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DEMONOLOGY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Divinity

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A study of Old Testament demonology involves a vast amount of material. This may appear rather obvious when considering the fact that the Old Testament was written over a long period of time. It is precisely

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In this study we have addressed the second chapter. This chapter may be the most lengthy and may also be considered the most important. It is the pivotal point around which the remainder of the study will revolve. While not claiming that we have reached all of the problems connected with the origin of Old Testament demonology, we have nevertheless succeeded in pointing up, in the area of our study, some of the major differences that exist between critical scholarship and literary interpretation.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A study of Old Testament demonology involves a vast amount of material. This may appear rather strange when considering the fact that "demons" in the Old Testament are greatly absent at first sight. However, it is precisely the absence of demons that fills the study with intrigue. To say this is also to imply the obvious, that a study of Old Testament demonology is somewhat problematic.

The basic problem of Old Testament demonology is the problem of origin. Whence came demons in Old Testament times? Are they real beings whose existence is the product of divine revelation? Or do they exist as the result of association with pagan cultus? What of the Hebrew mind? Was it of such character as to develop a belief in demons purely through imaginative superstition?

To this basic problem we have addressed the second chapter. This chapter must be the most lengthy and must also be considered the most important. It is the pivotal point around whose findings the remainder of the study will revolve. While not suggesting that we have resolved all of the problems concerning the origin of Old Testament demonology, we have nevertheless succeeded in pointing up, in the area of our study, some of the major differences that exist between critical scholarship and literary interpretation.

Chapter three concerns itself with the problem of identifying specific demons in the Old Testament. It also attempts to present a general, while concrete characterization of demons according to Hebrew belief. The chapter bears the title, "Possible References to Demons in the Old Testament," since the writer is not convinced that all of the references designated apply specifically to demons. We have again taken into account the demonological identifications of both the critical and the more conservative branches of Biblical scholarship.

How are Hebrew men to react when confronted by demons? This is essentially the question that is answered in chapter four. Demonology presents a distinct challenge over against monotheistic religion. The Hebrew man had to reckon with this challenge.

Chapter five deals briefly with the concept of Satan. His origin is alluded to in chapter one and is given in more detail in chapter four. The definition of Satan is brought out along with a description of his position as the chief of demons.

The final chapter of our study attempts to bring together certain significant conclusions. While the writer is careful not to overstep the boundaries defined by the study's title, he cannot but help make at least slight reference to apocryphal rabbinical, and New Testament contributions toward a demonological system.

The purpose of this study is not to argue the problem of whether demons actually existed in Old Testament times or whether they were merely mythological attempts to express the reality of evil in the universe apart from the human sphere. The purpose is to present a rapid survey of Old Testament demonology and the influence that critical and conservative scholarship have brought to bear upon demonological interpretation.

It should be pointed out that this study has its limitations. We would not dare suggest the possibility that we have exhausted all of the materials available on Old Testament demonology. We have listened to only the major voices on this subject. In particular, we have paid attention to Biblical scholars like W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson of the critical school and Merrill F. Unger of the conservative group.

Old Testament demonology is a study far too expansive to be covered fairly in our brief study. Thus, there is a lack of detailed exegesis on most Scriptural references while also an absence of thorough historical discussion concerning obvious questions. For example, is a demonological system more evident during certain periods of Israel's history?

We hope, within these limitations, to establish some degree of scholarship. We begin with the problem of the origin of Old Testament demonology. We then supply specific references and consider the Old Testament attitude toward demons. Satan is held up to be the chief of demons, and we are thus led to suggest significant conclusions.

CHAPTER II

THE ORIGIN OF OLD TESTAMENT DEMONOLOGY

To unveil the origin of Old Testament demonology is an arduous task, particularly in regard to critical assumptions. One might begin the investigation from the vantage point of Old Testament monotheism and consider it a development out of lower religious stages. One might also approach the problem from the vantage point of Old Testament angelology and its informative passages concerning "evil angels." Our purpose is to make use of both vantage points. First, we would view the origin of Old Testament demonology from a critical point of view and then proceed to a more conservative, literary interpretation of the problem.

To deny the fact that elaborate systems of demonology existed among the peoples surrounding ancient Israel is inconceivable. Merrill Unger comments: "The entire religious environment out of which ancient Israel was divinely chosen to be a witness and a guardian of the truth . . . was full of demonism."¹ The peoples that possibly exerted chief influence upon Israel in regard to demonism were the Babylonians, Assyrians, Arabians, and Persians. W. O. E.

¹Merrill F. Unger, Biblical Demonology (Wheaton, Ill.: Van Kampen Press, Inc., 1952), p. 4.

Oesterley adds the thought that these peoples were racially connected with the Israelites, thus making their influence upon them more pronounced.²

Ancient Babylonia was, in a sense, swarmed over by demonic spirits called genii. These genii, or demons, were generally ill-disposed and were considered messengers of Ereshkigal, the queen of the realm of the dead.³ Other particular demons of ancient Babylonia include Namtaru, from the nether-world; Utukku, spirit of the dead who harms those who dwell in the wilderness; and Ekimmu, "the departed soul," who finds no rest but wanders about the earth injuring men at every available opportunity.⁴ These messengers of Ereshkigal virtually invaded all of Babylon, "creeping under doors, filling every nook, lurking menacingly behind walls and hedges, relentlessly demanding incantations, magical prayers, and religious veneration for their appeasement."⁵ The Assyrian demonological system was, to a large degree, comparable to that of Babylonia.⁶

A similarly fantastic demonology is discoverable in Arabic religion. Here demonic spirits are called Ginn or

²W. O. E. Oesterley, "The Demonology of the Old Testament," The Expositor, Series Seven, III (1907), 320.

³Ibid., p. 326.

⁴Ibid., pp. 326-327.

⁵Unger, op. cit., pp. 4-5.

⁶Ibid., p. 5.

Jinn. Ginn is a collective word pointing to a multiplicity of demons.⁷ The Arabic Ginn constitute the ghostly shadows of perished nations.⁸ Burial places are purported to be full of demons and the ruined sites of Higr and Nicibin are supposedly inhabited by spirits of those who lived there in days gone by.⁹ These demons, too, virtually swarm over all Arabia and lurk in every nook and cranny awaiting to attack the unwary.

So thickly do the Arabs people the desert with their "Jinn" that they apologize when throwing anything away, lest they should hit some of them. So when entering a bath, or pouring water on the ground, or letting a bucket down into a well, or entering a place of uncleanness, the well-bred son of the desert will say, "Permission, ye blessed!"¹⁰

Persian religion represents a dualistic system. Ahura-Mazda, the god of light and goodness, is opposed by Angra-Mainyu, who is the cause of all evils.¹¹ Demons, then, are creations of Angra-Mainyu and are held responsible for all that is evil, wicked and harmful in the world.¹²

According to critical scholarship, the religion of Israel was greatly influenced by these pagan religions,

⁷Oesterley, op. cit., p. 325.

⁸Ibid., p. 326.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Unger, op. cit., p. 5.

¹¹Paul Heinisch, Theology of the Old Testament (St. Paul: The Liturgical Press, 1955), p. 145.

¹²Unger, op. cit., p. 5.

particularly in regard to their demonological systems. To the religion of Israel, then, must also be attached the stigma of "syncretism."¹³ The religion of Israel was not entirely the product of divine revelation, but rather took shape along syncretistic lines. It became a mixed religion, its native elements joined with various practices and beliefs of its pagan neighbors.

Thus Oesterley would say that there is no purpose in arguing whether or not demonology exists in the Old Testament. The presumption is, a priori, that it does exist.

Since an elaborate system of demonology existed among the Canaanites, the Arabs, and the Babylonians, it can be presumed that we can find traces of an elaborate system also in Israelite literature.¹⁴

Consequently, it is only by the comparative method that the real meanings of the passages referring to demons in the Old Testament can be discovered.¹⁵

¹³ Rudolph Kittel, The Religion of the People of Israel (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1925), p. 29. "From the middle or end of the third millenium native elements mixed with those of the Babylonians . . . Egyptians . . . Hittites and of other peoples." Cf. also p. 13; "it is quite certain that the Hebrew religion in historical times took shape on the soil of Palestine or Canaan, and in close connection with the religion of the country."

¹⁴ Oesterley, op. cit., p. 320.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 325. Oesterley would suggest not only comparing the religion of the Canaanites, Arabs, and Babylonians with Israel, but also later Jewish demonology (rabbinical and New Testament) in order to discover Old Testament passages containing demonic references.

We are back at the question, whence came demons in Old Testament times? We would answer in summary of what we have discovered thus far that demons exist in the Old Testament partly as a result of the process of absorption. The religion of Israel absorbed a demonological system from their pagan neighbors.

But this is not to be completely fair to the critical approach. There is more to be said. For a critical approach to the Holy Scriptures also betrays preconceptions strongly influenced by Hegelian evolutionary assumptions and Darwinian materialism.¹⁶ Thus, critical scholars would say, every religion, including that of the Jews, is evolutionary. In addition to Israelite religion being a mixed religion (absorbent or syncretistic), it is also involved in the evolutionary process. Every religion must pass through a variety of stages. Every religion evolves or develops from a lower to a higher form. Resultantly, demonism is a particular stage in religious evolution and is ultimately superseded in the Old Testament by a religious and ethical monotheism.

The stages through which all religions pass are most generally limited to three. These are: (1) Animatism (2) Animism (3) Polytheism.¹⁷ The three stages are defined in

¹⁶ Merrill F. Unger, Introductory Guide to the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1951), p. 268.

¹⁷ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, Hebrew Religion (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1930), p. 4. Cf. also Unger, Introductory Guide to the Old Testament, p. 268.

this way: Animatism is believing in the tree itself as a spirit; Animism is believing in the same tree, this time as animated by a spirit; Polytheism is the spirit developing into either a god or goddess.¹⁸

Accordingly, critical scholars assert that the faith of Israel grew out of primitive, pagan beliefs, and in the course of its history, passed through the various stages listed above. For this study, the period designated "animism" is the most important. This particular stage of development suggests a religion which is polydemonistic. To place the period of "animism" within the context of Israel's history, then, is to say that it is pre-Mosaic.¹⁹

R. W. Moss observes:

Jewish demonology must be traced back to primitive and pre-Mosaic times, when both a form of animism was present in a belief in the ill-disposed activity of the spirits of the dead, and a variety of places and objects were supposed to be rendered sacred by the occupation, permanent or temporary, of some superhuman power.²⁰

For purposes of simplicity and clarification it might be well to suggest that the term "animism," which we have defined as material animated by spirit,²¹ includes polydemonism in the form of animated objects and ancestor-spirits. Thus

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁹ Heinisch, op. cit., p. 34.

²⁰ R. W. Moss, "Devil," Dictionary of the Bible, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952) p. 188.

²¹ Supra.

Oesterley is led to the conclusion that demonology is the necessary concomitant of animism.²² Or, perhaps, it is possible to go one step further and say that demonology and animism are, for all practical purposes, synonymous terms.

The Jewish Encyclopedia argues that the thought of spirits animating every object and every part of the world has its place in primitive beliefs of all tribes and races.²³ This would also hold true of the people of the Old Testament. For example, the 2 Samuel 5:23-24 passage is considered to be suggestive of animism.

And when David inquired of the Lord, he said, "You shall not go up; go around to their rear, and come upon them opposite the balsam trees. And when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then bestir yourself; for then the Lord has gone out before you to smite the army of the Philistines."

Oesterley comments on this passage as follows:

After David had enquired of Yahweh regarding his attack upon the Philistines, he is told that when he hears the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees it will be time to bestir himself, "for then is Yahweh gone out before thee to smite the hosts [army] of the Philistines." The marching in the tops of the trees is the sound of the rustling of the branches. It is quite clear from this that the belief was held that Yahweh entered the trees, His presence being indicated by the rustling. One could not have a more direct indication of animistic belief.²⁴ (Underscoring my own.)

²² Oesterley, op. cit., p. 318.

²³ The Jewish Encyclopedia (New York and London: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1902), p. 514.

²⁴ Oesterley and Robinson, op. cit., p. 27. Cf. also 1 Chron. 14:15.

Perhaps a more familiar illustration of the animistic belief that Yahweh abode in material things is the record of Exodus 3:2-5. Here Yahweh appears to Moses in the burning bush and even speaks to him.

In Judges 20:33 we read, "And all the men of Israel rose up out of their place and set themselves in array at Baal-tamar." We are unable to locate Baal-tamar geographically. It is not mentioned in other references; its locality is unknown. Regardless of this, it is obvious that this place was named after a Baal who was believed to inhabit the $\gamma\beta\tau$, a sort of "palm-tree Baal." Just this fact is enough for our present purposes since it is a rather clear instance in the Old Testament of a somewhat developed animistic belief.²⁵

While these passages do not specifically point to polydemonism in the animistic stage of Israel's history, they are nevertheless very instructive. For their designation of deity as the inhabitant of rocks and trees tells us that there must have been a time in the history of ancient Israel when animism (in the sense of material animated by demon-spirits) was very predominant. Thus, in attempting to uncover a demonological system in the Old Testament, we must approach the problem with the presupposition that animistic evidences will be there.

To the animistic spirits, which we interpret to be demons, must also be added another peculiar classification of spirit-

²⁵ Ibid., p. 26.

demons. This other group must be considered a modification of primitive animism and can be rightly placed under the heading of ancestor-worship or ancestor-spirits. The spirits of the wicked dead were supposed to have haunted the wilderness and the tombs.²⁶ T. H. Robinson, going on the assumption that Israelite religion was syncretistic, says, "The gods worshipped by the ancestor of Israel may have been originally eponymous ancestors (underscoring my own) of semi-animistic spirits of the wilderness."²⁷

We shall now follow critical scholarship as it attempts to define the origin of Old Testament demonology in the terms of ancestor-worship. Oesterley explains this ancient institution as follows:

The fundamental idea here is the keeping up of social relations with a dead ancestor. Just as, when living, the head of a family, clan or tribe acted as guardian and protector to his dependents, who in turn honored and served him as their head, so this mutual relationship was intended to continue after death had removed the former from visible presence among the latter.²⁸

H. Wheeler Robinson, in his old but still valuable treatise on man, suggests that the phenomena of fetishism,

²⁶ Moss, op. cit., p. 189.

²⁷ Theodore H. Robinson, "The History of Israel," The Interpreter's Bible, edited by George A. Buttrick (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1952), I, 273.

²⁸ Oesterley and Robinson, op. cit., p. 16.

totemism, demonology, and witchcraft are common to all primitive thought, the ancient Israelites being no exception.²⁹ As a possible parallel to Old Testament conceptions surrounding the departed he points to the Egyptian practice of embalming the dead; to the "striking development of ancestor-worship" in the Mongolian races; to the "transmigration of the soul into other bodies for subsequent lives" and its "complementary theory of 'Karma'" in Indian thought; and finally to the scientific study of personality among the Greeks which was perhaps initiated by Aristotle.³⁰ However, to place Robinson's thoughts within their proper context we must overstep the boundaries of this chapter and look at his ultimate evaluation of ancestor-worship and the practice of consulting the dead in the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament, this belief in the accessibility of man to the will of demons and spirits, good or evil, is concentrated into belief in accessibility to the Spirit of Yahweh, and is deepened by the moral consciousness and by progressive conceptions of both God and man till it becomes spiritual in the fuller sense of the word.³¹

²⁹ H. Wheeler Robinson, The Christian Doctrine of Man (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1926), pp. 7-8. The first portion of this volume discusses "The Old Testament Doctrine of Man." The volume as a whole has only slight bearing on our study.

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 9-10. Cf. his quote on Egyptian embalming from Budge's The Book of the Dead: "All the available evidence shows that the Egyptians of dynastic times mummified the dead body because they believed that a spiritual body would 'germinate' or develop itself in it." Similar practices and beliefs produced the spirit-demons of ancestor-worship in Israel.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 10-11.

Here is a very instructive paragraph in regard to the critical point of view. Through religious evolution man's spiritual life reaches a higher level in which he transfers his accessibility to demon-spirits into a morally productive accessibility to Yahweh.

There is no doubt among critical scholars as to identifying ancestor-worship and the practice of consulting the dead in the Old Testament. Suffice it to say that the familiar account of King Saul consulting a dead Samuel through the witch at Endor³² gives great support to this presupposition.

However, taking it for granted that the religion of Israel was influenced by pagan religion we are then able to find very early evidence of polydemonism in the form of ancestor-worship on Canaanite soil. Kittel concludes that this practice is the oldest evidence of worshipping "non-earthly" or "non-human" beings on Canaanite soil and that the evidence is certain as far back as the third or fourth millennium before Christ.³³ His information concerning funeral customs, soul and spirit, and religious practices surrounding these is very interesting from the standpoint of Old Testament demonology.

³² 1 Sam. 28.

³³ Kittel, op. cit., p. 15.

Certain funeral customs in Gezer, by which an attempt was made utterly to destroy the body by burning, point to a primitive belief in a soul, namely, the conception of a soul within the body being inextricably bound up with it and able to cause trouble so long as the body continues to exist. In this period of the more ancient great stone monuments the cultus was practiced, as far as we can see, chiefly at cromlechs or circles of stone (Gilgal?) and at stone blocks such as Jacob's stone at Bethel was thought to be. What form of religious worship was practiced within the precincts of a holy place or at the upright stone blocks cannot accurately be told. Nevertheless, it may be taken for granted that gifts were brought to the earth-spirits and to the ancestral spirits who dwelt in these sacred spots.³⁴

It is apparent that critical scholars hold primitive funeral customs to be of invaluable significance in constructing an Old Testament demonology. Kittel suggests that from these ancient customs we are able to uncover a Biblical account of man sacrificing or placing a gift before a demon or god and permitting such to take it away.³⁵ For example, in Judges 6 we have the account of Gideon being commissioned leader of the Israelites against Midian by the angel of the Lord. When told that he will defeat Midian, Gideon requests a sign of the Lord's favor. Thus he says, "Do not depart from here, I pray thee, until I come to thee, and bring out my present, and set it before thee."³⁶ Gideon then goes into his house, prepares a kid and unleaven cakes, and puts them on a rock under the oak tree at Ophra where the angel

³⁴ Kittel, op. cit., p. 15.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Jud. 6:18.

had appeared. The angel then touches the kid and the unleaven cakes with his staff. Fire springs up from the rock and consumes them. The angel vanishes.

Here, then, is purported to be a Biblical example of sacrifice to deity comparable to the demon-sacrifice of the ancient Canaanites. The conclusion, though not explicitly stated, is that the example of Judges 6 and other Old Testament passages betrays evidence of the fact that ancient Israel gave sacrifice to demons, in fact, possessed a demonology similar to that of Canaanite and all early Semitic religions.

Thus Oesterley and Robinson say:

The belief in demons and the practice of consulting the departed was widespread among the early Semites, and there is nothing in the nature of things to justify the supposition that the Hebrews formed an exception to the rule.³⁷

The critical approach toward the origin of Old Testament demonology, then, says two things. First, the Israelites believed in demons because they inherited such a belief from their associations with pagan religions. Secondly, all religions including the Israelite religion pass through a stage called animism in which demons are present in the form of spirits animating material and in the form of spirits of the dead. Even with these presuppositions it is still difficult to find many direct references to demons in the Old Testament.³⁸

³⁷Oesterley and Robinson, op. cit., p. 62.

³⁸Oesterley, op. cit., pp. 323-324.

We want to turn next to the Biblical account of the origin of demons. Before we do, however, a word is in order concerning Hebrew man. His worries, fears, and suspicions might give us some clue as to the origin of Old Testament demonology. Perhaps a belief in the existence of demons originated in the depths of Hebrew man's uncertainty.

The world to Hebrew man was an insecure, sinister, and tenacious place. This is, perhaps, brought out by one of the Hebrew words for world, אֲרָץ. This word conveys the idea of something uncertain, unknown, or hidden.³⁹ To the Hebrew the world exists under the continuous threat of destructive chaos in the forms of earthquakes and other accidents.⁴⁰ For that reason the somewhat pessimistic and uncertain personality of Hebrew man is laid bare in these words of the Psalmist:

Then the flood would have swept us away,
the torrent would have gone over us;
then over us would have gone
the raging waters.⁴¹

Or, the author of the Jonah narrative displays cosmic insecurity when he says, "The waters closed in over me, the deep was round about me; weeds were wrapped about my head."⁴²

³⁹Ludwig Koehler, Hebrew Man (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956), p. 112.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 109-114.

⁴¹Ps. 124:4-5.

⁴²Jonah 2:5.

The desert regions from which the Hebrews came added to their insecurity. These regions were full of "terrors, sinister things, voices in the night, and other ghostly impressions."⁴³ The Hebrews shared with other religions the belief that all sicknesses and troubles in the world were caused by "lesser deities," which deities were then imagined to be ridiculous combinations of animal, bird, and human bodies.⁴⁴

He (the Hebrew) is bound by the expectation of a world catastrophe, as chaos takes away the foundation of his existence from under his feet. He is bound by the uncertainty as to whether tomorrow will dawn or whether summer and harvest will come again next year. He is held by the indefinite, secret fear which earthquake and landslide have given him. He is oppressed by the puzzles of nature from which something unexpected or terrifying can come again and again--puzzles which he does not understand, which he does not examine, and in the face of which he never knows just how he ought to conduct

⁴³ Koehler, op. cit., p. 115. Cf. The Jewish Encyclopedia, op. cit., p. 515. "The wilderness as the home of demons was regarded as the place whence such diseases as leprosy issued, and in cases of leprosy one of the birds set apart to be offered as an expiatory sacrifice was released that it might carry the disease back to the desert."

⁴⁴ George Ernest Wright, "The Faith of Israel," The Interpreter's Bible, edited by George A. Buttrick (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1952), I, 375. Kittel, op. cit., pp. 77-78 explains Hebrew personality in approximately four steps. Hebrew man (1) believed in evil forebodings, Gen. 15:11; (2) heard Yahweh's voice in tree-tops, 2 Sam. 5:24; (3) communicated with spirits of the dead, 1 Sam. 28:7ff.; Is. 8:19; (4) sacrificed to underground spirits, 1 Kings 16:34. "As in ancient Canaan they manifestly still felt themselves surrounded on every side by spirits, and men's minds were held in thrall by anxious superstition."

himself. He is filled with a dark belief in demons and uncanny powers, whose activities he thinks he can detect in his illnesses, in the changes of his moods and the disturbances of his mind, in all the trials and afflictions which come unexplained upon him.⁴⁵

For the orthodox Christian the basic source of information concerning the origin of Old Testament demonology must be the Old Testament itself. This source is more reliable than either the critical approach or the world view of Hebrew man since it reaches back before history and into eternity.⁴⁶ What does the Old Testament say about the origin of demons?

The answer to this question must be made from the vantage point of Old Testament angelology. A belief in angels permeates the whole Old Testament. Although it never expressly states that God created all the angels, nevertheless this truth is implicit in those passages which speak of God as the creator of all that exists, visible and invisible.⁴⁷

The traditional view is that God created all things good. However, the evil angels (devils or demons) "are spirits who were created holy, but sinned and are forever rejected by God."⁴⁸ Also the Devil or Satan was once a holy

⁴⁵ Koehler, op. cit., p. 117.

⁴⁶ Unger, Biblical Demonology, p. 15.

⁴⁷ Heinisch, op. cit., p. 130. Cf. Gen. 1:1.

⁴⁸ A Short Explanation of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1943), p. 95.

angel who fell away from God.⁴⁹ This, then, is the simple and logical explanation of the origin of Old Testament demonology in conservative Biblical scholarship. However, opposition may be raised against this view since it finds its primary support not in the Old Testament, but more properly in the New Testament.⁵⁰

To discover what the Old Testament has to say about the origin of demons, one is forced to ask where is the Old Testament reference to the fall of the angels, or, whence Satan if God originally made all things good.

One purely speculative argument is that demons are not evil angels at all but the disembodied spirits of a pre-Adamite earth.⁵¹ The supposition here⁵² is that a pre-Adamite race existed under the rule of Satan in his unfallen state. However, when Satan and his cohorts rebelled against God in heaven, these pre-Adamite people somehow became involved in the rebellion. The result was that they were cursed with the loss of their bodies and became disembodied spirits or demons.

Another attempt to explain the origin of Old Testament demonology on the basis of the Old Testament is to link the fall of Satan and the evil angels with Genesis 6:1-4. Here

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 86.

⁵⁰Cf. Matt. 25:41; 2 Pet. 2:4; Rev. 12:7-9.

⁵¹Unger, Biblical Demonology, pp. 42-45.

⁵²Gen. 1:2.

the angels are identified with the "sons of God" who seduced the "daughters of men."⁵³ The monstrous progeny of the angels and the antediluvian women are considered demons.⁵⁴ Ancient apocryphal writings tend to support this explanation.⁵⁵ However, Genesis 6 is not a reference to the fall of Satan and the evil angels. The "sons of God" are the pious descendants of Seth who "entered polygamous marriages with depraved women, whereupon the fear of God vanished from the earth and immorality prevailed."⁵⁶

It is legitimate to expect the Book of Job to give at least slight reference to the fall of the evil angels. Two passages particularly are sometimes interpreted as references to this event.

Even in his servants he puts no trust,
and his angels he charges with error.⁵⁷

Behold, God puts no trust in his holy ones,
and the heavens are not clean in his sight.⁵⁸

These passages refer to the spirit world surrounding God's throne. However, they cannot be interpreted as

⁵³Heinisch, op. cit., p. 144.

⁵⁴Unger, Biblical Demonology, pp. 45-52.

⁵⁵Heinisch, op. cit., p. 144.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Job 4:18.

⁵⁸Job 15:15.

references to the fall of the evil angels since they refer to the whole spirit world and only a certain number of evil angels fell away.⁵⁹

A final attempt to locate an Old Testament reference to the fall of Satan or the evil angels is made in Isaiah 14:12-20.

How you are fallen from heaven

O Day Star [Lucifer, KJV], son of Dawn! (vs. 12)

Many church fathers associated "Day Star" or "Lucifer" with Satan. These words, however, were addressed to the king of Babylon who was reaching for the heavens and attempting to establish his throne on an equal basis with God. Because of this he will be made to fall, or will be "cast down," or humbled.

Thus Heinisch:

These passages can be applied to Satan only in the typical sense; perhaps, however, the picture would be easier to explain if the prophet had had in mind an angel who had exalted himself against God and was punished by being hurled into hell.⁶⁰

A. B. Davidson presents a rather interesting view of the origin of demons in the Old Testament.⁶¹ He says that angels

⁵⁹ Heinisch, op. cit., p. 133. Is. 24:21 refers to stars, not to fallen angels.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 144.

⁶¹ A. B. Davidson, The Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), pp. 294-295.

belong to a superhuman class. This class is designated מַלְאָכִים . In the Scriptures these מַלְאָכִים and God are called by the same name. They are His messengers. However, it is interesting to note that the heathen gods were also called מַלְאָכִים . Thus, the Hebrew line of thought was turned toward another direction. The result was a mixture of angels and heathen gods to the end that the gods of the nations became demons or evil angels. The demonology of the Old Testament, then, becomes the simple matter of identifying false gods as demons.

Davidson's view is rather narrow and does not give answer to the problem of locating a specific Old Testament reference that tells of the fall of Satan and the evil angels. The event in which the evil angels under Satan's leadership fell away from God and lost their original holiness is assumed by conservative scholarship to have taken place sometime after the creation of the invisible creatures and before the Fall in Genesis 3. This assumption is based upon the appearance of Satan in the form of a serpent tempting Eve. However, this position is quite weak by virtue of the fact that the very first instance Satan is identified with the serpent that tempted Adam and Eve is found in an apocryphal work.⁶²

⁶² Wis. 2:24. Cf. Heinisch, *op. cit.*, p. 143. "That a demon from the netherworld was involved is indicated by the words 'eat dust.'"

It becomes increasingly difficult to establish the origin of Old Testament demonology on the solitary basis of what the Old Testament says about demons. A clear, distinct reference to the fall of Satan and his evil angels is not to be found in the Old Testament. The interpretations of conservative scholarship, then, lean heavily on the New Testament revelation in this regard. Suffice it to say that the concept of Satan and the fallen angels possibly existed in the minds of the Old Testament people. It was customary to relegate all things to God's doing, including at times moral evil.⁶³ Therefore, the problem of finding an explanation for the origin of Satan and his host was not a pressing obsession with Old Testament people. They merely assumed the existence of these beings.

⁶³Heinisch, op. cit., pp. 143-144.

CHAPTER III

POSSIBLE REFERENCES TO DEMONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The possibility of identifying demons in the Old Testament appears rather slim at first sight. Young's Analytical Concordance¹ lists no references to "demons" in the Old Testament. However, two Hebrew words are rendered "devil" in English translations. These words are שָׂטָן and שָׂטָן . Each of these words appear only two times in the Old Testament.² The term Satan, שָׂטָן , appears sixteen times, twelve of these being in the Book of Job.³ The Septuagint, however, contains five Hebrew words which are translated either by δαίμων or δαμόνιον .⁴ These Hebrew words are as follows: שָׂטָן , שָׂטָן , שָׂטָן , שָׂטָן , and שָׂטָן .

In spite of these references we are not able to overlook the scarcity of demons in the Old Testament. Unger gives a possible solution to this problem:

This circumstance does not for one moment militate against the fact of Hebrew popular belief in demons,

¹ Robert Young, Analytical Concordance to the Bible (Twenty-Second American Edition; New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co.), p. 252.

² Lev. 17:7; 2 Chron. 11:15; Deut. 32:17; Ps. 106:37.

³ Young, op. cit., p. 836.

⁴ Merrill F. Unger, Biblical Demonology (Wheaton, Ill.: Van Kampen Press, Inc., 1952), p. 59.

which is attested by the many Scriptural warnings against sorcery and magic. That the people so constantly needed the admonition of revealed truth speaks more strongly for the abiding belief in demons than the few specific references which are found. The paucity and simplicity of Old Testament demonic conceptions were doubtless intended to be at once a vivid contrast to elaborate and multitudinous ethnic prevailing superstition and excess.⁵

However, when we take into account both the references to demons in the Septuagint and the animistic preconceptions of critical scholarship, we are able to construct a rather elaborate demonological system. Unger constructs his Old Testament demonology under the five Hebrew words translated "demons" in the Septuagint.⁶ Oesterley and Robinson have prepared a more extensive demonology which is divided into the two forms in which demons appear in the Old Testament:

(1) Theriomorphic--demons in animal form (2) Anthropomorphic--demons in human form.⁷

It is our intention to present eighteen groups of demons in the Old Testament and to identify them by name and reference. These are not listed in any special order, although the more familiar groups will appear first. It is rather ambiguous to ask which demons are more familiar than others in the latter groupings of our list.

Shedim-- שְׁדִיִּם . The root of this word is שָׁדַד , to rule, to be lord: שְׁדִיִּם (idols) appears only in the

⁵ Ibid., pp. 58-59.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 59-61.

⁷ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, Hebrew Religion (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1930), p. 63.

plural and is translated *δαίμόνια* in the Septuagint "since the Jews [rightly] regarded idols to be demons, who allowed themselves to be worshipped."⁸ Koehler calls these demons "the black ones."⁹

The opinion of Biblical scholars is nearly unanimous in finding only two Old Testament references to the $\Pi' \text{ } \dot{\text{T}} \text{ } \dot{\text{W}}$. Both of these references concern the idolatrous Israelites sacrificing to demons. Deuteronomy 32:17 says, "They sacrificed to demons which were no gods." Psalm 106:37 speaks of child-sacrifice offered to appease the $\Pi' \text{ } \dot{\text{T}} \text{ } \dot{\text{W}}$:

They sacrificed their sons
and their daughters to the demons;
they poured out innocent blood,
the blood of their sons and daughters,
whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan.

Oesterley, however, finds four other references to the $\Pi' \text{ } \dot{\text{T}} \text{ } \dot{\text{W}}$, Genesis 14:3,8,10 and Hosea 12:12. He says that the textus receptus in Genesis 14 which reads $\Pi' \text{ } \dot{\text{T}} \text{ } \dot{\text{W}} \text{ } \Pi$ $\text{ } \dot{\text{P}} \text{ } \dot{\text{H}} \text{ } \dot{\text{U}}$, "the Valley of Siddim," should probably be pointed $\Pi' \text{ } \dot{\text{T}} \text{ } \dot{\text{W}} \text{ } \Pi' \text{ } \dot{\text{U}}$ and read "the Valley of the Shedim," or "the Valley of the evil-spirits."¹⁰ Likewise, the original text

⁸ Gesenius' Hebrew And Chaldee Lexicon (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmann's Pub. Co., 1954), p. 805. So also Unger, op. cit., p. 59: "The Hebrews regarded idol images as visible symbols of invisible demons--who let themselves be worshipped by men."

⁹ Ludwig Koehler, Hebrew Man (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956), p. 115.

¹⁰ W. O. E. Oesterley, "The Demonology of the Old Testament," The Expositor, Series Seven, III, (1907), 322.

in Hosea 12 which reads $\text{בְּגִלְגָל יִזְבְּחוּ בָּאֵימֹתַי שְׂעִירֵי אֲשֵׁרִים}$, "in Gilgal they sacrifice bulls," should be emended to read

$\text{בְּגִלְגָל יִזְבְּחוּ לְאֵלֵי אֲשֵׁרִים}$, "in Gilgal they sacrifice to the demons."¹¹

Seirim-- שְׂעִירֵי . These are the "hairy ones," he-goats or satyrs, possibly so named because of their appearance.¹²

There are five references to these demons in the Old Testament. Gesenius suggests that the idolatrous worship of אֲשֵׁרִים among the Hebrews comes from following the example of the Egyptians.¹³

The Holiness Code orders the Israelites to kill their sacrificial animals at the door of the tabernacle. The reason for this order is given in Leviticus 17:7, "So they shall no more slay their sacrifice for satyrs $[\text{אֲשֵׁרִים}]$, after whom they play the harlot."

During the reign of King Josiah an intensive drive against idolatrous practices in Israel was undertaken. 2 Kings 23:8 says of Josiah, "and he broke down the high places of the gates," $\text{וַיִּשְׁבֹּר אֶת-בָּמֹת הַשַּׁעֲרֹת}$. Oesterley suggests an emendation to this original text since the passage does not make good sense as it stands. For

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Oesterley and Robinson, op. cit., p. 64. Cf. also Unger, op. cit., p. 60: "These demons are goat-like either in respect to looks or in respect to attitude."

¹³ Gesenius, op. cit., p. 792.

הַשְּׂעִרִים לְמִזְבְּחֵי הַשְּׂעִרִים he substitutes the form הַשְּׂעִרִים, "the highplace, or the sanctuary of the desert-demons [lit. he-goats]."¹⁴ The prohibition, then, is against demon-sacrifice and is practically identical to Leviticus 17:7.

Jeroboam I ruled the Israelites from approximately 929 to 909 B.C. During this period he succeeded in keeping the Levites from serving as priests of the Lord. He set up his own priesthood for sacrifice to the satyrs. In 2 Chronicles 11:15 we are told, "he appointed his own priests for the high places, and for the satyrs [הַשְּׂעִרִים]."

The great prophet Isaiah in two poetic passages portrays these "hairy" demons as dancing in the ruins of Babylon, and calling to one another in the desolated city.¹⁵

But wild beasts will lie down there,
and its houses will be full of howling creatures;
there ostriches will dwell,
and there satyrs [הַשְּׂעִרִים].¹⁶

And wild beasts shall meet with hyenas,
the satyr [הַשְּׂעִרִים] shall cry to his fellow.¹⁷

From all these passages we learn that הַשְּׂעִרִים had their own sanctuaries, the "high places"; sacrifices were offered to them; special priests were assigned to carry out

¹⁴Oesterley, op. cit., pp. 322-323. Cf. also Unger, op. cit., p. 60.

¹⁵Unger, op. cit., p. 60.

¹⁶Is. 13:21.

¹⁷Is. 34:14.

this ritual; their name ("hairy-ones") supposes them to be visible; they live in ruined sites.¹⁸

Azazel-- אֲזַזֵּל . Gesenius suggests this word be rendered "avorter," ἀλεξίκακος (אֲזַזֵּל for אֲזַזֵּל), from the root אֲזַז , to remove, to separate.¹⁹

This name causes some difficulty since Azazel appears to have originally been an idol which was appeased by sacrifice. Gesenius comments, "no such idea as this can be admitted by anyone who indeed believes in the inspiration of Scripture; God could never mix up idolatrous rites with his own worship."²⁰

To resolve this difficulty we must look at the references. Azazel is found only in connection with the ceremony on the Day of Atonement. Azazel is usually translated "scape-goat" in English. The word appears only four times in the Old Testament, all of these being in Leviticus 16 (vs. 8, vs. 10 twice, and vs. 26).

The ceremony consisted of taking two he-goats from the congregation of Israel for a sin offering. Aaron sets the he-goats before Yahweh "at the door of the tent of meeting" (vs. 7). Then, "Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats,

¹⁸Oesterley and Robinson, op. cit., p. 65.

¹⁹Gesenius, op. cit., p. 617.

²⁰Ibid.

one lot for the Lord and the other lot for Azazel" (vs. 8). The goat on which Yahweh's lot falls is offered as a sin offering. The goat on which Azazel's lot falls is to "be presented alive before the Lord to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel" (vs. 10).

The actual identity of Azazel is rather foreign to us. We do not know who he is except to assume he is some sort of demon living in the wilderness. Perhaps the whole ceremony of the Day of Atonement survived from pagan backgrounds and Azazel along with it, not because he played an important role in the people's lives, but because of his connection with the ancient ceremony.²¹ Azazel was regarded as a personal being and since the sins of the people were consigned to him, he was regarded as a demon.²²

It is interesting to note as a postscript that Azazel is ultimately identified with Satan in the apocryphal writing, Enoch 6:7.

Röbetz-- אזאזל. In Genesis 4:7 Yahweh speaks to Cain, "And if you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do

²¹G. Ernest Wright, The Old Testament Against Its Environment (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1950), p. 92. Cf. Gesenius, op. cit., p. 617: ". . . from the names of idols being often applied to demons, this name was used for that of an evil demon inhabiting the wilderness, who had to be appeased by sacrifices by this very ancient and Gentile rite."

²²Paul Heinisch, Theology of the Old Testament (St. Paul: The Liturgical Press, 1955), pp. 140-141.

not do well, sin is couching at the door." Oesterly and Robinson claim that this is an impossible rendering of the Hebrew.²³ "Sin" is feminine and "couching" is masculine. The only solution is to go along with Duhm (Die Boesen Geister Des Alten Testaments) who explains "sin" as a marginal gloss to "couching," probably inserted by a later copyist. So Genesis 4:7 should read, "And if you do not do well (there is) one that couches [יָיַן] at the door."

Thus Oesterley and Robinson:

The Babylonians believed that Robetz lurked at the threshold of people's dwellings, and was ready to spring on a man if he came out unwarily; the Hebrew writer adapted this belief, and spiritualized it by identifying Robetz with sin; so that he interpreted this passage as meaning that God said to Cain, "If thou doest not well, remember, Robetz is at the door"; or, in other words, if a man is inclined to do what is wrong, there is an evil demon always lurking at hand to aid and further him in his evil intentions.²⁴

Seraphim-Serpents-- שֵׁרָפִים . These particular venomous serpents appear five times in the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 8:15; Numbers 21:6,8; Isaiah 14:29 and 30:6.

שֵׁרָפִים is supposed to be the Greek πρηστῆρ, καύσων, "so called from its inflamed bite."²⁵

²³ Oesterley and Robinson, op. cit., p. 69. The remainder of the paragraph is a re-phrasing of p. 69.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 69-70.

²⁵ Gesenius, op. cit., p. 795.

The belief that serpents were the incarnations of demons was a popular belief among Semitic peoples.²⁶ These שׁוֹרֵפִים developed in two directions. The familiar vision of the prophet in Isaiah 6 shows that they developed into angelic beings. However, Deuteronomy 8:15, in speaking of Yahweh's leading the Israelites out of Egypt, says, "who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, with its fiery serpents $[\text{שׁוֹרֵפִים}]$ and scorpions." Here the שׁוֹרֵפִים develop in the direction of demons of the waste.²⁷

When the Israelites murmured against God and Moses on their way to the promised land, "the Lord sent fiery serpents $[\text{אֲשֵׁרֵי אֵשׁ}]$ among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people died."²⁸ Moses then prayed in behalf of the people. Yahweh said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent $[\text{שׁוֹרֵפִים}]$, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten when he sees it, shall live."²⁹ Oesterley and Robinson comment that this is "imaginative magic which shows the antiquity of the belief in this kind of demon."³⁰

²⁶ Oesterley and Robinson, op. cit., p. 64.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Num. 21:6.

²⁹ Num. 21:8.

³⁰ Oesterley and Robinson, op. cit., p. 64.

Isaiah 14:29 is an oracle against Philistia who will be punished by, among other things, a "flying serpent [שׁוֹרֵפֶת]." The oracle in Isaiah 30:6 speaks of the flying serpent שׁוֹרֵפֶת as an inhabitant of the Negeb.

Serpent-- שׁוֹרֵפֶת . The reference here must be Genesis 3:1-15. In the account of the Fall the serpent is the instrument through which Satan tempts Adam and Eve. The serpent is thus considered to be a demon.

R. W. Moss observes:

That certain animals were believed to be endowed with demonic power appears from Gen. 3:1-15, though here the serpent itself is represented as demonic, and not yet as possessed by an evil spirit (Wis. 2:24; Rom. 16:20).³¹

Lilith-- לִילִית . This is the female night demon.

The only reference is Isaiah 34:14.

And wild beasts shall meet with hyenas,
the satyr shall cry to his fellow;
yea, there shall the night hag [לִילִית] alight.

Gesenius comments:

It is really lamentable that any one could connect the word of God with such utter absurdity [considering "Lilith" as a real demon]; many understand the nocturnal creature spoken of to be simply the screech owl.³²

Sting-- שׁוֹרֵפֶת . The reference is to Psalm 91:6.

nor the pestilence [שׁוֹרֵפֶת] that stalks in darkness,
nor the destruction [שׁוֹרֵפֶת] that wastes at
noonday.

³¹R. W. Moss, "Devil," Dictionary of the Bible, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), p. 188.

³²Gesenius, op. cit., p. 438.

The Septuagint translates לַחֲדָשׁ with demon. However, it seems that a popular demonic conception has crept in also with לַחֲדָשׁ . According to The Jewish Encyclopedia both refer to demons, the one walking in darkness and the other storming along at midday.³³

The destroyer-- מַחְרָשׁ . In order to release the Israelites from Egyptian slavery Yahweh had promised to pass through the Egyptians and slay the first born of every family. However, the Israelites were to paint the lintel and door-posts of their dwellings with the blood of the Passover lamb. If this were done Exodus 12:23 says, "the Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer מַחְרָשׁ to enter your houses to slay you."

Some scholars call "the destroyer" a demon, although the messenger of Yahweh.³⁴ However, "the destroyer" is simply the angel of Yahweh who inflicts calamities and death upon men.³⁵

The dry ones. Along with the Seirim in Isaiah 13:21 some scholars find a number of other demons appearing in animal form. They are called "dry ones" because like the Seirim they inhabit wastes or dry places.³⁶

³³The Jewish Encyclopedia (New York and London: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1902), p. 516.

³⁴Moss, op. cit., pp. 188-189. So also Oesterley, op. cit., p. 323.

³⁵Gesenius, op. cit., p. 816.

³⁶Koehler, op. cit., p. 115. Cf. also Oesterley and Robinson, op. cit., p. 67.

Isaiah 13:21-22, speaking of ruined Babylon, says:

But wild beasts will lie down there
and its houses will be full of howling creatures;
there ostriches will dwell,
and there satyrs will dance.
Hyenas will cry in its towers,
and jackals in the pleasant palaces.

(a) $\square^{\prime} \overset{\circ}{\gamma}$. This word appears only in the plural and originally means "dwellers in the desert."³⁷ It is usually rendered "wild beasts" in English translations. What kind of animal this is we do not know. It is simply taken as a real animal believed to be an incarnation of a demon.³⁸

(b) $\square^{\prime} \pi^{\prime} \aleph$. This word also appears only in the plural, perhaps conveying the idea that these animals congregated in numbers. It is another anthropomorphic demon. In English it is usually translated "howling animals" or "howling creatures" and probably refers to screech owls.³⁹

(c) $\pi \overset{\cdot}{\gamma} \overset{\cdot}{\zeta} \overset{\cdot}{\eta}$. These are ostriches of either sex who inhabit the deserts and utter their doleful cry.⁴⁰ The Septuagint renders this word "syrens" which makes them parallel with demons.⁴¹

³⁷ Gesenius, op. cit., p. 708.

³⁸ Oesterley and Robinson, op. cit., p. 67.

³⁹ Gesenius, op. cit., p. 28.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 356.

⁴¹ Oesterley and Robinson, op. cit., pp. 67-68.

(d) אֲרִיִּים . This word occurs only in the plural and means "a howler" (hyena, RSV), so called because of its cry in the night which sounds like the scream of an infant.⁴² It is an anthropomorphic demon.

(e) אֲרִיִּים . This word occurs only in the plural and is translated "jackal" or "wild dog" because of its mournful cry in the desert.⁴³ The animal itself is difficult to identify. Its descriptive name serves merely to indicate another family of demons.

These anthropomorphic demons which inhabit the deserts are named elsewhere in the Old Testament (Is. 23:13; 34:14; 43:20; Jer. 50:39; Job 30:29; Mic. 1:8). However, we will not attempt to exhaust all the references to them. The Isaiah 13 passage is the best since it lists all of the "dry ones" together.

Idols-- אֲרִיִּים . Psalm 96:5 says, "For all the gods of the peoples are idols $[\text{אֲרִיִּים}]$ " The Septuagint translates "idols" as "demons." The original meaning of the word, however, is "things of nought" and should perhaps convey the idea that "the gods of the peoples" are "no-gods."⁴⁴ This is

⁴² Gesenius, op. cit., p. 36.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 868.

⁴⁴ Heinisch, op. cit., p. 140. Cf. W. F. Albright, From The Stone Age To Christianity (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1957), p. 297. In a discussion on Old Testament monotheism Albright comments on Deut. 32. He says, "pagan deities are 'evil spirits' (shedim, v. 17), 'not divine' (v. 21), 'I am I (so!) and there is no God beside Me' (v. 39)."

a most instructive passage for Old Testament demonology. Demons and idols are identified; the idols are "nothings" or "no-gods"; and the demons behind them are the real existences.⁴⁵

Gad-- $\Gamma \bar{\lambda}$. The word literally means "fortune"; specifically it refers to "the divinity of Fortune" worshipped by the Babylonians and the Jews in exile there.⁴⁶

Isaiah 65:11 speaks of this.

But you who forsake the Lord,
who forget my holy mountain,
who set a table for Fortune $[\Gamma \bar{\lambda}]$.

The Septuagint translated "Gad" with "demon." Elsewhere in the Old Testament he is called $\bar{\lambda} \bar{\gamma} \bar{\gamma}$, $\bar{\lambda} \bar{\gamma}$ (Baal), and was regarded in all the East as the giver of good fortune.⁴⁷ As in the previous passage, idolatry is here connected with demons.

Evil spirit-- $\bar{\lambda} \bar{\gamma} \bar{\gamma} - \bar{\lambda} \bar{\gamma} \bar{\gamma}$. The reference here is 1 Samuel 16:14, "Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit $[\bar{\lambda} \bar{\gamma} \bar{\gamma} - \bar{\lambda} \bar{\gamma} \bar{\gamma}]$ from the Lord tormented him." This "evil spirit" was perhaps originally a demon turned into an evil spirit sent from Yahweh.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Unger, op. cit., pp. 60-61.

⁴⁶ Gesenius, op. cit., p. 157.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ The Jewish Encyclopedia, p. 516. Cf. also Jud. 9:23.

Lying spirit-- רַב־שֵׁן . The Old Testament tells us that demons are sometimes used by God to punish the wicked. Thus, Ahab was punished for his wickedness by a "lying spirit" or demon which Yahweh placed in the mouth of all his prophets so that Ahab would be led to disaster at Ramoth-Gilead.

1 Kings 22:23 says, "Now therefore behold, the Lord has put a lying spirit [רַב־שֵׁן] in the mouth of all these your prophets."

Giants-- עַלְוִיִּם . These are demons of the earliest times, creatures of terror who are produced by miscarriages.⁴⁹

Genesis 6:4 says, "The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them."

Numbers 13:33 speaks of the investigation of Canaan by the Israelite spies. "And there we saw the Nephilim [the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim]; and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them."

The leech-- שֵׁן . This is a female monster or spectre, a bloodsucker or vampire.⁵⁰ In Jewish mythology "the leech" is rendered a demon of the netherworld.⁵¹ In Proverbs 30:15 "the leech" has two daughters which cry "Give! Give!"

⁴⁹ Koehler, op. cit., p. 115.

⁵⁰ Gesenius, op. cit., p. 632.

⁵¹ The Jewish Encyclopedia, p. 516.

The first-born of death-- תִּלְוֵי יָדָיִם. This is, perhaps, the same as the terrible hawk-like demon portrayed in the Babylonian Hades picture.⁵² Job 18:13 says,

By disease his skin is consumed,
the first-born of death consumes his limbs.

Gazelles and hinds of the fields-- תִּלְוֵי יָדָיִם and תִּלְוֵי יָדָיִם. If these are demons, they are kindly-disposed demons. In the Song of Solomon 2:7 and 3:5 they are portrayed as faunlike spirits similar to the Seirim by which the Shulamite incites the daughters of Jerusalem to bring her back to her lover.⁵³

From an obvious lack of specific references to demons in the Old Testament, we have nevertheless constructed a somewhat elaborate demonology consisting of eighteen groups. However, solid Biblical support in favor of many of these identifications is sorely absent.

⁵² Ibid., p. 515.

⁵³ Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

THE OLD TESTAMENT ATTITUDE TOWARD DEMONS

Demons do exist in the Old Testament. This is not at all a wild or unfair assertion to make. Even if the clear references to them are few, nevertheless just these few references are enough to constitute a demonology.

Still it is advantageous to look at demons in the Old Testament from a different point of view. Rather than to seek only specific references to them, this fundamental question should be asked: What kind of attitude does the Old Testament take toward demons?

If we go along with Koehler who portrays Hebrew man as superstitious and insecure, then we must think that Hebrew man would express himself in some manner when confronted by a demon. What would he do? Perhaps the confrontation with a demon would puzzle him. But his course of action would always be the same. He would follow tradition, and as his ancestors before him, so also he would withdraw from the demon and wait in trustful patience and endurance to see what would happen.¹

The attitude of Hebrew man toward demons, then, was one of fear. So fearful was Hebrew man of the uncanny and demonic

¹ Ludwig Koehler, Hebrew Man (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956), p. 117.

that he set up divisions between safe and unsafe places to go.² Isolation is unsafe. It is safe to go only where others go. Jesus brought about a change in this insecure attitude of the Hebrew. He feared neither dark nor isolation, neither did he acknowledge hostile spirits or ghosts.³

Critical scholarship, of course, attempts to uncover the Old Testament attitude toward demons on the basis of neighboring demonologies. Oesterley comes to the general conclusion that all religious systems commonly use formulas, incantations, and perhaps other methods for blocking the evil machinations of demons. He quotes Rashi as saying, "If a demon hears his name pronounced [repeatedly], each time with a syllable less, he will flee." Thus, the formula used against the demon called Shabiri is: "Shabiri, abiri, biri, ri."⁴

Perhaps some sort of formula against a demon is recorded in one of the visions of the prophet Zechariah. Here Yahweh speaks to Satan twice and uses the formula, "The Lord rebuke you."⁵

² Ibid., p. 116.

³ Ibid. Cf. Mk. 1:35.

⁴ W. O. E. Oesterley, "The Demonology of the Old Testament," The Expositor, Series Seven IV, (1907), 133.

⁵ Zech. 3:2. Oesterley, op. cit., p. 133 suggests this as a formula to be used against Satan.

Psalm 91, which Oesterley considers to be post-exilic in date, is sometimes interpreted as a formula or incantation to be used in the event of a demoniacal encounter.⁶ Sigmund Mowinckel and Alfred Guillaume think that all the imprecatory psalms ". . . had the prophylactic purpose of slaying the sorcerer at his evil work."⁷ So also the penitential psalms were originally prayers, comparable to those of Babylonia, whose purpose was to ward off the evil effects of magical spells.⁸

G. Ernest Wright comments:

In any case, it is most improbable that these psalms were composed as ritual incantations against sorcerers. They are simply prayers to the God who alone can and will deliver a person from all danger, but who will not permit the chirping and muttering of ritual incantations and exorcism to have any effect whatever on his decisions. Faith, not incantations, is what he demands.⁹

Oesterley considers Psalm 91 a polemic in devotional form against current methods of securing oneself against

⁶ Oesterley, op. cit., p. 131.

⁷ G. Ernest Wright, "The Faith of Israel," The Interpreter's Bible, edited by George A. Buttrick (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1952), I, 376. Cf. Ps. 91:5-6, "the terror by night." Cf. also Sigmund Mowinckel, Psalmenstudien I (Kristiania: Jacob Dybwad, 1921) and Alfred Guillaume, Prophecy and Divination (New York: Harper and Bros., 1938), pp. 272-289.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

a demon.¹⁰ He says that while this psalm agrees with other religions as far as ideas and beliefs in demons are concerned, it disagrees in the method of shielding oneself from them. Psalm 91 says it is not formulas, enchantments, wizards, or witches that will shield a person from a demon, but only the help and protection of Yahweh.¹¹

In Babylonia all evils were attributed to demons.¹² The only means by which the power of demons can be broken are these same magical practices, incantations, and amulets. In the Old Testament, however, such practices are strictly forbidden.

The Pentateuch contains laws which are explicitly opposed to incantations and magic. Exodus 22:18 commands, "You shall not permit a sorceress to live." Leviticus 19:26 echoes a similar command, "You shall not practice augury or witchcraft." Deuteronomy 18:9-14 is even more explicit and apparently shakes the whole foundation of comparative study:

When you come into the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, any one who practices divination, a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a medium, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord; and because of these abominable practices the Lord

¹⁰ Oesterley, op. cit., p. 134.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Paul Heinisch, Theology of the Old Testament (St. Paul: The Liturgical Press, 1955), p. 140.

your God is driving them out before you. You shall be blameless before the Lord your God. For these nations, which you are about to possess, give heed to soothsayers and to diviners; but as for you, the Lord your God has not allowed you to do so.

Even the prophets spoke out in opposition to the demoniacal formulas, incantations, and other means of appeasement as serious transgressions. Isaiah 2:6 tells how Yahweh will reject Judah because she had taken over these forbidden practices from the Philistines.

For thou hast rejected thy people,
the house of Jacob,
because they are full of diviners from the east
and of soothsayers like the Philistines,
and they strike hands with foreigners.

Ezekiel 13:9 brings the word of Yahweh against the foolish prophets of Israel whose prophesying was not charismatic. "My hand will be against the prophets who see delusive visions and who give lying divinations."

Perhaps the clearest passage in the prophets which speaks about the futility of Babylonian incantations, magic spells, and prayers to defy demons is recorded in Deutero-Isaiah.¹³

Stand fast in your enchantments
and your many sorceries,
with which you have labored from your youth;
perhaps you will be able to succeed,
perhaps you may inspire terror.
You are wearied with your many counsels;
let them stand forth and save you,
those who divide the heavens,
who gaze at the stars,
who at the new moons predict
what shall befall you.

¹³Is. 47:12-15. Cf. also Is. 8:19-22; Jer. 27:9-10.

Behold, they are like stubble,
 the fire consumes them;
 they cannot deliver themselves
 from the power of the flame.
 No coal for warming oneself is this,
 no fire to sit before!
 Such to you are those with whom you have labored,
 who have trafficked with you from your youth;
 they wander about each in his own direction;
 there is no one to save you.

Man in the Old Testament, then, was not particularly pressed into reasoning out an abstract, theoretical, and logical position regarding demons. His main concern lay always in his spiritual attitude toward Yahweh. Yahweh required holy fear, faith, trust, and love.¹⁴ And if man in the Old Testament possessed these, then he had no reason to be afraid of demons.

However, a peculiar attitude prevailed in the Old Testament which definitely influenced Hebrew man's attitude toward demons. In the Old Testament all things are referred back to God. Thus Isaiah 45:7 says:

I form light and create darkness,
 I make weal and create woe,
 I am the Lord, who do all these things.

Similarly, the evil spirit troubling Saul in 1 Samuel 6:14 comes from Yahweh. In 1 Kings 22:20-22 the false prophets who persuade Ahab to go up to Ramoth-gilead have in their mouths lying spirits from Yahweh.

Walther Eichrodt, in his fine monograph on Old Testament man, capitalizes on this referral of all things back to God.

¹⁴Wright, op. cit., p. 375.

He says:

With other peoples the world of demons or the magic arts of evil men can be held responsible for sudden misfortune, and thus the good will of the gods can be separated from a world of curses which has its own laws and must be combated by opposing magic and exorcism.¹⁵

But in Israel it is different. God is the only power that influences the life of Hebrew man within the community. Perhaps this explains ". . . why something of the uncanny and the demonic enters into the portrayal of his [God's] power."¹⁶ Even so, God is not considered devilish or malicious. Hebrew man is ready to acknowledge God's higher justice which is revealed in His fundamental will to save.¹⁷

Against the background of the pagan world with its polytheism and polydemonism, the Old Testament speaks with clarity and simplicity. Customs which were, perhaps, originally linked with a belief in demons have now been transferred to Yahweh. He is the source and cause of all things. This is monotheism, the peculiar characteristic of Israel's religion. And monotheism is challenged by demonology. To meet this challenge Hebrew man must speak up in the words of

¹⁵ Walther Eichrodt, Man In The Old Testament (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1951), pp. 53-54.

¹⁶ Ibid. Cf. Gen. 32:25ff.; Ex. 4:24ff.

¹⁷ Ibid.

the Song of Moses: "pagan deities are 'evil spirits' (shedim, v. 17), 'not divine' (v. 21); 'I am I (so!) and there is no God beside Me' (v. 39)."¹⁸

Thus Paul Volz:

Und so entstand die religionsgeschichtlich einzigartige Tatsache, dass ueberall sonst in der Welt Goetter und Daemonen in Glauben und Kultus nebeneinander standen, in Israel aber der eine Jahwe alles umspante, dass ueberall sonst bei den groszen und kleinsten Nationen der Dualismus die Welterklaerung war, in Israel mit dem Monotheismus die Welterklaerung verbunden werden musste.¹⁹

¹⁸ William F. Albright, From The Stone Age To Christianity (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1957), p. 297.

¹⁹ D. Paul Volz, Das Daemonische in Yahwe (Tuebingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1924), p. 31.

CHAPTER V

SATAN--THE PRINCE OF THE DEMONS

It is impossible to survey Old Testament demonology without devoting some space to a discussion of the Satan. We alluded to his origin in chapter two. The traditional view is that the Satan was originally one of the Bene Elohim, or good angels. However, under his leadership some of the angels did not remain in the original state, but fell into sin of their own accord. "From the state of grace (status gratiae) they thus passed into the state of misery (status miseriae)."¹

However, it is to be remembered that the designation of the Satan as a "fallen angel" leans heavily upon the New Testament revelation. The Old Testament says nothing about his origin. He appears merely as one of the Bene Elohim to whom has been attached the name of "the Satan."²

"Satan" is a Hebrew word which characterizes the activity of this being. It means "adversary" or "accuser"; one who distresses someone, and one who strives against another.³

¹J. T. Mueller, Christian Dogmatics (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1934), p. 199.

²A. B. Davidson, The Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), p. 302. Cf. Job 1; Zech. 3.

³J. N. Schofield, "Adversary," A Theological Word Book of the Bible, edited by Alan Richardson (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1955), p. 17.

The main objective of the Satan is opposition to the will of God, as in Job 1:6, and secondarily, opposition to the welfare of man, as in Zech. 3:1. The Satan accuses God before men, as in Genesis 3:1-5 and men before God, as in Job 1:9. The term "devil" perhaps is a better term in regard to this latter activity of slandering or accusing.⁴ However, it is only in the Matthew 4:1-11 account of the temptation of Jesus that the "devil" and the Satan are identified.

The Satan, then, is a trouble-maker, openly opposed to God and yet always subordinate to Him.⁵ References to this being are not many and appear primarily in the Book of Job. Some see him already in Genesis 3:1-15 incarnated in the serpent for the express purpose of opposing Adam and Eve. It has been repeatedly pointed out, however, that the identification of the serpent in Genesis 3 with the Satan is first made in apocryphal literature, Wis. 2:24, "by the envy of the devil death entered into the world." Heinisch suggests that Genesis 3:14 speaks of a demon from the netherworld, and that this is indicated by the words "eat dust."⁶ Even though the Old Testament never attempts to make the Satan and the

⁴Merrill F. Unger, Biblical Demonology (Wheaton, Ill.: Van Kampen Press, Inc., 1952), p. 68.

⁵Is. 45:7.

⁶Paul Heinisch, Theology of the Old Testament (St. Paul: The Liturgical Press, 1955), p. 143.

serpent identical, Davidson has this to say:

as it is the office of the Satan to try God's saints in the present economy where sin has entered, and as all trial may have the effect of seducing them and tempting them to evil, there is nothing a priori against the idea that he may have been employed in God's hand to try those innocent, but whose innocence was not yet confirmed by voluntary determination to maintain it. And thus there is nothing against the idea that the temptation in the form of a Serpent, recorded in Gen. 3, proceeded from the Satan.⁷

Some Biblical scholars have made an attempt to uncover the progressive development of the Satan in the Old Testament. Thus, the term "Satan" is used originally in the general sense of "adversary," either personal or national, without any trace of a distinct being called "Satan" being found.⁸ Secondly, "Satan" appears with the definite article indicating a somewhat distinct being and a supernatural adversary par excellence.⁹ Finally, "Satan" is used as a proper name without the definite article indicating that his position has been elevated to that of a distinct personality who is able to oppose God and to provoke men to do wrong.¹⁰

In the Old Testament the Satan is not always in the foreground. His activity is not continuous. His appearances are

⁷Davidson, op. cit., p. 304.

⁸G. H. Box, "Satan," Dictionary of the Bible, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), p. 829. Cf. Num. 22:22; 2 Sam. 19:22; 1 Kgs. 5:4; 11:25.

⁹Schofield, op. cit., p. 17. Cf. Job 1f.; Zech. 3.

¹⁰Box, op. cit., p. 829. Cf. 1 Chron. 21:1; 2 Sam. 24:1.

always occasional. Thus, it is difficult to elaborate upon the concept of the Satan in the Old Testament. Suffice it to say that he is there. However, the whole concept of the Satan must be viewed from the apocryphal writings and particularly from the New Testament in order to be properly orientated.

For example, in speaking of the deliverance of Israel the prophet says:

In that day the Lord with his hard and great and strong sword will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the twisting serpent, and he will slay the dragon that is in the sea.¹¹

Only from the vantage point of the New Testament are we able to see Leviathan as symbolic of the enemies of God who shall be defeated at the beginning of the new age. Besides this, the author of Revelation is explicit in indentifying the "dragon" and the Satan for us.

According to the traditional view the Satan is chief of the demons. This elevated position is accorded to him apparently on the basis of Matthew 12:26-27, where the Satan is identified with "Beelzebub," the prince of devils. Thus, the Satan is thought of as prince and leader of a renegade band of evil angels. Although the Old Testament never ranks the Satan as a prince, he is given an elevated position by virtue of the fact that he appears more in the Old Testament than any of the other demons. This fact alone should lead us to place the Satan at the head of Old Testament demonological study.

¹¹Is. 27:1.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

A demonological system in the Old Testament is difficult to construct. The references to demons are few. But this does not necessarily imply the impossibility of a more comprehensive belief in demons existing in the mind of Hebrew man. Men do not speak willingly of these dreadful beings.¹ It is quite possible that man in the Old Testament had a secret, hushed, and yet elaborate belief in demons. This, however, is only conjecture.

Concerning the Old Testament references to demons Koehler says, "We must not imagine that their whole number is exhausted in the small amount of information which has come down to us."² The Old Testament in essence denies the reality of these beings. Or, perhaps we should say, the Old Testament at least denies the power of these beings. Even so Koehler would suppose that ". . . to the mind of the Hebrew they [demons] are present and real."³

It must be emphasized again that demonic references in the Old Testament are few. So then we must briefly overstep the boundaries of our study in order to see how, as an

¹Ludwig Koehler, Hebrew Man (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956), p. 114.

²Ibid., p. 115.

³Ibid.

outgrowth of the Old Testament, demonology is expressed more extensively in apocryphal, rabbinical, and New Testament literature. The demonologies of these various areas naturally overlap to a certain extent.

The apocryphal writings move in the direction of a dualism. This is caused in part by the influence of Zoroastrianism during the Persian period. H. H. Rowley gives a concise summary of the development of demonology in the apocryphal writings. He says:

In the thought of the inter-testamental period was developed the conception of a court of evil, set over against God's court, to which such evil spirits were relegated, and where they were presided over by Satan or Beliar.⁴

This quasi dualism cannot be dismissed as merely the result of Zoroastrian influence. Rowley would emphasize that the seeds of this dualism are to be found already in the Old Testament ". . . where in all periods good and evil spirits were thought of as existing."⁵ The apocryphal writings, so to speak, picked up the seeds of dualism planted in the Old Testament, caused them to germinate, with the ultimate result that they blossomed forth into a more complete demonology.

The same is true of rabbinical and New Testament literature. Some of the interesting and yet fantastic ends to which rabbinical demonological writings reached are related by Unger.

⁴H. H. Rowley, The Faith of Israel (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), p. 80.

⁵Ibid.

He traces rabbinical demonology from its small beginnings on to its reproduction of an innumerable host of demons.

The fall of Satan and his angels, in rabbinic demonology, is strangely imagined as subsequent to the creation of man, and was occasioned by their jealousy and envy of him. And various gross ideas are entertained as to the origin of demons, ranging from their creation on the eve of the first Sabbath, before their bodies could be finished [this is supposed to account for their being spirits], to generation of multitudes of them as the offspring of Eve and male spirits, and of Adam and female spirits, or with Lilith, queen of the female spirits. Still grosser ideas link them to transformations from vipers, or as springing from the backbone of him who did not bow in worship. Fully sexed, they multiply rapidly, and are innumerable. A thousand at your right hand, ten thousand at your left. No one could survive the shock of seeing their actual number. They are arranged in four classes, according to the divisions of the day - morning, midday, evening, and night spirits. The night spirits are the most dangerous and malignant.⁶

Finally, the New Testament contains a much more thoroughgoing demonology than that of the Old Testament. The rather frequent allusions to individuals who were demon-possessed is evidence of this. However, the peculiar contribution of New Testament demonology is not demon-possession but the concept of demons as originally attendant upon the true God and who had fallen away from Him.⁷

⁶ Merrill F. Unger, Biblical Demonology (Wheaton, Ill.: Van Kampen Press, Inc., 1952), pp. 32-33.

⁷ R. W. Moss, "Devil," Dictionary of the Bible, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), p. 189. Cf. 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6.

From our study of Old Testament demonology it has become increasingly apparent that in order to uncover its demonological system, one must interpret references to demons on the basis of some source or sources outside the Old Testament. Thus, as we have observed, critical scholarship says two things. First, Old Testament demonology must be studied from a comparative and historical perspective. Koehler is very explicit in this regard: "If we ask whence belief in them [demons] and fear of them come, we must answer that the Hebrews have probably taken these over from the Canaanites."⁸ In addition, not only neighboring demonologies must be considered, but also the writings of later Judaism, that is, the apocryphal and rabbinical writings.

Secondly, since all religions pass through the stage designated "animism" we can expect to find traces of such a stage in the Old Testament in forms of material animated by spirit and ancestor-spirits.

Thus, this approach toward Old Testament demonology consists of "reading in" a demonology from outside sources. The dangers of this approach are obvious, one of the greatest being the somewhat speculative process of textual emendations which unduly force demonological interpretations upon certain passages.

A second grave danger of this position is the evolutionary concept of the faith of Israel. Thus Harry Emerson Fosdick:

⁸ Koehler, op. cit., p. 115.

No longer can we think of the Book as on a level, no longer read its maturer passages back into its earlier sources. We know now that every idea in the Bible started from primitive and childlike origins and, with however many setbacks and delays, grew in scope and height toward the culmination in Christ's gospel.⁹

The danger here is that history becomes lord over Biblical theology. And while this position produces a healthy interest in Biblical history it, at the same time, produces an attitude which can easily misinterpret the subject matter ". . . because it must always evaluate in terms of an ascending scale of values."¹⁰ Heinisch contends that only scholars who do not admit divine revelation hold to this position, which position is quite weak since an investigation of religions of the ancient Orient shows that "rather than evolution there was retrogression."¹¹

Nevertheless, we are forced to admit that the critical approach to Old Testament demonology does have something of value to say. For the Old Testament again and again bears record that in the face of Yahweh's prohibitive commands, Israel boldly assimilated certain pagan beliefs and practices from her neighbors. For this she was punished and ultimately disinherited.

⁹G. Ernest Wright, The Old Testament Against Its Environment (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1950), p. 9. Cf. Harry E. Fosdick, The Modern Use of the Bible (New York, 1924), pp. 11f.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 11.

¹¹Paul Heinisch, Theology of the Old Testament (St. Paul: The Liturgical Press, 1955), p. 34.

The evolutionary concept can be carried too far. The Old Testament is not a source book which displays the evolution of religion from primitive to highly advanced concepts. Oesterley and Robinson¹² have made it such and have produced possibly the most developed critical study on Old Testament demonology. But they have been guilty of a gross misinterpretation of Old Testament literature. This leads Wright into the following evaluation of their work:

One fourth of this book is given over to the description of the animistic and magical background of Israel's religion. Yet we now know that in doing this, the authors are dealing neither with Patriarchal nor with pagan religion of the day, but chiefly with Stone Age survivals and relics, the true meaning of which either in Israel or in contemporary polytheism is scarcely understood.¹³

A conservative approach toward Old Testament demonology is strictly Biblical. It answers "yes" when asked whether demons are the products of divine revelation. This is ultimately the basis of all conservative scholarship, that the Scriptures are the revelation of God to man. This revelation is a unity composed of Old and New Testaments. And the hermeneutical principle should be followed that "Scripture interprets Scripture." One testament must be read in the light of the other and vice versa. To this extent the Scriptures are on a flat level and the more mature passages must be

¹² W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, Hebrew Religion: Its Origin And Development (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1930).

¹³ Wright, op. cit., p. 12.

read back into earlier sources. Like critical scholarship, then, conservative scholarship is "reading in" from some other source. But unlike critical scholarship which "reads in" from external sources, conservative scholarship "reads in" from internal sources, that is, from the Scripture itself. The latter appears to be the more logical and unified position.

Concerning Old Testament demonology, then, we must say that the critical position lacks solidarity. This is not to deny, again, the possibility that extracts of pagan demonologies did exist in the mind of Hebrew man. Of this we cannot be certain. A purely Biblical approach toward Old Testament demonology is the only answer. But even in this approach careful attention must be taken that not more is said than what the Scriptures say. Also, it must be admitted that Old Testament demonology is practically obscure if it were not exposed by New Testament passages.

The following is a brief summary and list of conclusions of our study:

1. The Old Testament contains only slight reference to demons.
2. Israel fell into illegitimate practice through the influence of her pagan neighbors. Demonism and forms of appeasing demons are included in these practices.
3. The Old Testament strictly forbids such practices. Demonology is part and parcel of paganism. Yahweh demands exclusive loyalty and attention. Lesser

beings drop from sight. The gods of the nations are "no-gods" and are degraded to "evil spirits." Yahweh alone is God.

4. In the spirit of monotheism, Yahweh stands behind all things. This opposes any type of demonology which ascribes misfortune and disease to demons.
5. The Old Testament contains an implicit doctrine of angels.
6. The New Testament interprets the Old Testament doctrine of angels. Fallen angels are demons (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).
7. The origin of Satan is to be found in the creation of invisible creatures. He appears in the Old Testament in the form of a serpent (Gen. 3). He is the prince of the demons. This is made clear only through New Testament study.
8. That Old Testament man held such a concept of Satan and fallen angels is possible. It must be remembered, however, that demonology did not play a very important role in the faith of Israel.

However powerful and numerous demons may be, the old and new Israel will always find great comfort in the words of 1 John 3:8, "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil."

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