Theology and Demonology in Qumran Texts

Article *in* Henoch · January 2010

CITATIONS
3

READS
8,293

1 author:

Ida Fröhlich
Pázmány Péter Catholic University
3 PUBLICATIONS **3** CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

THEOLOGY AND DEMONOLOGY IN QUMRAN TEXTS

IDA FRÖHLICH, *Pázmány Péter Catholic University*

Demons are mentioned in a number of texts that have survived in the library of the Qumran community. Some of these texts are narrative works while others belong to the genre of wisdom literature. There are also texts that were written for practical purposes. This article provides a short outline of the theme of demonology in Qumran literature, presenting the phenomenon of belief in demons in the written tradition, its background, the question of the influence of Babylonian culture, the attitude toward demons and magical methods, and the formation of a new method of dealing with the demonic part of the world mirrored in various Qumran texts.

4Q510-11 (Songs of the Sage)

4Q510-11[1] is a collection of fragments of two manuscripts. 4Q510 has only one major fragment and 11 minor ones; 4Q511 represents a much longer copy of the same work. On paleographical grounds both manuscripts are dated to the end of the 1st century BCE. The work is thought to be sectarian, that is, a work composed in the community, and representing vocabulary and ruling ideas of the community. The songs are authored by the *maskil*, the sage. The songs are hymnic poems of wisdom reflecting on the world order and the role of human beings. Their main themes are the glory of God, the activity of the righteous, and the works of evil demons in the world. The songs reflect a dichotomous worldview. God is called the King of Glory (4Q510 1, 1); God of knowledge (4Q510 1, 2); Lord of the divine beings (*'l 'lym*), and Lord of all the holy ones (*'l qdwšym*) (4Q510 1, 2). His realm is above the powerfully mighty (4Q510 1 3). However, God is once called El Shaddai (4Q 511 8, 6), a name used especially in magical texts. Divine beings are also mentioned several times in the hymns.

The Sage (*maskil*) is characterized by the knowledge he received from God. He loathes all deeds of impurity, that is, practices resulting in impurity (4Q511 18 I, 7). There is a group mentioned in the Songs as the associates of the Sage: "those who follow the path of God" (4Q511 2 I, 6). This means in Qumran vocabulary the right interpretation and practice of the Mosaic Law, namely, interpretation according to the tradition of the community. Other names for this group are those who know justice, (4Q511 2 I, 2) and the holy

[1] M. Baillet, "Cantiques du Sage (i) (Pl LV)," "Cantiques du Sage (ii) (Pl. LVI-LXXI)," in *Qumrân Grotte 4.III (4Q482-4Q450)*, ed. M. Baillet, (DJD 7; Oxford: Clarendon, 1982), pp. 215-62.

ones, (4Q511 35, 2-3). Thus, the group is characterized by knowledge, purity, and holiness; the latter two because of their right practice of the Law. They receive their knowledge from God.

The third element of the system is the demons. They are listed in both exemplars of the work (4Q510 1, 5-8; 4Q511 10, 1-5). According to the list they are spirits of the ravaging[2] angels (*ml'ky ḥbl*); the bastard spirits (*rwḥwt mmzrym*); demons (*šdym*), Lilith, (*lylyt*); owls and jackals, (*'hym wṣ'yym*); those who strike unexpectedly to lead astray the spirit of knowledge (*hpwg'ym pt' pt'wm lt'wt rwḥ bynh*).

The activity of the demons is, according to the Songs, not forever, but only for the period of the rule of wickedness and in the periods of humiliation of the sons of light. Periods (called *qṣ*, pl. *qṣym*) of human history are often mentioned in several Qumran works, such as Pesher 'al ha-qiṣṣim, 4Q180-181, which is a theoretical work on these periods in human history. The various periods are characterized by the activity of various groups, the righteous, or the evil. According to this they are labelled as periods of righteousness, or periods of sin. The latter, of course, are periods of oppression for the righteous. So, the demons mentioned in the Songs of the Sage are subject to God's power, and they are mediators of divine plans.

Shedim, Lilith, owls and jackals

As to the names and origin of the various categories of demons, some of them are known from the Old Testament as well as from Syrian and Mesopotamian lore, like the *šdym*, Lilith, and owls and jackals. Together with Lilith, owls and jackals are mentioned as evil spirits dwelling at deserted ruins (Isa 34:14). Isaiah does not inform about Lilith's characteristics. On the other side Lilith is well known from Mesopotamian incantation texts and amulets as a night demon killing babies. The incantation series Maqlû mentions several times the group *lilû*, *lilītu*, and *(w)ardat lilî*.[3] The name *Lilitu* is to be identified here with that of Lilith as well as in the incantation texts written against the demons of the *lilû*-family.[4] Lilith is dangerous, above all for newborn babies, sucking their blood and eating their flesh. Her characteristics are very similar to those of the Mesopotamian female demon Lamaštu. She is represented on her numerous representations with lion head, female body, bird's legs, holding

[2] *Ḥebel* 'destruction' from the root *ḥbl* II. 'act corruptly', Pi. 'ruin, destroy'. Pun possible the root *ḥbl* I. 'bind, pledge (bind by taking a pledge)'.

[3] G. Meier, *Die assyrische Beschwörungssammlung Maqlû neu bearbeitet* (AfO Beiheft 2; Osnabrück: Biblio-Verlag, 1937, Neudruck 1967)

[4] The members of the *lilû*-family are the *lilû*, a male demon, an *incubus*; the *lilītu*, a female demon who strangles newborn children; the *(w)ardat lilî*, a female demon, a kind of *succubus*. For the texts see W. Farber, *Schlaf, Kindchen, Schlaf! Mesopotamische Baby-Beschwörungen und Rituale* (Mesopotamian Civilizations 2; Eisenbrauns: Winona Lake, 1989).

snakes in her hands, and suckling a dog and a swine.

Jewish sources derive the name Lilith from the noun *lylh*, "night." However, its origin is the Sumerian word *líl* meaning "wind" (similarly the names *lilû* and (*w*)*ardat lilî*). Lilith and her companions are constantly mentioned in the texts of the Aramaic and Mandean magic bowls from late antiquity. The inscriptions in the bowls served apotropaic purposes. The majority of the bowls originate from the Jewish community of Nippur.[5] Lilith is well known in Talmudic and later Jewish tradition.[6] Apotropaic texts called *segullah,* directed against Lilith's harmful activity, have been used in Jewish tradition until modern times. Printed *segulloth* from Hungary from the beginning of the 20th century used Psalm texts and names of the biblical matriarchs as protection against Lilith (Lilit in OT).[7]

Without mentioning Lilit's name Isa 13:21-22 lists owls and jackals, ostriches and "hairy ones" (*s'yrym)*, all of them as demonic beings dwelling among ruins.[8] In the ancient Near East and the Mediterranean, owls are generally connected to death and the demonic.[9] The evil *utukku*-demons are called "owls hooting over the city" in a Mesopotamian incantation text. Similarly, the jackal is an animal related to death.[10] A general name of a demonic being is *šēd* (*šd*), usually mentioned in plural form in the Old Testament (Deut 32:17, Ps 106:37).

The Old Testament mentions other demonic beings besides those mentioned above. Saul's mysterious depressive illness is caused by a bad spirit (*rwḥ r'h*) (1 Sam 16:14-23).[11] Saul evokes the spirit of the dead Samuel, with the help of the witch of En-dor (1 Sam 28). Demonic beings

---

[5] J.A. Montgomery, *Aramaic Incantation Texts from Nippur* (Publications of the Babylonian Section 3; Philadelphia: University Museum, 1913); M.J. Geller, "Eight Incantation Bowls," *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 17 (1986), pp. 101–17.

[6] Mentioned in four tractates (Niddah 24b, Baba Bathra 73a, Šabbat 151b, ʿErubin 100b) as a long-haired winged being. In midrashic tradition Lilit was Adam's first wife. He gendered with her the *šēdim* who bring plagues and afflictions on humans. Lilit wanted to rule over Adam, therefore he dismissed her. Lilit became an evil spirit, the demon of the childbed fever and infant mortality. See V. Haas, *Magie und Mythen in Babylonien: von Dämonen, Hexen und Beschwörungspriestern* (Merlins Bibliothek der geheimen Wissenschaften und magischen Künste 8; Gifkendorf: Merlin, 1986), pp. 224-225.

[7] I. Fröhlich, "Two Apotropaic Texts from the Jewish Museum of Budapest," in *Proceedings of the Colloquium on Popular Customs and the Monotheistic Religions in the Middle East and North Africa*, eds. A. Fodor and A. Shivtiel, (Budapest Studies in Arabic 9-10; Budapest: University of Eötvös Loránd, 1995), pp. 295-303.

[8] The term is mentioned in the Old Testament over 50 times. On the figure of the *seʿirim* see B. Janowski, 'Satyrs', in K. van der Toorn, B. Becking, P.W. van der Horst (eds.), *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible,* Leiden: Brill, 1999), pp. 732-3.

[9] A. Dunnigan "Owls", in *The Encyclopedia of Religion,* ed. M. Eliade (New York: Macmillan, 1987), vol. 11, pp. 144-145, esp. p. 144.

[10] Gods and demons of death are usually represented in the form of various canines. The jackal-form of god is the lord of the desert and the netherworld. See also M. Heerma van Voss "Anubis", ibid. vol. 1, pp. 330-331.

[11] The word *rwḥ* can also designate ethical evil, like the "spirit of breach" in Judges 9:22-23, and "a lying spirit" in the mouth of prophets in 1 Kings 22:19-22.

are referred to in texts mentioning Azazel (*'z'zl*, Lev 16:8, 10, 26), the *rephaim* (*rp'ym*), and the vampire-like *'alûqâ* (Prov 30:15). Names of illnesses and afflictions may comprise the meaning of demonic beings, like *mašhît*, *deber*, *qeteb*, *rešep* or the "demonium meridianum" in Ps 91:6.[12] Later Jewish tradition shows a rich world of demons.[13] Illnesses and afflictions in the Old Testament narratives are always God's agents for punishing sins. They are never sovereign entities.[14]

The use of amulets is also documented in the Old Testament. The "moonlets" (*shrnym*) mentioned in historical and prophetic texts (Jdg 8:21, 26; Isa 3:18) probably served as amulets. In all probability jewels (nose-rings, necklaces also worn as amulets) and make-up used for apotropaic purposes were meant when the prophet Hosea urged Israel to "put away her whoring from her face (*pnym*), and her adultery from between her breasts" (Hos 2:2). Golden bells (*p'mnym*) hanging from the high priest's garment (Ex 28:33*ff*; 39:25*ff*) "were in the first instance amulets to frighten evil spirits away".[15] A tomb from Ketef Hinnom (Jerusalem) from the end of the pre-exilic period provided archaeological evidence for the use of amulets as sacred texts written on silver sheets with protective and apotropaic purposes.[16]

The Old Testament has a negative attitude toward magic. The historical narratives of the corpus, possible witnesses of everyday practice, have come down to us through the filter of the Deuteronomistic editors whose opinion was adverse to magic; accordingly they tried to eliminate all magical elements. For this reason references to belief in demons are not obvious. However, behind these laconic reports there may exist a living but concealed world of beliefs. It is hard to believe that in preexilic Israel there was only a limited or temporary belief in demons, confined to an acquaintance only with some demons, in certain periods. Belief or non-belief in demons is a vital part of any worldview, and it is never partial or temporary.

Ancient Near Eastern cultures attributed illnesses, anxiety and psychic disorders, afflictions, epidemies, and all kinds of natural evil to the work of demons. This view can be said to be natural, since at that time there was no knowledge about bacteria, viruses, other biological causes of illness, or medical theories and concepts that are well-known to us. The Hippocratic humoral theory that considers illness a disorder of the balance of humors in

---

[12] A. Caquot, "Sur quelques démons de l'Ancien Testament," *Semitica* 6 (1956), pp. 53-68.

[13] For a survey see D.R. Hillers, "Demons, Demonology," *Encyclopedia Judaica*, ed. Cecil Roth (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971) vol. 5, cols. 1521-1533, esp. cols. 1526-1533 for demons in the Talmud and Kabbalah.

[14] On the concept see K. van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction in Israel and Mesopotamia, A comparative study* (Studia Semitica Neerlandica 22; Assen: van Gorcum, 1985).

[15] T.W. Davies, *Magic, Divination and Demonology* (New York: KTAV, 1898, reprint 1969) p. 99.

[16] G.A. Barkay, G. Vaughn, M.J. Lundberg, and B. Zuckerman, "The Amulets from Ketef Hinnom: A New Edition and Evaluation," *BASOR* 334 (2004), pp. 41-71.

human organisms was a revolutionary breakthrough in ancient medicine. However, it occurred only at the turn of the 5th and 4th centuries BCE, and Near Eastern medicine had not been influenced by it for a long time. Consequently the realm of demons was a natural and basic element of the worldview of ancient Near Eastern cultures, including the Israelite culture, from the earliest times to late antiquity.

Mesopotamian demonology

Ancient Israel's culture is rooted in the Semitic cultures of the ancient Near East. Notwithstanding that Yahwistic monotheism was prevalent in Israel, the worldview and beliefs of Israelites are similar to those of the Syrian-Mesopotamian world. The period of the exile was an age of direct contact with that world, a living experience for the exiled. Aramaic language and literacy were mediators between Mesopotamian and Jewish lore. Aramaic was known even earlier as a language of diplomacy.[17] Demonology, magical literature and healing practice have been well documented in Mesopotamia in literary texts, documents, and art. This is also true for the Neo-Babylonian period, the time of the Exile.

Jewish-Mesopotamian cultural relations continued during the long period of the diaspora. Jewish groups living in Mesopotamia were very well informed of and a part of the political events and culture of their environment.[18] Mesopotamian literary and scientific traditions may have been mediated to the Jewish communities in exile through Aramaic scribes, well trained in Mesopotamian scribal tradition, and able to transmit it in Aramaic.[19] During the first millennium BCE, besides copies of works of older cuneiform literature, an abundance of Aramaic texts may have been produced in Mesopotamian scribal offices – works written on parchment and papyrus, therefore not preserved.[20] In order to understand certain phenomena in postexilic Jewish culture one has to take into account

---

[17] See 2 Kings 18:26; Isa 36:11, the report on Jerusalem's Assyrian siege in 701 BCE.

[18] To give just two examples: references to the Persian conquest of Babylon in Deutero-Isaiah (Isa 40-46) reflect accurate information on political events from the viewpoint of Jews in exile. Authors of the earliest parts of the Danielic collection (Dan 2, 4, 5) are well acquainted with Mesopotamian methods of dream-interpretation, presenting the method as practiced by a Jewish exile, Daniel, on divine inspiration. See I. Fröhlich, *'Time and Times and Half a Time …,' Historical Consciousness in the Jewish Literature of the Persian and Hellenistic Eras* (JSOT Supplement Series 19; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), pp. 11-48.

[19] The Neo-Babylonian term *sāpiru* designates Aramean scribes, competent in both Aramaic and cuneiform recording, see M.A. Dandamaev, *Vavilonskie pistsy* (Moscow: Nauka, 1983), pp. 67-76. Competence in cuneiform recording was not restricted to professional scribes, see M.W. Stolper "Mesopotamia, 482-330 B.C.," in *The Cambridge Ancient History VI. The Fourth Century B.C.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 234-260, esp. pp. 255-256.

[20] B.T. Arnold, *Who were the Babylonians?* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 81-82.

possible influences of Mesopotamian culture on Jewish thought.[21]

The worldview of the Mesopotamians was determined by their beliefs in *omina* and demons. The basis for the interpretation of *omina* was their holistic concept of the world.[22] Heavenly and earthly realms were interrelated, earthly institutions being a mirror form of heavenly ideal plans. They looked for relations between stars and natural phenomena of the heavenly world, which gave rise to astrology. The constellation of heavenly bodies, behavior of animals, especially birds, phenomena of the earth, and dreams were interpreted as predictions of the future. The interpretation of *omina* was an everyday praxis in Babylonia. The 4th century Greek author, Theophrastos, ridiculed the Babylonians for their extreme insistence upon interpreting everyday phenomena as prognostications of future events.[23]

Demons were considered in Mesopotamia as a natural phenomenon, an imminent part of the world, representing natural evil. They were considered as harmful beings, causes of illnesses, plagues, and any noxious influence on humans. They counted as the most dangerous spirits the *eṭemmu*-s, the spirit of the dead, especially those who suffered a violent death or who did not receive a proper burial and offerings following their death. A baby-killing demon called Lamaštu (known also under the name *lilītu*) was generally known and feared. The demons *lilû* and *(w)ardat lilî* were types of incubus and succubus who caused erotic dreams and nocturnal seminal emission.

In many cases demons are simply known by the name of a symptom of disease such as Headache or Fever. The fullest description of evil demons and their nature is the series entitled Utukkū Lemnūtu. It is a manual of demonology, a rich account of demons and ghosts. The demons are agents of illness, fever, and drought. The *utukku* is "hostile in appearance" and is "tall in stature," "his voice is great." "His shadow is dusky, it is darkened, there is no light in his body." The demon dwells in hidden places. "Gall is always dripping from his talons, his tread is harmful poison" (UH 12:14-18).[24] They usually roam in bands. They ravage crops like scorching windstorms, and spring up on animals and humans. They kill humans,

---

[21] Jewish Aramaic works of the Second Temple literature show a considerable influence of Mesopotamian tradition. Several themes of the Aramaic Enochic literature from Qumran are inspired by Mesopotamian scientific lore. A further study of the impact of Mesopotamian culture of the Achaemenid era on Jewish Aramaic literature will bring important results.

[22] W. van Binsbergen and F. Wiggerman, "Magic in History. A Theoretical Perspective, and its application to Ancient Mesopotamia," in *Mesopotamian Magic. Textual, historical, and interpretative perspectives,* eds. T. Abusch and K. van der Toorn (Ancient Magic and Divination I; Groningen: Styx 1999), pp. 3-34, esp. pp. 25-29, 33-34.

[23] Theophrastos, Characteres 16; see Theophrastos, *Characteres* (The Loeb Classical Library 225; Cambridge: Harvard 1993), pp. 106-113.

[24] For the texts see M.J. Geller, *Forerunners to Udug-Hul: Sumerian exorcistic incantations* (Freiburger altorientalische Studien 12; Stuttgart: Steiner 1985). *Utukkū lemnūtu* is a comprehensive survey of these demonic beings. The picture given in Mesopotamian magical texts and omen literature tallies with the above description.

shedding their blood and devouring their flesh, sapping their stamina, incessantly consuming blood (UH 4:1-8).[25]

They are indefinitely shaped dim figures. They are children of the Earth (*erṣetu*) and the sky-god Anu (UH 5:1-10). They are counter-measures of the holistic world. "Non-anthropomorphic breed of Heaven and Earth, amoral outsiders sharing neither the burdens, nor the profits of civilization. They attack man indiscriminately, not because of his sins … but in order to get by force what they do not get by right: food and drink. The essential characteristic of these demons is that they do not have a cult, so they cannot profit from the co-operation with man on a regular basis, as the gods do. They are not members of the civilised centre."[26] These demons represent the natural evil in the world, evil that appears in the form of various diseases, mental illnesses, drought, famine, and natural disasters.

Demons were considered impure. They were supposed to live in subterranean holes and in desert regions, among ruins of houses, outside of the city, sites not belonging to the ordered world of humans, localities that were isolated from human communities. Demons' abodes were also rubbish heaps and latrines, places considered as impure, where refuse resulting from disintegration of human bodies, scraps of food, personal objects, and the like were to be found, through which they supposedly developed their noxious influence on humans. Places beside waters and alongside canals were also considered the habitations of demons.[27]

Witches allegedly possessed the ability to evoke demons and make people ill. Epilepsy and psychotic illnesses usually were considered the result of sorcery and the charms of witches. For that reason witchcraft and sorcery were considered as especially harmful. The series Maqlû was written against the practices of the witch, in order to neutralize their charms.[28]

Protection of houses and persons

Humans tried to protect themselves against demons in various ways, by protecting the integrity of the human body, and hiding or avoiding disintegration. Apertures of the body like mouth, nose, ears, and eyes were

[25] Incantations of the Arameans of the Urmia region from the 18-19th centuries speak of seven evil demons which creep on the cattle, their victims, like snakes, devouring their flesh, and drinking their blood like vampires. Greek magical papyri mention Ereshkigal, the queen of the nether world as one who is stuffing dung and gobbling flesh. See V. Haas, *Magie*, pp. 220-221.

[26] W. van Binsbergen and F. Wiggerman, *Magic in History*, pp. 3-34, esp. p. 27.

[27] Rivers, springs, etc. are in Babylonian and Jewish worldviews connected with the subterranean waters (the earth being a flat disk floating on the subterranean ocean). See W.G. Lambert, "The Cosmology of Sumer and Babylon," Rabbi Louis Jacobs, "Jewish Cosmology," in *Ancient Cosmologies*, eds. Carmen Blacker and Michael Loewe (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1975), pp. 42-65; 66-86.

[28] G. Meier, *Maqlû.*

protected by make-up (antimony for the eyes and red paint for the lips), earrings, nose-rings, and necklaces. Tattooing served a similar function. Cylinder seals worn on the neck served not only as sign-manuals of their owners, but also as apotropaic objects. They commonly had scenes of the gods depicted on them. The house was defended by similar methods. Gates of official buildings were guarded on both sides by figures of protective spirits (lion or bull), seen by everybody. Smaller apotropaic figurines were deposited at the entrances of private buildings. Clay or wooden figurines were buried under the floor of courtyards, rooms, and thresholds; divine artifacts made of metal and stone were placed in brick boxes.

Illnesses were healed with incantations designed to remove the curses of sorcerers, chasing away the demon that caused the illness. There were two main categories of healers, the *āšipu* and the *asû* healers. The first one specified the diagnosis, the second one dealt with the therapy, working also with *materia medica*. Their views concerning the cause of the illness were similar, attributing demonic causes to illnesses. Any differences lay in their methods, the *asû* using more herbs and *materia medica*. Their relationship was rather similar to that of the doctor and the pharmacist.[29]

Demons and ritual impurity systems

Belief in demons is a core element in the rationale of the concept of ritual impurity. Impurity systems are known from several ancient Near Eastern cultures. In addition to ancient Israel, Syrian, Mesopotamian, Iranian, and Indian cultures were familiar with the idea of impurity, and based various systems upon it. Impurity is human-centered in each system. Basic impurities are the bodily (physical) impurities of humans. Physical impurities resulted from organic states or natural human processes like death or menstruation. A theoretical system of impurities in ancient Israel is given in the Priestly Codex of Leviticus.[30] Physical (bodily) impurities in the Old Testament system are corpses, blood, lepers, and certain bodily emissions (any flow from genitalia). Whatever contributes to the disintegration of the body is considered physically impure.[31] Belief in demons and impurity

[29] J. Scurlock, "Physician, Exorcist, Conjurer, Magician: A Tale of Two Healing Professionals," in *Mesopotamian Magic: Textual, historical, and interpretative perspectives*, ed. T. Abusch and K. van der Toorn, (Ancient Magic and Divination I; Groningen: Styx, 1999), pp. 69-79.

[30] P does not discuss excrement, urine, sweat, and saliva. The first two were probably considered impure. See D. P. Wright, "Unclean and Clean, Old Testament," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary,* ed. David N. Freedman (Nashville: Abingdon, 1992), Vol. 6:729-741, esp. pp. 735-736.

[31] M. Douglas, "Couvade and Menstruation: The Relevance of Tribal Studies," in *Implicit Meanings: Essays in Anthropology,* ed. M. Douglas (Boston: Routledge, 1975) calls impurity "what is not whole or normal." G.J. Wenham, "Why Does Sexual Intercourse Defile (Lev 15:18)?" *ZAW* 95 (1983), pp. 432–34 associates purity and impurity with the ideas of life and death. The best definition is from Mary Boyce: "apart from the corpse, the chief cause of

systems are related to each other.[32] Whatever is impure is receptive to demonic influence and vulnerable. Humans attempt to impede the spread of impurity as a method of defending against the pernicious influence of the demonic world.

The Story of the Watchers: Rationale for the origin of the demonic in the postexilic age.

The expression *rwḥwt mmzrym* in 4Q510-11 designates demons. Bastard spirits and ravaging angels probably originated in the Enochic tradition where the Watchers had illicit sexual relations with earthly women. The Book of Enoch was known early as a part of the pseudepigraphic tradition, in Greek and Ethiopian translations. Its original language may have been Hebrew or Aramaic. The Greek translation was based in these texts, but only a part of it has survived.[33] Fortunately, the *ge'ez* (Ethiopian) translation has preserved a much longer text.[34] The work known only in translations is uniformly dated to the middle of the 2nd century BCE. Some parts of it (chs. 37-70) are dated to a somewhat later time.

The finding, among the Qumran texts, of fragments of the Aramaic original of I Enoch, produced a veritable revolution in Enochic research.[35] The admittedly minute manuscript fragments found at Qumran not only answer certain important questions about the history of the origin of the text, but also provide insight into the role the text played in the literary tradition of the group

---

pollution is all that leaves the living body, whether in sickness or in health, the bodily functions and malfunctions being alike regarded, it seems, as daevic (demonic) in origin, perhaps since they are associated with change and mortality rather than with the static state of perfection", see M. Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), Vol. 1:306-307.

[32] Magical practices raising demonic power are always connected with the unclean while solving the curse and healing mean at the same time a process of purification. For Babylonian examples see V. Haas, *Magie*, pp. 155-196. According to David P. Wright the biblical system lacks the demonic character of other impurity systems, arguing that the Bible's monotheistic ideal rejects any demonic impurity. See D.P. Wright, "Unclean and Clean, Old Testament," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. D.N. Freedman (Nashville: Abingdon, 1992), Vol. 6:729-741, esp. p. 739. However, the existence of spirits and demonic beings is never disclaimed in biblical sources; to the contrary, the belief is positively attested in a number of cases.

[33] Its editions are J. Flemming and L. Radermacher, *Das Buch Henoch* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1901); M. Black (ed.), *Apocalypsis Henochi graece* (PVTG 3; Leiden: Brill, 1970). About the Greek manuscripts see also A.M. Denis, *Introduction aux pseudépigraphes grecs d'Ancien Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1970).

[34] The Ethiopian manuscript tradition can be traced back to the 15th c. The first edition of the Ethiopian text is R.H. Charles, *The Ethiopic Version of the Book of Enoch in Anecdota Oxonensia* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1906); for the new, critical edition of the Ethiopian text, which takes into consideration the Aramaic fragments, with translation and annotation, see M.A. Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch: A new edition in the light of the Aramaic Dead Sea Fragments,* 1-2, (Oxford: Clarendon, 2nd, rev. ed. 1982).

[35] Their edition: J.T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch, Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976).

that hid the Dead Sea Scrolls in the caves.[36] Based on the number of fragments found,[37] one may suppose that the work was not only known at Qumran, but that it must have been an important work in the tradition of the community. This is also indicated by the fact that numerous other works found at Qumran, and in some cases already known from the pseudepigraphic literature, contain a similar tradition to that known from *1 Enoch*, or refer to *1 Enoch*.[38] No fragments of the Parables of Enoch (chs. 37-70) were found at Qumran. It is thought that these chapters are of later origin than the other parts of *1 Enoch*.

The Qumran manuscripts, however, also contain fragments of the Astrological Book and Book of Giants, not known from any translations prior to the discovery of the Qumran cache.[39] The oldest Qumran manuscript of *1 Enoch* (4Q En.ar/a) may be dated to the end of the 3rd century BCE, and already this manuscript contains the text of Chapters 1-12.[40] Most likely the entire Book of Watchers (chs. 1-36) belongs to this layer.[41] The later manuscripts contain more of that work; this indicates that the work was continually transmitted until the 1st century BCE, and that in the course of this transmission the collection was enriched by additional pieces.[42] The

---

[36] On the significance of the Aramaic fragments, see F. García-Martínez, "Contributions of the Aramaic Enoch-Fragments to Our Understanding of the Books of Enoch," in *Qumran and Apocalyptic*, ed. F. García-Martínez (Leiden: Brill, 1992), pp. 45-96.

[37] In his edition Milik identified seven manuscript copies on the basis of the fragments found in cave No. 4, four manuscripts from the Astronomical Book. On the basis of the fragments of the Book of Giants we may also suppose the existence of several copies from this part as well. See J.T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch,* pp. 139-317. See also E. Eshel and H. Eshel, "New Fragments from Qumran: 4QGen^{f}, 4QIsa^{b}, 4Q226, 8QGen, and XQpapEnoch," *DSD* 12 (2005), pp. 134-157.

[38] To mention the most obvious examples: the Book of Jubilees uses and explicitly quotes the book, see R.H. Charles, *Apocrypha*, vol. 2, pp. 18-19, and elements originating from 1 Enoch play an important role in its entire narrative. The Damascus Document alludes to the Enochic tradition in its historical overview (CD II, 2-III, 12) similarly the historical schema outlined in 4Q180-181 is also based on the story of the Watchers.

[39] J.T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch,* pp. 273-317. The Book of Giants contains a rich tradition concerning the giants, the children of the Watchers, unfortunately in a very fragmentary form. The order of the fragments is very problematic. On this see F. García-Martinez, "The Book of Giants," in F. García-Martínez (ed.), *Qumran and Apocalyptic* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), pp. 97-115. For a new edition of the fragments of the Book of Giants (BG) see L.T. Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Giants from Qumran, Texts, Translation, and Commentary* (TSAJ 63; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997).

[40] Earlier works, such as R. H. Charles, *The Book of Enoch* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1893), pp. 2-3 considered the material of Chapters 1-5 to be a subsequently written introduction to the whole work; in view of the Aramaic manuscript tradition, however, it seems certain that this part is contemporaneous with the narrative parts that follow, and that it represents a tradition predating the 2nd century BCE.

[41] J. T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch,* p. 140. Milik also supposes that the writer of the text followed the Northern Syrian or Mesopotamian scribal customs; and this may also indicate the origin of the tradition. The fragments also prove that Chapters 1-5 already belonged to the so far known earliest Enoch-tradition.

[42] Ibid. p. 164 dates 4Q En/b to the mid-second century (this manuscript also only contains the Book of Watchers; the later manuscripts, designated by c, d, and e which can be dated to the

manuscript tradition can be traced to the turn of the 3rd and 2nd centuries BCE. This means that the Book of Watchers was written at least during the 3rd century BCE, and it may have been written even earlier.

1 Enoch *and Mesopotamian tradition*

Enoch was written in Aramaic, the vernacular in Mesopotamia, by the time of the Exile. Besides I Enoch, several works composed in Aramaic came to light from the Qumran library. They manifest several specific common characteristics concerning their literary genres and content. These are worthy of further examination.[43] Several Qumran Aramaic works are well acquainted with historical, literary, and other traditions of the Eastern diaspora, and they contain Mesopotamian and Persian elements.[44] *1 Enoch* reflects a solid awareness of certain Mesopotamian traditions.[45] Revelations on the secrets of the cosmos given to Enoch during his heavenly voyage reflect the influence of Mesopotamian cosmological lore.[46] The figure of Enoch, and the elements of the revelation-tradition associated with him, originates in the figures of the Mesopotamian *apkallū* (wise ones), more exactly in the figure of the Mesopotamian diviner-king Enmeduranki; and in the tradition about divine revelation given to him.[47] Thus it can be assumed that the kernel of the Enochic tradition (*1 En.* 1-36) was shaped either in a Babylonian Jewish

---

first century BCE - 1st century CE, also contain parts of the Book of Dreams (1 Enoch 83-90) and of the Epistle of Enoch (*1 En.* 91-107), see ibid. pp. 178-217, 217-225, and 225-244.

[43] Characteristics of Aramean literary texts were examined by B.Z. Wacholder, "The Ancient Judeo-Aramaic Literature 500-164 BCE: A Classification of Pre-Qumranic Texts," *in Archaeology and History in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. L. H. Schiffman (JSOT Supplement Series 8; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), pp. 257-281.

[44] The most outstanding example is 4Q242, the Prayer of Nabonidus which is well acquainted with historical legends on the last Neo-Babylonian king Nabunaid (555-539 B.C.E.). On the historical background of the legend see R. Meyer, *Das Gebet des Nabonid* (SSAW.PH 107/3; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1962). 4Q550 uses Persian names, the story reflects the influence of the pattern of the Ahiqar novel, see I. Fröhlich, "Stories from the Persian King's Court. 4Q550 (4prEsthar/a-f)," *Acta Antiqua (Hung)* 38 (1998), pp. 103-114.

[45] H.L. Jansen, *Die Henochgestalt: eine vergleichende religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Skrifter utgitt av det Norske videnskaps-akademi i Oslo. II. Hist.-filos. klasse no. 1; Oslo: Norske videnskaps-akademi I komisjon hos J. Dybwad 1939) examined the figure of Enoch in the light of the Mesopotamian tradition years before the finding of the Qumran manuscripts.

[46] P. Grelot, "La Géographie mythique d'Hénoch et ses sources," *RB* 65 (1958), pp. 33-69; idem, "La Légende d'Hénoch dans les Apocryphes et dans la Bible," *RSR* 46 (1958), pp. 5-26, 181-210; idem, "L'Eschatologie des Esséniens et le livre d'Hénoch," *RevQ* 1 (1958-59), pp. 113-131; idem, "Hénoch et ses écritures," *RB* 82 (1975) 481-500, written before the publication of the Aramaic fragments.

[47] J.C. VanderKam, *Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition* (CBQMS 16; Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1984), p. 116. On the Mesopotamian background of the Enoch figure and of the Son of Man figure see H. S. Kvanvig, *Roots of Apocalyptic, The Mesopotamian Background of the Enoch Figure and the Son of Man* (WMANT 61: Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1988). See also S. Bhayro, "Noah's Library: Sources for 1 Enoch 6-11," *JSP* 15/3 (2006), pp. 163-177.

diaspora-community or perhaps in a community of returnees that maintained traditions from the Babylonian exile. This group of writings might have been expanded by later additions to the text.[48]

The narrative of the Watchers (*1 En.* 6-11) belongs to the earliest textual layer of I Enoch and represents one of the earliest traditions of the collection. In chapters 6-11 two distinct narratives exist – the narrative on Shemihazah and that on Asael.[49]

The Shemihazah tradition

The bulk of this early tradition is contained in the Shemihazah story (*1 En.* 6:1-7:62). According to the Shemihazah-story a group of the sons of heaven (6:2), whom the text refers to as the Watchers (*'yryn* as in Daniel 7), glimpse the daughters of men, desire them, and decide to descend to them. Their leader Shemihazah (*šmyḥzh*) considers the plan to be sinful, and he does not want to bear the responsibility alone (6:3). Therefore, the Watchers, in order to fulfill their plan, swear to unite on Mount Hermon (*1 En.* 6:6). Then the Watchers ". . .began [to go in to them, and to defile themselves with them and (they began) to teach them] sorcery and spellbinding [and the cutting of roots; and to show them plants . . ." (7:1). The women became pregnant from them and bore children, who became giants. The giants "were devouring [the labour of all the children of men and men were unable to supply [them." (7:4). After this the giants begin to devour men, and then "... they began to sin against all birds and beasts of the earth] and reptiles . . . and the fish of the sea, and to devour the flesh of another; and they were] drinking blood. [Then the earth made the accusation against the wicked concerning everything] which was done upon it" (7:5-6).[50] These then are the transgressions, which finally bring about the punishment of the flood (*1 En.* 9:1ff). Thus the story serves as a justification for the catastrophic punishment wreaked upon humanity.

The Asa'el story (*1 En.* 8:1-2) does not retell the story of the Watchers. It is focused upon and limited to different data concerning such details as the name of the leader of the revolt and the teachings of the Watchers. Here their leader is called Asa'el. He taught metalworking, making weapons and jewels for men, and the knowledge of eye-shadows, of precious gems and dyes of

[48] A similar case is the Danielic collection, the earliest pieces of which demonstrate a good knowledge of Mesopotamian lore.

[49] This fact has already been noted by early scholars dealing with the work. R.H. Charles, *The Book of Enoch* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1893), pp. 13-14, differentiated between two narratives in the text of 1En. 6-11. More recently P. D. Hanson, "Rebellion in Heaven, Azazel and Euhemeristic Heroes in 1 Enoch 6-11," *JBL* 96 (1977), pp. 197-233 and G.W.E. Nickelsburg, "Apocalyptic and Myth in 1 Enoch 6-11," *JBL* 96 (1977), pp. 383-405 have analysed the constituents of the text and they too differentiated between two sources.

[50] Translated by J. T. Milik, based on the Aramaic text reconstructed by him; see J.T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch,* pp. 166-167.

mineral origins for women.[51] The section on Asa'el's teaching is followed by a report on the teachings of Shemihazah and his companions: they taught the interpreatations of heavenly *omina*, each Watcher teaching the signs of the natural phenomenon that was included in his name (*1 En.* 8:3-4).

The whole section ends with a report of the punishment of Asa'el and the Watchers. Asael was punished by the angel Raphael for the sin Asael perpetrated: he was bound and cast into darkness, where the Watchers will stay until "the great day of judgment" (*1 En.* 10:4-7). On the other hand, the punishment mentioned in the Shemihazah-story is the binding of Shemihazah and his companions by Michael "for seventy generations" after they were forced to witness their children, the Giants, perish (*1 En.* 10:11-12). The devastation of the flood following these events signifies the purification of the earth (*1 En.* 10:1-3, 20-22).

The narratives on Shemihazah, Asael, and the flood revolve around the problem of the origin of evil. The Shemihazah narrative is similar to Genesis 6:1-4, which is also connected with the flood. The relation of the two stories is complicated. The story of Shemihazah and his companions is a logical and continuous narrative, whereas Genesis 6:1-4 seems to be a series of theological reflections on the story narrated in *1 Enoch*.[52] As to the background and meaning of the story of the Watchers, earlier theories saw historical and mythological motifs behind the narrative. The motif of the integration of heavenly and earthly beings would have referred to and negatively judged the mixed marriages of the priests in the postexilic era, objected to by Ezra.

The motif of the bloodshed would have mirrored the wars of the Diadochi.[53] Other theories look for mythological models, seeing the motif of the teachings of the Watchers as modeled after the myth of Prometheus, Asael being a *protos heuretes*.[54] Of course, neither historical-sociological, nor mythological models, including Greek images, can be ruled out. However, observation of only one or two motifs of the narrative does not illuminate the background and meaning of the whole story. Many elements of the story, such as cannibalism and consuming blood, the basically negative nature of the teachings of the Watchers, magic and interpretation of *omina*, are left unexplained. In order to ascertain the background and the exact meaning and

---

[51] 1 En 65:6 supplements the list of the teachings of Asael by adding that the Watchers also taught people to cast metal and to make cast metal statues. According to *1 Enoch* 69 a Watcher named Pinem'e taught people writing and the use of ink and papyrus - things that later could be the source of several misunderstandings.

[52] The Shemihazah story is generally considered by scholars as an expansion and explication of Genesis 6:1-4. There is no room here to discuss the relation of the two texts; this will be the aim of a further study.

[53] D. Suter, "Fallen Angel, Fallen Priest: The Problem of Family Purity in 1 Enoch 6-16," *HUCA* 50 (1979), pp. 115-135; R. Rubinkiewicz, "The Book of Noah and Ezra's Reform," *FO* 25 (1988), pp. 151-155; G.W.E. Nickelsburg, "Apocalyptic and Myth in 1 Enoch 6-11," *JBL* 96 (1977), pp. 383-405.

[54] Ibid.

message of the narrative, all major elements of the narrative must be considered. This can be followed by a discussion of the issue of foreign literary influences. The tradition of the Watchers was a relevant theme in Qumran literature. It was often cited and referred to in other works, certainly because the meaning of the story was considered relevant for the spiritual world of the community.[55] Supposedly, the story had a specific meaning for them, and its motifs embodied basic ideas of the Essene tradition.[56] Notions that are related to each of the motifs of the story are those of *sin and impurity* and *magic and the demonic*.

Sin and impurity: ethical (prohibited) impurities

The purity system of the Old Testament is acquainted not only with physical impurities, but also ethical ones.[57] Ethical impurity grows out of situations that are controllable and are not natural or necessary, such as delaying purification from physical impurity, polluting specific *sancta*, sexual transgressions, idolatry, and murder. The locus of uncleanness may be the person, but proscriptions refer more to the pollution of the sanctuary or land.[58] Punishments of these sins are more severe than the consequences of physical impurities. Punishment of the sinner is usually the banishing/driving away from the land or the extinguishing of ones family (*kārēt*).[59]

The main list of ethical impurities is in the Holiness Code (Lev 17-26):

1. Sins related to sexual relations are cases of the *zenūt,* usually translated as fornication, that is, all kinds of illicit sex: sex among blood relatives, with another's wife, homosexual relation, sex with menstruating woman, and prostitution (see Lev 18:1-30; 19:29). A special case in the list is *kilayim*, the prohibition of mixing together different kinds of animals, plants and materials in human clothing (Lev 19:19, Deut 22:9-11). A special case of *zenūt* not

---

[55] The *nachleben* and infuence of the Watchers' story in the literature of Qumran requires a separate study.

[56] According to P. Sacchi the peculiar conception of evil based on *1 En.* 6-11 was a distinct ideological tradition that was the catalyst of the schism between the group and Judaism in the fourth century BCE. Michael Stone and David Suter date the schism to the third century. See G. Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis, The Parting of Ways between Qumran and Enochic Judaism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1998), pp. 76-77.

[57] On the distinction between types of purity based on nonbiblical anthropological evidence, see L.N. Rosen, "Contagion and Cataclysm: A Theoretical Approach to the Study of Ritual Pollution Beliefs," *African Studies* 32 (1973), pp. 229-246.

[58] W.D. Davies, *The Territorial Dimension of Judaism; With a Symposium and Further Reflections* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991); D.P. Wright, "Unclean and Clean, Old Testament," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary,* ed. David N. Freedman (Nashville: Abingdon, 1992), Vol. 6:729-741, esp. pp. 738-739.

[59] E.g. the Assyrian exile of Israel is explained in 2 Kings 17:5-23 as a punishment resulting from "the sin of Jerobeam," the improper cultic practice of the northern kingdom.

listed in Leviticus 17-26 is remarriage with one's divorced wife, she having in the meantime been remarried and then divorced or widowed (Deut 24:1-4; cf. Jer 3:1).

2. Sins related to blood: bloodshed (Deut 21:1-9; cf. Gen 4:10, Ps 106:38*ff*)

3. Sins related to the dead: corpse left on the tree for the night (Deut 21:22-23), cf. 11QTS LXIV, 11-12).

4. Sins related to magic: "Do not resort to ghosts and spirits or make yourselves unclean by seeking them out. I am the Lord your God" (Lev 19:31). Magical practice is sometimes conceived as *zenūt* (Lev 20:6), and those who practice it are to be killed (Ex 22:17).

Results of ethical impurities are summarized in Leviticus 18:27-30: "The people who were there before you did those abominable things and the land became unclean. So do not let the land spew you out for making it unclean as it spewed them out. Observe my charge, therefore."[60] Qumran texts enrich the Biblical theory of impurities.[61]

Sin and impurity in the story of the Watchers

The sins of the Watchers are their transgression of the cosmic order and mixing with earthly women, and their teaching of magic. They became impure by this process (*1 En.* 7:1, cf. 4Q531 5, 1). The Book of Giants qualifies their relation as a case of *zenūt* (4Q203 = 4QEnGiants[a] 8, 9), one of the main categories of ethical impurities. On an analogical basis the mixing of heavenly and earthly beings can also be a violation of the *kilayim*, prohibition of the mixing of categories. Practice of magic is again an ethical impurity according to the biblical system.

The sins of the Giants, sons of the Watchers are violence, bloodshed (cannibalism), sins against the animals, birds, and fishes, and drinking of blood (*1 En.* 7:4-5). Homicide is among the sins that make the land impure (Deut 21:9). Cannibalism is not known from the biblical system. The meaning of the sins committed against the animals is not clear; it can be a violation of the prohibitions concerning food. This presupposition is confirmed by the report on their consuming of blood, which is a violation of the biblical prohibition (Gen 9:3-4). These are the sins of the Watchers and their offspring that made the earth impure. The resultant flood is not only a punishment of

---

[60] The citation is a summary of the Holiness Code in Leviticus 17-26. The land is the Land of Canaan into which the people were about to enter.

[61] The Temple Scroll (11QT) considers as impure the non-observance of the dietary laws (11QTS XLVIII, 6-7), the bodily signs of mourning (tattooing) (11QTS XLVIII, 10), covenant and marriage with the "inhabitants of the land," which constituted idolatry (11QT II, 1-15, cf. Ex 34:10-16), burial-grounds not separated from surroundings (11QTS XLVIII, 11-17), the non-separation of sufferers from bodily impurities (flux, leprosy, plague, scab, menstruating women, women after childbirth), and idolatry repeatedly mentioned as *zenut* defiling the land. 4QMMT (4Q394-399) adds to the list of impurities the offering taken from the pagan corn, and highlights cases of forbidden marriages (priests' marriage with commoners' daughters) as cases of *kilayim.*

these sins but, at the same time, a purification of the earth.

The Giants in the Enochic tradition

1 En. 15:8 refers to the offspring of the giants as demons (Ethiopic *nafsat*, Aramaic *rwḥ*'). These beings are spiritual in nature, following their fathers' nature: they do not eat, they are not thirsty and know no obstacles. Their destructiveness first and foremost affects children and women, as they were born of women.[62] The Giants are the protagonists of the Book of Giants. The Aramaic fragments belonging to the Enochic manuscripts from Qumran are not contained in the Greek and Ethiopic translations. According to the narrative of a Qumran fragment, one of the Giants took to the air "as whirlwinds, and he flew with his hands/wings as [an] eagle."[63] According to this, giants were shaped like human figures that could fly like whirlwinds.

The story of the Watchers and demonology

Although the story of the Watchers does not mention any demons, the motifs of the story are related to the realm of the demonic. The characteristics of the Giants evoke the Mesopotamian tradition about the *utukku*-s, a term generally used for demonic beings. The Enochic Giants have the same characteristics as the Mesopotamian demons: they are tall and obtrusive beings, roaming in bands, attacking their victims indiscriminately. They ravage the work of humans,[64] devour the flesh of animals and humans, and consume their blood. They are born from a sexual union of heavenly and earthly beings, considered in the Enochic story to be impure.

It is to be noted here that the name and figure of Gilgamesh, one of the giants of the Book of Giants, can be interpreted in light of the magical tradition of the Near East. This name that is known also in Greek magical papyri is still referred to today in magical incantations.

Binding the Watchers

The punishment for the sins of the Watchers is binding them and casting them into darkness. Asa'el is bound by the angel Raphael, Shemihazah is bound by Michael. Demonological texts regularly mention that the demon is binding his victim. The witch, a constant figure of the Mesopotamian

---

[62] This part of the tradition is known only from the Greek and the Ethiopic translations. 4QEnar/c, the fragment which supposedly contains this part of the text, is not legible at this place. It is to be supposed that this part was also contained in the Aramaic text tradition of the Enochic collection.

[63] 4Q530 (4QEnGiants/b III, 4), see L.T. Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Giants*, pp. 128-34.

[64] 4Q531 5 1 speaks in more concrete terms than the Shemihazah story, and mentions that the Giants were devastating fruit, wheat, trees, sheep, and cattle.

incantation series, Maqlû, binds her victim by her practices. The binding effect of the witchcraft is mentioned in the title of a series of incantations entitled "The pregnant woman who was bound."[65] The bonds made by witches can be solved by another kind of magic, healing incantations.

Binding is a constant motif in the Mesopotamian creation myth *Enūma elīš,* in which the triumph of the gods over their demonic enemies is marked by binding the enemies. Triumphant Ea binds Apsu, the primeval ocean, and builds his house over his breast. He also binds Apsu's helper, Mummu. Marduk binds Tiamat, then, splitting Tiamat in two, he forms (létrehoz), the netherworld, in the monster's inner part.[66]

Sorcery

In the Shemihazah story, the Watchers teach humans magical practices: "sorcery (*ḥršh*) and spellbinding (*ksph*) [and the cutting of roots (Gr. *ridzotomia*); and to show them plants . . ." (*1 En.* 7:1). The first two nouns are general terms for magical practices. The "cutting of roots" means, in all probability, the making of herbal ingredients for magic, and making amulets containing herbs and roots.[67]

Metallurgy

Asa'el and his companions teach men metallurgy, the making of weapons and jewels. To the women they teach make-up and cosmetics, the most precious and choice stones, and all kinds of coloured dyes (*1 En.* 8:1). Metallurgy and smithing are very closely related to the notion of magic. Ironsmiths are considered sorcerers in the belief system of the ancient and modern Near-East.[68] Weapons made by forgers were attributed to magical power. Jewels served originally as amulets with apotropaic function.[69]

---

[65] V. Haas, *Magie,* p. 170.

[66] Ibid. p. 92.

[67] The Talmud is acquainted with two sorts of *kemi'ot* (amulets): a written one (a parchment with quotations from various sources, including the Scriptures), and the *kame'a šel iqrin*, an amulet made from roots of a certain plant (Shab 61b).

[68] On the general idea see M. Eliade, *Forgerons et alchimistes* (Homo Sapiens; Paris: Flammarion, 1956). In Ethiopic ironsmith and magician are denoted by the same word (*dubanansa*), see W. Leslau, *Concise Dictionary of Ge'ez (Classical Ethiopic)* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrasowitz, 1989), p. 181; similarly the descendants of Cain, who are ironsmiths in the Bible (Gen. 4:16-24), in the later tradition related to them are associated with magical motifs (Syriac "Cave of Treasures" folia 12a, col. 2, for an edition see C. Bezold, *Die Schatzhöhle*, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs 1883, reprint Amsterdam: APA-Philo Press, 1981). In the Ethiopian tradition the belief that ironsmiths have magic capabilities and knowledge is alive to this day; they are considered sorcerers and therefore members of other groups do not marry their daughters to them. In an incantation of the series Maqlû (II.128) the witch (*kaššaptu*) is called silversmith, whose spells are to be solved by the incantation, see G. Meier, *Maqlû.*

[69] V. Haas, *Magie*, pp. 197-198.

Cosmetics

The ancient magical origin of make-up, especially the painting of eyes and lips, is well-known, similarly the magic of jewels.[70] In *Enūma elīš*, the Mesopotamian creation myth, all the gods at war wear amulets, using their magic power against their enemies. According to the myth of *Inanna's (Ištar) descent into the nether world,* the fertility goddess going to the netherworld must, at each gate of the netherworld, part with one piece of her seven magical powers, represented by her garments and jewels. At the end of her journey she arrives naked and powerless before Ereškigal, the lady of the netherworld. In the Sumerian variant of the myth two pieces of Ishtar's cosmetics and jewels are mentioned as having the specific power of sexual attraction: her mascara called "Let a man come, let him come," and her pectoral called "come, man, come."[71]

Interpretation of omina

The holistic worldview of the Mesopotamians considered everything an omen for future events, and interpretation of *omina* was generally practiced. Interpretive traditions were collected and systematized in a series of interpretations. A collection of interpretations on heavenly phenomena and meteorological *omina* can be found in the series *Enūma Anu Enlil* (When Anu and Enlil) from the Neo-Babylonian era.[72] Its content is similar to the teachings of Shemihazah and his companions, referred to in the Enochic story.

The story of the Watchers as a myth of the origin of evil

The story of the Watchers is a myth on the origin of evil in the world.[73] According to the narrative of the Enochic collection this is the first event following the creation (the material of Gen 2-5 is not included in the Enochic collection). The first stage of the birth of evil is dysfunction in the cosmic order, the mixing of heavenly and earthly beings. Sins of heavenly beings are designated as ethical impurities; therefore the deeds of the Watchers are considered in the narrative to be ethical impurities. Initiators of the sins are the heavenly beings who descend to the earthly women, driven by their desire. The Watchers are conscious of the nature of their deeds. They even agree together to commit the sin collectively. The narrative does not mention human

---

[70] Ibid. pp. 197-198.

[71] Innana's descent to the nether world, lines 22-23. For the text and translation see *ETCSL* (*The electronic text corpus of the Sumerian Literature*, Oxford) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.1.4.1#).

[72] W.H. van Soldt, *Solar omens of Enuma Anu Enlil: Tablets 23 (24)-29 (30)* (Uitgaven van het Nederlands historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul 73; Istanbul: Nederlands historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1995).

[73] On the problem see G. Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis*, pp. 72-73.

responsibility. The authors and agents of the deeds are the Watchers. The Giants, the beings born from the cosmic dysfunction, initiate further anomalies in the world. These anomalies are ethical sins resulting in the defilement of the earth. Impurity of the earth results in the punishment of the flood.

The story of the Watchers is an independent story. It is a parallel to the narrative of Genesis 6:1-4 about the angels and the daughters of men, and not an interpretation of Genesis 6:1-4.[74] The story of the Watchers contains a message that cannot be found in Genesis 6:1-4. It is a determinist myth and an alternative tradition to the message of the primeval history of Genesis. In the Enochic collection evil originates from the deeds of the Watchers, following the creation. In Genesis the origin of evil is the human fall into disobedience (Gen 2-3). The tradition of the Watchers is often referred to in Qumran texts, with the implication that here is the origin of evil. On the other hand, the biblical story of the fall (Gen 2-3) is almost never mentioned at Qumran.

1 Enoch is a theoretical work. The origin of evil means the origin of the demons, causes of natural evil. It seems that the author(s) of the Enochic story use Mesopotamian lore in a conscious manner. Evil in *1 Enoch* is equal to sin and impurity. The bearers of evil and impurity are demonic beings, the offspring of the Watchers. Demons are working in world history.

The story of the Watchers (*1 En.* 6-11) was written following the Babylonian exile. The *terminus ad quem* is the end of the 3rd century BCE. Its language is Aramean, the vernacular of Mesopotamia and the *lingua franca* of the exiled Judaeans from the 6th century BCE. The figure of Enoch and the revelations given to him reflect a working knowledge of the Mesopotamian traditions about the *apkallū*, the antediluvian sages, a priestly tradition from the city of Eridu.[75] Mesopotamian elements in the Enochic literature are not simply a matter of borrowing. Mesopotamian lore was adapted and built into a Jewish system of thought. The message of the

---

[74] There is no room here to go into the problems of the relation of the two texts. Although Wellhausenian text criticism assigned Genesis 6:1-4 to the Yahwistic source, there is no evidence for an early provenence of this short and disjointed text that may even be a series of reflections of a priestly redactor (4th c. BCE). The Enochic story of the Watchers is backgrounded by a tradition not dependent upon Genesis 6:1-4, which was formed prior to the end of the 3rd century date of the manuscripts of the Book of the Watchers known to us. The Enochic story is thought by some scholars to be an interpretation of Genesis 6:1-4. See D. Dimant, "1 Enoch 6-11: A Fragment of a Parabiblical Work," *JJS* 53 (2002), pp. 223-237. Similarly S. Bhayro, "Daniel's "Watchers" in Enochic Exegesis of Genesis 6:1-4," in *Jewish Ways of Reading the Bible*, ed. G.J. Brooke (JSS Supplement 11; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 58-66, and A.T. Wright, *The Origin of Evil Spirits: The Reception of Genesis 6.1-4 in Early Jewish Literature* (WUNT 2.198; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005). For a different view see P.R. Davies, "And Enoch Was Not, For Genesis Took Him," in *Biblical Traditions in Transmission: Essays in Honour of Michael A. Knibb,* eds. Charlotte Hempel and Judith M. Lieu (JSOT Supplements 111; Leiden: Brill, 2006) pp. 97-107.

[75] See J.C. VanderKam, *Enoch*; H.S. Kvanvig, *Roots of Apocalyptic.*

story of the Watchers is determined by a monotheistic worldview, backgrounded by the biblical system of ritual purity.

Beliefs concerning demons may not have been unknown among the exiles. However, everyday practice of the interpretation of *omina* and magical healing rituals were new for them, and may have produced a kind of culture shock.[76] The Enochic narrative interprets the existence of demons as the origin of natural evil. However, the existence of demons is not disclaimed; they are simply regarded as the evil part of the world. The phenomenon that is considered in Enoch absolutely negative is magic and its various forms, the interpretation of *omina* and the evil teachings of the Watchers. These are all experiences the exiles would have known from everyday Mesopotamian practice.

Phenomena and ideas are not explained at the time when they come into being or practice, but when a community senses for some reason a need to explain them and has time for reflection upon them. The Babylonian exile was such a situtation that demanded from the exiles a restatement of their identity. A vital part of reshaping their self-identity was their attitude toward the new cultural heritage to which they were exposed in the exile. Their incorporation and restatement of the Mesopotamian perspectives was, at the same time, a distancing of themselves from certain phenomena of the foreign culture. At the same time this does not mean a denial of the existence of a demonic realm and the rejection of apotropaic methods. Second Temple Jewish literacy (including Qumran) is especially rich in evidences of belief in demons. Narratives and magical texts from this period reflect the variegated methods used against harmful spirits.[77]

The Book of Jubilees

The early tradition of the Watchers surfaced not only in the later parts of the Enochic collection.[78] It can be found in other works that survived in Qumranic written tradition and that were obviously important in the community's spiritual worldview. The Book of Jubilees can be dated to the

---

[76] Cf. Theophrastos' consternation of Babylonian superstition, Theophrastos, *Characteres* (The Loeb Classical Library 225; Cambridge: Harvard, 1993), pp. 106-113.

[77] P.S. Alexander, "The Demonology of the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment,* eds. P.W. Flint and J.C. VanderKam (Leiden, Boston and Köln: Brill, 1999), pp. 331-353; E. Sorensen, "Chapter 3: Possession and Exorcism in Ancient Israel and Early Judaism," in *Possession and Exorcism in the New Testament and Early Christianity,* ed. E. Sorensen (WUNT 2.157; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002) pp. 47-74.

[78] 1En 85-90, the Animal Apocalypse, an historical overview based on the Biblical tradition. The Watchers are mentioned in the antediluvian period as stars that fall to earth upon seeing the black cows symbolizing the earthly women, and begetting with them elephants, camels, and donkeys.

middle of the 2nd century BCE.[79] Like *1 Enoch* it survived in a shorter Greek and a longer Ethiopic text.[80] Jubilees was also thought to have been written in Hebrew or Aramaic. A group of Qumran Hebrew fragments, most from Cave 4, was identified as fragments of the Hebrew original of Jubilees.

The spiritual milieu of Jubilees was not far from Qumranic views, it seems. This is strongly suggested by the large number of copies of Jubilees in the Qumran library, and the influence of Jubilees on other writings preserved in the community's written traditions. The relationship of the 364-day calendar of Jubilees with calendars documented from other Qumran works (11QT, 4QMMT) is generally known. Jubilees is one of the earliest examples of the genre of "rewritten Bibles," retelling narratives of Genesis, with both *lacunae* and additions.

At the same time Enochic tradition is systematically absorbed into Jubilees. In Jubilees God creates angels when creating the world: the angel of the divine Presence, the angel of the holiness, and the angels over the works of the cosmos and the natural phenomena. According to the story of the Watchers told in Jubilees (Jub 5:1-19), the Watchers were angels who came to the earth in order to teach righteousness, but their intention turned to the opposite (Jub 4:15). The children born from angels and earthly women became giants. At the same time they had nothing to do with the sins that began to spread following their birth (Jub 5:1-2). Jubilees does not speak about further offspring of the angels and giants.

Following the flood impure demons began to lead astray the children of Noah's sons, leading them into folly and destroying them (Jub 10:1). The demons were leading astray and blinding and killing Noah's grandchildren. Following this the text states that the demons originate from the Watchers (Jub 10:4-5). On the effect of Noah's prayer the Lord bound nine tenth of the demons; he allowed one-tenth to work in the world under Mastema's leadership (Jub 10:7-14).[81]

Jubilees presents a hierarchical world of supernatural beings. One of the functions of the demons is the same as in the earlier tradition: they cause illnesses, afflictions and death. The demons attacking Noah's grandchildren evoke the figures of the Lilit-type baby-killer demons. At the same time, new motifs appear concerning demons: they cause blindness and error. In all probability, blindness is meant figuratively, not literally. Blindness is not

---

[79] The earliest Hebrew fragments from Qumran have been defined as "late Hasmonean," and as such they are dated to around 125 BCE. As the writing of the fragments is semicursive, according to J.C. VanderKam they must have been preceded by an earlier written tradition, see J.C. VanderKam, *Textual and Historical Studies on the Book of Jubilees* (HSS 14; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977), pp. 215-17.

[80] R.H. Charles, *The Ethiopic Version of the Hebrew Book of Jubilees* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1895).

[81] The name originates from the Hebrew verb *stm* "bear a grudge, cherish animosity against" (Ar. *stn*). Hosea 9:7, 8 mentions it as a common noun meaning "enmity".

mentioned among the illnesses regularly enumerated in incantation texts or in other texts related to demons. Blindness, mentioned together with error, is a metaphor that cannot be associated with children, only with adults. Blindness, as a metaphor of spiritual error and improper religious practice, is a topic that pervades Qumran literature.[82]

Mastema is again a character different from that of the demons causing illness. According to the etymology of his name, he is "the instigator" "raising animosity." The figure is akin with Satan of the book of Job, the *bn 'lhym* who proposes to God Job's testing (Job 1:6-12). In Jubilees Mastema is the leader of the demons in Noah's time. Subsequently, in the Jubilees narrative Mastema appears alone, and always as the instigator: in the time of Ur, Kesed's son (Jub 11:5-6), and then in Terah's days (Jub 11:10-12). In the time of Abraham unclean demons, led by Mastema, ruled the world. These demons are described as descendants of the Fallen Angels (Jub 19:8-10). Abraham has power over the demons; the source of his power is his righteousness. He is not only unwilling to sacrifice to idols while living in the city of Ur, but he sets "the house of idols" on fire (Jub 12:12).[83] The biblical story of the binding of Isaac (*'aqedah*) is again reformulated in Jubilees: the attempt at sacrifice is here upon the request of Mastema. He is the one who asks God to test Abraham's faith (Jub 17:16).[84] He intends to kill Moses on his way back from Midian (Jub 48.2-3), and Mastema helps the Egyptian wizards, Moses' rivals in Egypt (Jub 48.9-18).[85]

Evil and demons in Jubilees represent traditions of varied origins. The basis of the idea of the Lilit-type baby-killer demons (Jub 10:1-2) is the general belief in demons causing infant mortality and childbed fever. That they lead to error and spiritual blindness is a scholarly assessment, perhaps even speculation, that expresses the demonization of a religious practice considered to be wrong. There is no demonic figure in oriental folklore that parallels this Jubilees perspective.

---

[82] The historical survey of 1 En 85-90 represents Israel as a herd. In the period preceding the Maccabean revolt many of the sheep became blind and fell victims of birds of prey. Finally white lambs appeared among the herd and began to open the eyes of the blind and lost sheep. The Damascus Document refers to a group of the exiled who "perceived their iniquity and recognized that they were guilty men, yet for twenty years they were like blind men groping for the way. And God observed their deeds, … and He raised for them a Teacher of Righteousness to guide them in the way of His heart", *CD* I, 7-11. Uncovering of ears and eyes is a metaphor for religious teaching, *CD* II, 3, 14.

[83] In the Book of Judith, in Achior's speech (5:6-9) Abraham has to leave Mesopotamia because he refuses to worship the local deities. The core of this legend most likely came into being at the end of the 2nd century BCE. On Abraham and Mastema see M. Kister, "Demons, Theology and Abraham's Covenant (CD 16:4-6 and Related Texts," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls At Fifty: Proceedings of the 1997 Society of Biblical Literature Qumran Section Meetings,* eds. R.A. Kugler and E.M. Schuller (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997), pp. 167-184.

[84] Similarly in Pseudo-Jubilees, 4Q225 2 II, 6-7. The fragment preserved a tradition similar to that of the Book of Jubilees, but the text is not identical with that of Jubilees.

[85] On the Old Testament model of this episode see E. Eshel, "Mastema's Attempt on Moses' Life in the 'Pseudo-Jubilees' Text from Masada," *DSD* 10 (2003), pp. 359-364.

Mastema's figure is that of the instigator, a relative of the Satan of the Old Testament. At the same time Mastema is not an independent power. It is not Mastema who tests people, but God. God has power over Mastema, like his power over the angels. At the same time, Mastema is a dangerous enemy, the chief demon in Jubilees. As indicated above, in Jubilees the motifs connected with demons have various sources: the folk belief, Enochic tradition, scholarly explications, and the tradition about Satan. These characteristics derived from various roots are merged and presented in the figures of the demons in the book of Jubilees in a hierarchy and in a historical perspective.

Returning to the demonological system of the Songs of the Sage (4Q510-11) it can be ascertained that not only demons of folk beliefs (*šēdim*, Lilit, owls, jackals) and demons of the Enochic tradition (bastard spirits) are known in the work, but also spirits of error derived from Jubilees have shaped it. Opposition of pure and impure, light and darkness associated with human and the demonic world are also evident in other works from the Qumran library.

Demons in narratives

The Book of Tobit belongs to the category of deuterocanonical books. It is not part of the Masoretic canon. Fragments of four Aramaic (4Q196-199) manuscripts and one Hebrew (4Q200) manuscript of the book of Tobit were found in Qumran Cave 4.[86] This cave is generally known as the sectarian library cave, containing the most important works produced by the community itself, and a depository for biblical manuscripts. As to biblical books in Qumran, fragments of the books of the Masoretic canon, with the exception of the book of Esther, were found in the caves. Cave 4 contained at least one copy of each biblical book.

The book reflects a hierarchical angelology. There are seven angels in the heaven who stand before "the glory of God" (Tob 12:15, cf. Rev 8:2).[87] One of them, Raphael, appears as a mediator of God (12:18), proven by his function in the plot of the narrative.[88] Angels are spiritual beings. They do not eat (Raphael only appears to eat in Tob 12:19), and they can fly (Tob 12:20).

---

[86] One of the four Aramaic texts is written on papyrus, three on leather as is the Hebrew text. All the copies were written between 100 and 50 BCE. A linguistic analysis defined the Aramaic of Tobit as Middle Aramaic (612-250 BCE); the Hebrew as late postexilic Hebrew. See J.A. Fitzmyer, "The Aramaic and Hebrew Fragments of Tobit from Qumran Cave 4," *CBQ* 57 (1995), pp. 655-675; J.A. Fitzmyer, *Tobit, Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003).

[87] Late biblical and postbiblical literature mentions the following angels: Michael in Dan 10:13, 21, 12:1; Gabriel in Dan 8:16, 9:21; Raguel in 1 En 20:4; Uriel in 1 En 9:1, 19:1, 20:2. Raguel ("Friend of God") is an archangel's name in 1 En 20:4.

[88] As Raphael informs Tobit, "I was sent to test you" (Tob 12:13).

Demons are represented in the narrative by Ashmodai.[89] Ashmodai is a kind of the type known as *incubus*. However, the demon has several special characteristics in the story. He is the demon who kills Sarah's bridegrooms in the bedroom. The servant in her speech to Sarah makes her responsible for the death of her bridegrooms, and she adds: "I hope we never see son or daughter of yours." Thus she supposes that Sarah may have sexual relations with the demon, and her words reflect a fear of marriage with a demon and a fear of offsprings of demons. The demon loves Sarah, and he does not kill her. On the other hand, it is explicitly stated that Sarah had no sexual relations with the demon, that she was a virgin. In Tobit endogamy wins over the demon, with the help of burning the fish's liver and heart. This method was taught him by Raphael. The exorcism is followed by the prayer of the new couple (Tob 6:18). It is stated that the smell of the fish kept the demon away, "and he made off (*ephugen*) into Upper Egypt." Raphael followed him there and promptly bound him hand and foot" (Tob 8:3).

Exorcism with the help of burning fish liver, the exorcistic method applied by Tobias, is known from Mesopotamian healing traditions. The prayer following the exorcism is a special Jewish motif in the narrative. The angel Raphael functions in the story as a helper and the one who binds the demon. The name Raphael (*rp'l*) is a function name (God has healed), the archangel's function in the narrative of Tobit. The binding of the demon by Raphael is a parallel to the tradition of the Watchers where Raphael is binding the Watcher Asael.

The Genesis Apocryphon is a rewritten Bible, a paraphrase of biblical narratives. The length of the episodes in it are very different from their parallels in Genesis; here we can read detailed descriptions of things that in Genesis are mentioned only briefly. The narrative follows the sequence of biblical stories, adding to them new episodes, while omitting other ones (the story of Babel, Gen 11). The narratives of the Genesis Apocryphon are clearly focused on special points of the tradition of Genesis. In spite of the many additions of various literary characters, the work can be characterised as an exegetical narrative.

Columns XIX-XX retell the tradition of Genesis 12, in which Abraham, driven by famine, goes with his wife to Egypt where Sarah's beauty attracts the attention of the Egyptians, and they bring the woman, who said she was Abraham's sister, to Pharaoh's court. Following this God afflicts Pharaoh and his court with plagues. Because of these plagues Pharaoh gives Sarah back to her husband (Gen 12:10-20). The narrative of Genesis leaves room for doubt whether Sarah was given back untouched by the Egyptians. The narrative of Genesis Apocryphon offers an undeniable proof that Sarah could not have been made impure, either by Pharaoh or any other Egyptian.

---

[89] His name originates perhaps from Pers. Aeshma daeva, "the demon of wrath": see: Y.M. Grintz, "Tobit, Book of," *Encyclopedia Judaica*, ed. C. Roth (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971), Vol. 15:1185.

Following the taking of Sarah by Pharaoh's men a chastising spirit (*rwḥ mkdš*) was sent by God to Pharaoh's court in response to Abraham's prayer (1QapGen XX, 16). Because of the spirit's influence, Pharaoh "was unable to approach her, let alone to have sexual intercourse with her, in spite of his having her for two years" (1QapGen XX, 17-18). The plague had been afflicting Pharaoh's court for two years. Finally Pharaoh "sent for all the wise men … and all the wizards ('*špy*') as well as all the healers of Egypt ('*sy mṣryn*), (to see) whether they could heal him of that disease, (him) and the members of his household" (1QapGen XX, 18-20). The wizards and the healers were not able to heal Pharaoh; for that reason he sent his man Horqanos to Abraham, asking Abraham to pray for him and to lay his hand on him, for Pharaoh had seen Abraham in a dream (1QapGen XX, 21-22). Following Sarah's return to him, Abraham prayed for Pharaoh and laid his hand on his head, banishing the spirit from Pharaoh (1Q apGen XX, 26-29). Pharaoh gave lavish presents to Abraham, appointed men to escort him, and Abraham left Egypt (1Q ApGen XX, 30-34).

The existence of demons is quite natural for the author of the Genesis Apocryphon. The function of the demon in the story is to cause illness. Impotency with other symptoms of melancholy is a well-known pattern in Mesopotamian incantation texts.[90] On the other hand, the laying on of hands is not known from Mesopotamian practice.[91]

The Prayer of Nabonid (4Q242) contains a legend about Nabonid (to be identified with the historical Neo-Babylonian king Nabu-naid, 555-539 B.C.E.).[92] The king retired to Teiman, where he was afflicted with a bad skin disease (*šḥn' byš'*) for seven years (4Q242 1-3, 2-3).[93] He prayed in vain to various idols made of gold, silver, and other materials. Finally an

---

[90] Incantation texts usually describe groups of symptoms, see M.J. Geller, Freud and Mesopotamian Magic, in *Mesopotamian Magic: Textual, Historical and Interpretative Perspectives,* eds. T. Abusch, K. van der Toorn, (Ancient Magic and Divination 1; Leiden: Brill, 1999) pp. 49-56. On incantations healing impotency see R.D. Biggs, *ŠÀ.ZI.GA. Ancient Mesopotamian potency incantations* (Texts from Cuneiform Sources 2; Locust Valley: J.J. Augustin, 1967).

[91] The laying on of hands (*sāmak*) is known from the Old Testament as a gesture in the context of sacrifice. In the New Testament it is associated with healing, blessing, reception of baptism and the Holy Spirit, and ordination. See D. Daube, "The Laying on of Hands, Jordan Lectures 1952" in *Collected Works of David Daube*, ed. C. Carmichael, vol. 2, *New Testament Judaism,* (Berkeley: Robbins Collection, republished 2000), pp. 224-246; J.A. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave I, A Commentary* (2nd rev. ed.), (Biblica et Orientalia, n. 18A; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1971), p. 140.

[92] The text has been published in several editions. The *editio princeps* is J.T. Milik, "'Prière de Nabonide' et autres écrits d'un cycle de Daniel," RB 63 (1956), pp. 407-415, pl. I. A recent standard edition is J. Collins, "4QPrayer of Nabonidus ar (pl. VI)," in *Qumran Cave 4.XVII: Parabiblical Texts Part 3*, ed. G. Brooke, J. Collins et alia (DJD XXII; Oxford: Clarendon, 1996) pp. 83-93. On the historical background of the legend see note 44 R. Meyer, *Das Gebet des Nabonid* (SSAW.PH 107/3; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1962).

[93] The Old Testament has knowledge of a number of skin diseases epitomised as "leprosy" (*ṣāra'at*). "Leprosy" is the cause of a persistent impurity, see Lev 13-14.

exorcist (*gzr*), an exiled Judaean, cured him by forgiving his sins and laying his hand on him. The text is fragmentary, and in the surviving elements no word referring to a demon (*rwḥ*' or its synonym) can be found. However, on the basis of the healing method, the laying on of hands known also from the Genesis Apocryphon and the New Testament parallels, it can be supposed that the illness of the king was caused by a demon (*rwḥ*').

Demons in wisdom and other texts[94]

4Q560 is a fragmentary Aramaic text.[95] The "evil visitor" (*pqd b'yš*) which "enters the flesh" (*'ll bbśr*'), "the male penetrator" (*ḥlhy' dkr*'), and "the female penetrator" (*ḥlhlyt nqb*') mentioned in the text (4Q560 1, 3), are probably causes of the symptomes described in the following: chill, fever, and pain in the heart (4Q560 1, 4). It is not clear, how these are related to the "visitors" and the symptoms of the sins (*'w'n wpš'*) mentioned previous to the symptoms. It seems that the "visitors" are night demons who attack "in sleep, he who crushes the male and she who passes through the female" (4Q560 1, 5). The word *rwḥ* is to be read in Fragment 2 (4Q560 2, 5).

Night demons of the *lilû* family are well documented from Mesopotamian incantation texts. They are male (*lilû*) and female (*wardat lilî*), types of *incubus* and *succubus*, attacking the opposite sex and causing erotic dreams, and infirmity. They are mentioned twice in our text. What is curious in our texts is that the second mention refers to male demons attacking males, and female demons raiding women (4Q560 1, 5). The text describes a group of symptoms which are characteristic of anxiety and mental illness. Similar groups of symptoms are described in a number of Mesopotamian incantation texts.[96] Our present Aramaic text is descriptive. Fragment 2, 5-6 may be an address of the exorcist to the demon (*w'nh rwḥ mwmh … 'wmytk rwḥ*').

11Q11 is a Qumran example for the apotropaic use of the Psalms.[97] Like the Songs of the Sage (4Q510-11) and 4Q560 it is a "theoretical" text

---

[94] For a survey, see E. Eshel, "Apotropaic Prayers in Second Temple Period", in *Liturgical Perspectives: Prayer and Poetry in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls,* ed. E.G. Chazon (STDJ 48; Leiden: Brill, 2003), pp. 69-88, and E. Eshel, "Genres of Magical Texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls", in *Die Dämonen*, eds. A. Lange, H. Lichtenberger and K.F.D. Römheld (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), pp. 395-415.

[95] D.L. Penney, M.O. Wise, "By the Power of Beelzebub: an Aramaic Incantation Formula from Qumran (4Q560)," *JBL* 113 (1994), pp. 627-650; F. García-Martínez and E.J. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* 1-2 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 2:1116-7.

[96] M.J. Geller, Freud and Mesopotamian Magic, pp. 49-56.

[97] É. Puech, "Les deux derniers psaumes davidiques du rituel d'exorcisme, 11QpsAp/a IV.4-V.14," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls; Forty Years of Research*, eds. D. Dimant U. Rappaport (Leiden: Brill, 1992), pp. 64-89; a new, standard edition: "11Q Apocryphal Psalms," in *Qumran Cave 11. II: (11Q2-18, 11Q20-31)*, eds. F. García-Martínez, E.J.C. Tigchelaar and A.S. van der Woude (DJD XXIII; Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), pp. 181-205, pls. XXII-XXV, LIII.

written in Hebrew, regarding darkness and light, demons, and God's power. The text is fragmentary, and not easy to interpret. Solomon's name is mentioned (11Q11 II, 3), but its context is not clear. The verb next to the name (*wyqrʿ*, and he will invoke) and the following enumeration of demons (*šd,* II, 3, 4; also mentioned in I, 10), spirits (*rwḥwt,* II, 3), and "the Prince of Animosity" (*ś*[*r hmśt*]*mh* II, 4) may refer to Solomon's power over the demons.[98]

This is followed by a meditation about God's creative power and his creatures. He is over every creature, a man can trust only in his help. "Lean [on YHWH, the God of gods, he who made] the heavens [and the earth and all that is in them, w]ho separated [light from darkness …]" (11Q11 II, 10-11). Angels (*m*[*l'kyw*]), and the holy seed (?) (*zr*[ʿ *hqwdš*]) are mentioned in the text; "who know his [wonder]ful [secrets]" (11Q11 III, 2-8). Raphael's name is mentioned as a healer (11Q11 V, 3), then follows an apotropaic text with the introduction: "Of David. Ag[ainst … an incanta]tion in the name of YHW[H. Invoke at an]y time" (11Q11 V, 4). However, the text following this introduction is not a canonical psalm of David, but an apocryphal composition. It speaks about horned beings, "[offspring of] man and of the seed of the ho[ly] ones," about darkness that is opposed to justice [*ṣdqh*], and about Sheol and its gates (11Q11 V, 6-10). "Belial's sons" (*bny bl*[*yʿl*]) are mentioned as powers antagonistic to man (VI, 3). Names of illnesses or other harms are not mentioned.

A new title, "Of David," in the next column (11Q11 VI, 3) introduces a new apotropaic text, this time a canonical psalm (Psalm 91), as an effective remedy against demons and harmful spirits. The text differs on certain points from the known Masoretic text.[99] The mention of the "offspring of man and of the seed of the holy ones" is a reference to the tradition of the Watchers. It designates, in all probability, demonic beings, in the context of darkness, Sheol, and Belial's sons, adversaries of man.

Objects used for apotropaic purposes called *Phylacteries (tefillin) and mezuzoth* were found in various Qumran caves, the majority of them found in Cave 11. Both *tefillin* and *mezuzot* contained short scriptural citations written on parchment and put in leather capsules. *Tefillin* were fixed on the forehead and hand on the occasion of prayer, *mezuzoth* were fixed on the doorframes of the entrances to houses and dwelling places. In addition, text straps and leather capsules were found in the caves. On the basis of the relatively high number of texts and objects it is thought that *tefillin* and *mezuzot* were written and made on the Qumran site, for the use of members

---

[98] The text is fragmentary, and the expression can be reconstructed both as *ś*[*r mśt*]*mh* or *ś*[*r hmśt*]*mh*, i.e. Prince Mastema or Prince of Animosity. Based on the extent of the gap the latter reading is likely. The Hebrew fragments of Jubilees read the two names alternately as *mśtmh* and *hmśtmh*.

[99] J.P.M. van der Ploeg, "Le Psaume XCI dans une recension de Qumrân," *RB* 72 (1965), pp. 210-217, pls. VIII-IX.

living inside and outside of the site.[100]

Scriptural texts cited in Qumran *tefillin* and *mezuzot* are practically identical with those used in later practice (usually Ex 13:9, 13:16, Deut 6:8, 11:18).[101] Demonic beings are never mentioned in them. The rationale of their use is the idea behind 11Q11: the holy texts have an effective power against any harmful influence, demon or tempting spirit. The Biblical verses cited in *tefillin* prescribe that "You shall put these words of mine in your heart and soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and fix them as an emblem on your forehead" (Deut 11:18). The objects were for everyday use. They serve as a shield in two important daily situations in human life: the prayer and the inner part of the dwelling place. Besides *tefillin* and *mezuzot,* no other apotropaic objects were found on the Qumran site. Qumran findings of tefillin and mezuzot represent their oldest occurrence.

Conclusion

To sum up briefly: demons are generally known and mentioned in various Qumran texts, written in various languages (Aramaic and Hebrew), and belonging to various genres (narrative, wisdom literature, other). Two from among these texts, 1 Enoch 6-11 and Jubilees are of theoretical and theological character. *1 Enoch*, originating from the period prior to the end of the 3rd century BCE, provides the rationale for the demons working in the world. Demons (the Giants) originate from the sin of the Watchers, an ethical sin considered as raising impurity. Demons represent the natural evil in the world. They are associated with sin and impurity.

The story in 1 Enoch 6-11 is a deterministic myth, distinct from Genesis 6:1-4. At the same time, it is a self-definition of a group of the exiled; a self-definition against their exilic background and not against another Jewish group. It is characterized by an acceptance of the realm of the demonic that represents natural evil, and the condemnation of magical methods. Jubilees is an attempt to harmonize the Genesis narratives and Enochic tradition. The Watchers are not sinners in Jubilees; however, the demons originate from them. Demons work in the world through history. They are subordinated to God's power, and represent the ethical evil in the world. Holy men (Noah, Abraham), on the grounds of their righteousness, had power over demons.

Exorcisms of demons are found in some narrative texts. Demons

---

[100] The Damascus Document, a rule written for the members living in families was found in several copies in the Qumran library, see *Qumran Cave 4.XIII: The Damascus Document (4Q266-273*), ed. J.M. Baumgarten (DJD XVIII; Oxford: Clarendon, 1996).

[101] G. Vermes, "Pre-Mishnaic Jewish Worship and the Phylacteries from the Dead Sea," *VT* 9 (1959), pp. 65-72; Y. Yadin, *Tefillin from Qumran* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and the Shrine of the Book, 1969).

represent natural evil also in the narratives. One text (Tobit) refers to magical method in healing, followed by prayer; while other texts present an unparalleled method, the laying on of the hand, followed by prayer. Raphael is known in Tobit as a helper and healer, and as the angel who binds demons. Wisdom and apotropaic texts present a world of demons representing both natural and ethical evil. Raphael is known in them as a healer. Besides him Solomon and David are mentioned or cited, the latter as the author of sacred texts used for apotropaic purposes.

Qumran texts related to demons reflect the emergence of a new concept concerning demons in postexilic Judaism, and the development of new methods represented by prayer and the laying on of hand. Protection against the harmful influence of the demonic world was provided by means of sacred texts and prayer; and eventually by means of a meticulous observance of purity prescriptions, trying to eliminate impurity from everyday life.[102]

ABSTRACT

*Texts related to demons from Qumran often refer to the Enochic tradition of the Watchers (*1 En. *6-11). The narrations in* 1 En. *6-11 are compositions on the origin of evil. The Shemihazah story (*1 En. *6:1 - 7:62) sees the origin of evil in a series of sins (sexual sins, magic, bloodshed) considered in the biblical impurity system as ethical impurities that defile the land. The tradition of Asa'el (*1 En. *8:1-2) ascribes the origin of evil to things related to magic (metallurgy, jewels, make-up). Notions related to the motifs of the stories are those of* sin and impurity *and* magic and the demonic*, the evil being identical with the impure and the demonic. This view is backgrounded and inspired by Mesopotamian magic as an exilic experience. The Book of Jubilees tries to harmonize this outlook with that of Genesis, to systematize the tradition, and enrich it with new figures like Mastema, Belial, and Satan.*

[102] For modern examples on the duality of methods in dealing with demonic, see G. Sengers, *Women and Demons, Cult Healing in Islamic Egypt* (International Studies in Sociology and Social Anthropology LXXXVI; Leiden: Brill, 2003).