

As much as there were magical practices to ward off the demonic, there were "spiritual" means as well (see Ferguson 1984:92-93). Just to be part of the covenant people was itself important. According to one passage, the prince of Gehenna voraciously demanded multitudes of victims, but God would not give him the seed of Isaac. Rather God said, "I have whole companies of heathens whom I will give you" (*Shabbath* 104a).

(b)   GOD HIMSELF

God, himself, was seen as a shield for his people (Midrash on Psalms 104:24 [224a]). In this reference it is written, "were it not for the shadow of the Holy One, blessed be He, which protects a man, the demons would destroy him ..... Were it not for the ordinance of the Holy One ..."

(c)   THE NAME OF THE LORD

The name of God was effective in driving demons away. In Midrash Rabbah Numbers 12:3, it is said, "By the power of His name I put to flight the harmful demons and the destroying angels" (cf. Craffert 1999a:90; see also Mk 16:16).

(d)   THE FEAR OF THE LORD

In the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,* the fear of the Lord is mentioned as one of the apotropaic measures. Surprisingly, in the *Testament of Benjamin,* the fear of the Lord is mentioned together with the love of one's neighbour: "Fear ye the Lord, and love your neighbour; and even though the spirits of Beliar claim you to afflict you with every evil, yet they shall not have dominion over you... For he that feareth God and loveth his neighbour cannot be smitten by the spirit of Beliar, being shielded by the fear of God *(T. Benjamin 3:3).*

(e)   ANGELS

God's angels are said to afford protection to his people against demons (Midrash on Psalms 17:8 [65b]; 9:4 [199b]; Midrash Numbers 12:3). In fact, "the wicked are accompanied by the angels of Satan; the righteous by the angels of God *(Tosef., Shab.* 17.2-3; cf. *Jubilees* 10.6; see also Ps 34:7).

(f)   THE WORD OF GOD

The word of God was itself protection (Midrash on Psalm 104:24 [224a]; Shebuoth 15b). Particularly the part of scripture known as *Shema*, the Jewish confession of faith (Dt 6:4-9; 11:3-21; Nm 15:36-41) was for every Jew to know. It is stated, "If one recites the Shema upon his bed, the demons keep away from him" *(Berakoth 5a; cf. Midrash Rabbah Numbers 20:20).

(g)   OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW

Fulfilling the commandments was another sure protection against demons. For each commandment observed by a human person becomes an angel "to guard

him against demons" (Ex. R. 32). "Every observance of the Law is a protection" *(Sotah 21a)* and those doing sacred work need fear no evil powers *(Pes. 8b).* In the *Damascus Document,* the following protection against demons is given: "On the day on which a man undertakes to be converted to the Law of Moses, the angel of hostility will depart from him if he fulfills his promises" (CD 16:14f). It is also stated that, "Every limb engaged in the fulfillment of a divine is protected against the 'Strong One'" *(Pesik. R. 9*; Midr. Teh. to Ps 35; cf. Lk 11:21) . Thus, Pharisaism, while increasing the whole of ceremonial laws for the sake of the love of God, showed a way to overcome the fear of demons. Belief in the power of the law became an antidote against what may be termed "Satanaphobia", and against the spirit of pessimism and asceticism which was fostered by the Essenes and the Christian heirs (Hirsch 1903:519).

(h)   PRAYER

Prayer was considered as a powerful weapon available to the righteous person (cf. James 5:16). The story was told of a demon who was haunting a school-house. He appeared in the guise of a seven-headed dragon. Every time the rabbi fell on his knees in prayer, one head fell off *(Kiddushin 29b).* This may remind us of Jesus' statement that, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer" (Mk 9:29).

(i)   THE BLOOD

The name 'shedim' which denotes a storm-demon (Isa 13:6) or evil demons, came to the Israelites through their interaction with the Chaldeans. In Chaldean mythology, the seven evil deities were known as 'shedim', storm-demons repre-sented in ox-like form. The sacred writers intentionally applied the word in refer-ring to the Canaanite deities. But they also spoke of "the destroyer" (Ex 12:23; cf. Meier 1999:240f) as a demon whose malignant effect upon the houses of the Israelites was to be warded off by the blood of the paschal sacrifice sprinkled upon the lintel and the door-posts (Hirsch 1903:515; cf. Rev 12:11). According to the book of the *Jubilee*s, in the Passover night, Satan was bound and pre-vented from doing harm to Israel *(Jub* xlviii.15; *Pes. 109b).*

(j)   THE BLESSING OF THE PRIEST

The priest's blessing was also taken as a protection against malign influences (Nm R 11). When the tabernacle was built by Moses and the priestly blessing pronounced, the spell of the evil eye was broken (*Pesikta Rabbati* 5:10).

(k)   HYMNS AGAINST DEMONS

From the *"Songs of the Sage"*, it is clear that God's people in ancient times made use of song to protect themselves against the influence of the demonic forces. One of the songs reads:

> Blessings to the King of glory
> Words of thanksgiving in psalms of [...]
> to the God of knowledge
> to the resplendence of the powerful,
> God of gods,
> Lord of all the holy ones.
> His realm is above the powerful mighty
> before the might of his power are all terrified
> they scatter and flee before the radiance of his dwelling
> of his glory and majesty
> And I, the Sage,
> declare the grandeur of his radiance
> in order to frighten and terrify
> all the spirits of the ravaging angels
> and the bastard spirits
> demons, Liliths, owls and [jackals...]
> and those who strike unexpectedly
> to lead astray the spirit of knowledge,
> to make their heads forlorn and ...
> in the era of the rule of wickedness
> and in the periods of the humiliation of the sons of light,
> in the guilty periods of those defiled by sins
> not for the everlasting destruction

but rather of the humiliation of sin [...]

Rejoice, righteous ones, in the God of wonders.

My psalms are for the upright

May all those of perfect path praise him.

- 4Q Songs of the Sage (4Q510[4QShira])

(l)   <u>CONCLUSIONS</u>

Although the use of magic was widespread among the Jews of the Mediterranean world as in other nations of the first-century era, there is evidence that there were other ways that were considered spiritually acceptable in the exorcising or protection against demonic forces. For the righteous person, the magical or talismanic means, were prohibited according to the Old Testament and other Jewish religious restrictions.

2.6.7.3   <u>EXORCISTS, MIRACLE-WORKERS AND HOLY PEOPLE</u>

(a)   <u>APOLLONIUS OF TYANA</u>

The most significant and best kown Greco-Roman holy man, a close contemporary of Jesus of Nazareth, was Apollonius of Tyana in Cappadocia, whose life spanned the first century A.D. and who died in the principate of Nerva.

Apollonius was born of a well-to-do Greek family and was educated in Tarsus. His biographer, Philostratos, a professional writer who was commanded by the emperor's mother to publish a fitting account of Apollonius' life, reports in *The life of Apollonius of Tyana,* that he was an ascetic wandering teacher and reformer who visited many of the prominent cities of the Roman world, and travelled as far as India. As with other philosophers, he was persecuted under Nero and Domitian, but charges of magical practices were involved. His reported miraculous powers and extraordinary features in his life like prevision of events, teleportation, exorcisms, healings etc., have made him the principal first-century representative of the "divine man" *(theios anér)* concept - both of the sage and

wonder-worker types - which has come to prominence in the New Testament gospel studies as the background for the portrayal of Jesus (Ferguson 1993:361; see also Craffert 1999a:129f). Among the features of Apollonius' life that may be parallel with Jesus are: his miraculous birth (1.4,5); the gathering of a circle of disciples, of whom one (Damis) was in a position to transmit authentic informa-tion; itinerant teaching; collection of miracle stories e.g. demonised boy, lame man, blind man, paralytic (3.38f), and disappearance at his trial (8.5 - see Ferguson 1993:362-363; Klauck 2000:169; *Life of Pythagoras*).

A notable incident in Apollonius' life of exorcism occurred when a licentious youth broke out into loud and course laughter during a discourse by Apollonius. Then Apollonius looked up at him and said: "It is not yourself that perpetrates this insult, but the demon *(ho daimon)* who drives you on without your knowing it." And, in fact, the youth was, without knowing it, possessed by a devil *(daimonion)*; for he would laugh at things that no one else laughed at, and then he would fall to weeping for no reason at all, and he would talk and sing to himself. Now most people thought that it was the boisterous humour of youth which led him into such excesses; but he was really the mouthpiece of a devil *(to daimonion)*, though it only seemed a drunken frolic in which on that occasion he was indulging. Now when Apollonius gazed on him, the ghost *(to eidolon)* in him began to utter cries of fear and rage, such as one hears from people who are being branded or racked; and the ghost swore that he would leave the young man alone and never take possession of any man again. But Apollonius ad-dressed him with anger ... and ordered him to quit the young man and show, by a visible sign, that he had done so. "I will throw down yonder statue", said the devil, and pointed to one of the images which were in the king's portico, for there it was that the scene took place. But when the statue began moving gently, and then fell down, it would defy anyone to describe the hubbub which arose thereat and the way they clapped their hands with wonder. But the young man rubbed his eyes as if he had just woken up, and he looked towards the rays of the sun, and assumed a modest aspect, as all had their attention concentrated on him; for he no longer showed himself licentious, nor did he stare madly about, but he had returned to his own self, as thoroughly as if he had been treated with drugs; and he gave up his dainty dress and summery garments and the rest of his sybaritic way of life, and he fell in love with the austerity of philosophers, and donned their

cloak, and stripping off his old self, modelled his future life upon that of Apollonius (Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* 4.20; cf. Mk 5:1-20).

(b)   HONI, THE CIRCLE-DRAWER

The religion of the Israelites was renowned for the tradition when prophets like Elijah and Elisha would demonstrate an ability to exert their will on natural phenomena. In the cases of severe drought, in addition to liturgical prayers and sacrifices for rain, they would urge persons of repute in the field of miracles to intervene on their behalf (see Craffert 1999a:132).

One of the holy men or *Hasidim* in the Jewish world of Jesus' time, accredited with miracles, was Honi, the Circle-drawer. Circles were solar symbols in Hellenistic magic. Drawing the circle around himself was probably a magical act in which Honi excluded the dangerous spirits from his immediate environment and protected himself against their attacks (see Mishnah Taanit 3:8). Knowing the name of a deity was one way of gaining control over it and using such names was common practice in magical incantations (see *PGM XII.160-178*). By calling on the name of the Lord (not the name itself), Honi could persuade the master of the world to act on his behalf.

c)   HANINA BEN DOSA

Another person who was accredited with miracles of causing the rain to fall, healing the sick and exorcising the demons was Hanina ben Dosa who, like Jesus of Nazareth, lived in the first century prior to the destruction of the temple in a small Galilean village in the district of Sepphoris (see Craffert 1999a:133; 1999b:83).

Among other things, Hanina ben Dosa is reputed for immunity from snake bite:

> Our rabbis say, once upon a time a poisonous snake was
> injuring people. They went and made known to Rabbi
> Hanina ben Dosa. He said to them, "Show me its bur-
> row". They showed him its burrow and he placed his heel

upon the mouth of the hole. It came forth and bit him - and it died. He put the snake on his shoulders, went to the House of Study, and said to them, "See my sons, it is not the snake that kills but sins that kill". Then they said, "Woe to the man a snake attacks and woe to the snake which Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa attacks!" (See Cartlidge and Dungan 1980:159; Vermes 1973:73; cf. Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* 28.6.30-33; Mk 16:17-18).

Hanina was also renowned for his ability to heal from a distance (cf. Ps 107:20; Mt 8:8, 13). One of the stories is about the son of Gamaliel who was suffering from a mortal fever. Two servants were sent to Hanina, who retired to his upper room and prayed. He returned with the word that the fever had departed. Back at home it was confirmed that the fever had left at exactly that time.

(d)   OTHER 'EXORCISTS'

Jewish writings which emerged after the Old Testament ascribed an exorcist status to some of the Old Testament personalities - a status which the Old Testament itself does not give.

In the Qumran documents, the *Genesis Apocryphon*, relates the story of Abraham as an exorcist in the healing of Pharaoh. The Essene writer seems to have been entirely responsible for this detail. In the story, Abraham behaves like a genuine exorcist since he cures the king of Egypt, who has been attacked by some purulent malady, by laying his hands on him and expelling the evil spirit *(Genesis Apocryphon 20:29)*.

In the *Prayer of Nabonidus* (4QPrNab), the healer, who was very likely Daniel, is also an exorcist. In his comment on the prayer, Dupont-Sommer (1961:325; see also Knibb 1987;206) says that Daniel (the exorcist) is given this title in the text (4b-5a). Nothing is said of the way in which the exorcist proceeded; what is remarkable is the formula employed in the narrative: "and an exorcist forgave my sins". In the context, says Dupont-Sommer, a formula such as this is obviously equivalent to "and this exorcist healed me of my sickness". Dupont-Sommer

also points out that in the synoptic gospels, Jesus says in the same way to the quadraplegic, "My child, thy sins are forgiven - meaning he is cured. As the scribes are scandalised by such a statement, Jesus explains to them: "Which is easier to say to the paralytic, 'Thy sins are forgiven', or 'Arise, take thy pallet and walk?'" And thereupon he ordered the sick man to rise, take up his bed and return to his house (Mk 2:1-12).

For Dupont-Sommer, the comments which the gospel story attributes to the Scribes on this occasion, are particularly instructive: "How can this man (Jesus) speak so? He blasphemes! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (Mk 2:7; Lk 5:21). According to Dupont-Sommer, these comments reflect Pharisaic senti-ment; they would be out of place among the Essenes. The *Prayer of Nabonidus* shows clearly that the Essenes believed that a properly qualified exorcist pos-sessed the power to remit sin, and at the same time expel sickness. Dupont-Sommer concludes that Jesus in the gospel story speaks like Daniel in the Qumran writing. Moreover, the *Damascus Document* appears to attribute to the 'over-seer' *(mebaqqer),* power to forgive sins within the Essene community: "He will loose all the chains that bind them ..." (xiii.10).

In the *Antiquities of the Jews*, Josephus portrays David as a kind of constant exorcist to a spirit-troubled king Saul (6.166-169). The method is just to sing songs and play the harp - no incantations or spells. The singing and playing is sufficient to cause the demons to leave (see Cotter 1999:104; cf. 4QSongs of the Sage).

Again, Josephus quotes Eleazer, the Pharisee (70-90 CE), who draws on Solomon's method for exorcism (*Ant.* 8.46-49). Josephus relates that, "I have seen a certain Eleazer, a countryman of mine [Josephus], in the presence of Vespasian, his sons, tribunes and a number of other soldiers, free men possessed by demons, and this was the manner of the cure: he put to the hose of the pos-sessed man a ring which had under its seal one of the roots prescribed by Solomon, and then the man smelled it, drew out the demon through his nostrils, and when the man at once fell down, adjured the demon never to come back into him, speaking Solomon's name and reciting the incantations which he had composed ..."

The name of Solomon finds prominence in Jewish exorcist stories. In rabbinic literature, Solomon is mentioned as one who knew the secrets by which to obtain mastery over demons. Solomon ruled over the denizens of the upper world (demons) as well as the lower (*Megillah* 116; cf. *Testament of Solomon*). Before Solomon sinned, he ruled over the demons. After he sinned, he brought sixty warriors to protect his couch from terror by night (*Pesikta Rabbati* 69a, cf. Midrash Rabbah Exodus 30:16). Even Josephus believed that God granted Solomon knowledge of the art used against demons for the benefit and healing of people (*Ant.* 8.44-45).

Something that could be learnt of exorcists in the early centuries comes from Lucian of Samosata (120-190 [?]), who was chiefly known for his satirical dialogues lampooning all aspects of life, especially religious "superstitions". It is worth noting that Lucian's home was in the East, and he can be expected to know something of the culture particular to Syria and Palestine of the first and second centuries - a world where the Jesus of Nazareth was active. There is no reason to think that Lucian had Jesus himself in mind, for such exorcisms he describes were common (see Ferguson 1984:56). Lucian criticises oracles as ignorant and deceitful, feeding on weakness and credulity (see Walker 2000:655).

In Lucian's *The Lover of Lies,* Ion scolds the story-teller for his incredulity over the miraculous and gives testimony about a "Syrian" who exorcises demons. In *The Lover of Lies* 16, the story is told thus:

> "You act ridiculously," said Ion, "to doubt everything. For my part, I should like to ask you what you say to thsoe who free possessed men from their terrors by exorcising the spirits so manifestly. I need not discuss this: everyone knows about the Syrian from Palestine, the adept in it, how many he takes in hand who fall down in the light of the moon and roll their eyes and fill their mouths with foam; nevertheless, he restores them to health and sends them away normal in mind, delivering them from their straits for a large fee. When he stands beside them as they ask there and asks: 'Whence came you into this body?' the patient

> himself is silent, but the spirit answers in Greek or in the
> language of whatever foreign country he comes from, tell-
> ing how and whence he entered into the man; whereupon,
> by adjuring the spirit and if he does not obey, threatening
> him, he drives him out. Indeed, I actually saw one coming
> out, black and smoky in colour."

Lucian's satirical portrayal attests to the popularity of exorcists in his society. In the accounts of Apollonius of Tyana and the Syrian from Palestine, we find much that agrees with the New Testament accounts of expelling demons: these parallels include the effects of demon possession on a person, in bodily actions and in voice; anger and assertion of authority by healer/exorcist; the effects on the person after the demon has departed. Among the differences are the fee charged, the material description of the demon and the physical signs given of expulsion (see Ferguson 1984:57).

Having cited a few examples we can, therefore, cautiously conclude that evil spirits indeed inhabited the bodies of human beings. This seems to have been common knowledge in the first-century world. Though widespread in the Mediterranean world in the first-century, Kotansky (2000:273) arrives at the conclusion that the idea that spirits may be exorcised from the body of a person, is Semitic. Greek spells that preserve the notion have a thoroughly Jewish ring about them. Exorcism, says Kotansky, is a Semitic concept. In another investigation, Ferguson (1984:46) finds that Jews had a considerable reputation as magicians and exorcists (cf. Acts 13:6-11; 19:13-16). Other magicians of non-Jewish background borrowed from their Jewish contemporaries. Jesus and the early church practised exorcism. It remained for a long time a practice among the early Christians (see Iraneaus, *"Haereses"* ii [2]:4, 32; Origen, *"Contra Celsum"* iii [3]:24).

2.6.8   DESTINY AND OVERTHROW OF DEMONS

In the Jewish literature that forms part of the New Testament background, there seems to be no doubt of the destiny of the evil spirits. In the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, the fact of the overthrow of the devil and the demons be-

comes clear: "And after these things there shall arise unto you the Lord himself, the light of righteousness ... he shall redeem all the captivity of the sons of men from Beliar; and every spirit of deceit shall be trodden down" (*T. Zebulun* 9:8) and "Beliar shall be bound by him [the Lord] and he shall give power to his children to tread upon evil spirits" (*T. Levi* 18:10-12). In the *Testament of Simeon,* we are told that "all the spirits of deceit shall be given to be trodden under foot, and men shall rule over wicked spirits" (6:6).

According to the *Assumption of Moses*, by most indications a first-century document, it is stated that God's kingdom will "appear throughout all his creation, and then Satan shall be no more, and sorrow shall depart with him" (10:1). In the Qumran writings, Belial is depicted as subordinate to God "who made Belial to corrupt, an angel of hatred" *(1 QM 13:11)*. God ordained a day "to annihilate the sons of darkness, (when there will be) rejoicing for all[the sons of light]" *(1 QM 13:16)*.

Of particular interest in the overthrow of evil, is the linguistic symbolism of the ancient Babylonian myth of a combat between the divine creator and a great sea monster (see Russel 1960:98). This myth finds echoes in a number of passages in the Old Testament where the monster is variously described as the dragon, Leviathan, Rahab or the serpent (e.g. dragon Job 7:12; Rahab Job 9:13; serpent Job 26:13; Amos 9:3).

In the Babylonian and Hebrew forms alike, the monster symbolises the chaotic deep or cosmic ocean (Hebrew *Tehom*, Babylonian *Taimat*) which is regarded as the place of mystery and evil. The power of God over the deep is explicitly shown in scripture (see Ps 33; 93; 107:23-32; Jonah 2:9). In Genesis 1:2, God the Creator saves the world from the power of chaos in the form of the primeval ocean.

The same sea-monster reappears in the apocalypse in the several writings of various dates. In the *Testament of Asher*, for example, the writer tells of the coming of the Most High to earth and of his "breaking of the head of the dragon in the water" (7:3; cf. Ps 74:13). There is a tradition that this dragon, described as Behemoth and Leviathan, is to be devoured at the Messianic banquet by

those who remain in the messianic age (see Russel 1960:99; cf. *II Esdras* 6:52; *II Baruch* 29:4). In the Old Testament, the same sea-monster is slain by Yahweh "with his sure and great and strong sword" (Isa 27:1, 9; Job 26:12). Inasmuch as this Babylonian cosmogony conflicted with the Jewish monotheistic system, the battle of God or his angel Gabriel with Leviathan and Behemoth was transformed into a great eschatological drama which ended in the perfect triumph of divine justice (see Hirsh 1903:518).

The Jews of intertestamental times expected demonic activity until God overthrows evil. It was a common feature of the expectation concerning the messianic age that the power of demons would be broken at that time. God's Elect One who is called in *1 Enoch 37-71* "The Anointed One", "The Righteous One", "The Son of Man" (This title, so familiar to the reader of the New Testament gospels, is derived apparently from Daniel 7:13 - see Pfeiffer 1959:123), will sit on the throne of glory and judge "Azazel, and his associates, and all his hosts in the name of the Lord of spirits" *(I Enoch 55:4; 90:20-27)*, and the end of Satan will be the healing and resurrection of the servants of the Lord *(Jubilees 23:30)*.

2.6.9   CONCLUSIONS

The first-century Jews shared in the common Mediterranean belief in the existence of spirits. There is a clear distinction between good and evil angels or spirits in Jewish demonology. Demons are given place in holy writings by expanding scripture text. In this case, Genesis 6:1-4 and other scriptures are refashioned to include the demons. While there is no similar cosmic myth in the rest of the Greco-Roman collections, in *1 Enoch*, the evil spirits are separated from the good through a "historical sin". The demons have a nature separate from that of humans. That demons incite people to sin is an important difference between later Jewish demonology and primitive religion. In later Judaism, the structure of the kingdom of darkness with the chief demon (Satan) as leader, seems to take concrete shape. The impression that demons have an element of immortality or indestructible life suggests that an eternal suffering and punishment will be borne by the wicked spirits. Though the devil and his forces are hostile to God and humanity, their power and influence are limited; God is sovereign over all creation, including the forces of evil.