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Beelzebul

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THE name Beelzebul, as is well known, occurs in the Synoptic Gospels, and is there applied to the chief of the demons. In the following pages its meaning will be discussed and its use. First, the question of the correct form of the word will be considered, and the contexts in which the name occurs examined. Then I propose to show that in New Testament times the word *zebul* was used specifically of heaven, and that, inasmuch as in each of the important non-Jewish religions of the period one god held a preëminent place, and he a sky-god, and a foreign god was considered by the Jews to be a demon, the name Beelzebul—i.e. Lord of Heaven—was properly applied to the chief of the demons.

The word Beelzebul, with variants, is found in Mt. 10 23 12 24. 27, Mk. 3 22, Lk. 11 15. 18. 19. Our first concern is to satisfy ourselves about the actual form of the word. The evidence¹ that I submit will show that the reading *βεελζεβούλ* is supported by the most important witnesses, and that the deviations from that reading are entirely explicable.

The Greek Mss. almost without exception read *βεελζεβούλ*.²

¹ Tischendorf, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 1869; Wordsworth and White, *Novum Testamentum Latine*, 1889 ff.; Pusey and Gwilliam, *Tetraevangelium . . . simplex syrorum versionem*, 1901; Lewis, *Old Syriac Gospels*, 1910; Ciasca, *De Tatiani Diatessaron Arabice Versione*, 1883; Ranke, *Codex Fuldensis*, 1868; Burkitt, *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe*, 1904; Robinson, "Ephraim's Citations from the Diatessaron," in J. H. Hill's *Earliest Life of Christ*, 1894.

² A few read *βελζεβούλ*; B * (except Mk. 3 22) *βεελζεβούλ*. These variants are not important for our purpose; with the latter might be compared *betzebul* in *g*¹ and *בַּעַלְזֵבּוּל* (Cooke, *North Semitic Inscriptions*, no. 54, l. 1 f.), *בַּעַלְזֵבּוּל* (*Corpus Inscrip. Sem.*, i. 1. 139, 1), *בַּעַלְזֵבּוּל* (*CIS*, i. 2. 869, 3), *בַּעַלְזֵבּוּל* (*CIS*, ii. 1. 163 C), *בַּעַלְזֵבּוּל* (*CIS*, ii. 1. 170).

This is supported by most of the Old Latin Mss. (*a, f, ff¹, q; k, d, h* read *belzebul*; *b, velz.*), by some of the Syriac versions, and by the Armenian, Ethiopic, Gothic, Coptic (*belz.*), and others. The Vulgate reads *beelzebub*. This reading has influenced later scribes, with the result that it has been introduced into a few of the Mss. of the Old Latin; but it causes no difficulty, for Jerome has explained that the word means "habens muscas, aut devorans muscas, aut vir muscarum," and that on that account it is to be read *beelzebub*, and not *beelzebul*.³ The Peshitta with the Sinaitic and the Cureton Syriac support the reading *beelzebub*; while *syr^p* (Tischendorf), the Commentary of Ephraim on the Diatessaron, and the Diatessaron in Arabic⁴ support *beelzebul*.⁵ This evidence suggests that the Diatessaron read *beelzebul*.⁶ It is demonstrable that the Syriac version has been influenced in other places by the Old Testament Peshitta⁷; in the light of what we know concerning the reading of the Vulgate that is most probably the case here. Some fragments of homilies in Syriac⁸ and a few Latin Mss. read *beelzebud*. An entirely adequate explanation of this is that it is due to a corruption originating in a Greek uncial Ms. (Δ for Λ).

The passages of the New Testament that bear on the question of Beelzebul are Mt. 9 34, 10 24 L, 12 24-28, Mk. 3 22-26, Lk. 11 15-20. Jesus had been exorcising demons; opponents of his of the Pharisaic party offered an explanation of the phenomenon. They said that Jesus had Beelzebul, and that through him, the chief of the demons, he was working his wonders. Jesus, to show the weakness of the Pharisaic

³ *Liber de Nominibus Hebraicis — de Joanne, s.v. 'Beelzebub'*; cf. also his Commentary on Matt. 10 28.

⁴ Codex Fuldensis follows in general the order of the Diatessaron, but gives the text in accordance with the Vulgate.

⁵ Gwilliam records a reading on the margin of a Jacobite Ms. of the twelfth or thirteenth century, *B'el d'vuv*. This is probably nothing but a textual error; it might be due to the Syriac word *debâdâ* = fly, or possibly (?) to *דבבא* = enmity, as an interpretation (see below, p. 51 f.).

⁶ So Burkitt, *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe*, ii. p. 205.

⁷ Burkitt, *op. cit.*, ii. p. 204, 289, *et al.*

⁸ *Anecdota Ozontensia*, Semitic Series, vol. i. pt. ix. p. 78.

explanation, pointed out what befalls a kingdom, or a city, or a house, that is divided against itself. In like manner, he said, "if Satan hath risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand." "If I by Beelzebul," he retorted, "cast out demons, by whom do your people cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then the kingdom of God is come upon you." At another time he said to his disciples: "A disciple is not above his master, nor a servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple to be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the *master of the house* Beelzebul, how much more them of his household!"

In seeking a satisfactory explanation of the name Beelzebul, it is most natural to consider that it is a real name that has been applied to and is descriptive of the chief of the demons. Our first care is the word *zebul*, and we shall find that in addition to its ordinary meaning 'dwelling,' it was used, in the period with which we are concerned, specifically of the *dwelling of God*, both of the temple in Jerusalem and of heaven.

In Rosh ha-Shanah 17 *a* we read: שפשו דידם זבול שנאמר זבול לו ואין זבול אלא בית המקדש שנאמר בנה בניתי: . . . "because they stretched their hands out against the *zebul*, for it is written זבול לו (Ps. 49 15; cf. Rashi and Ibn Ezra); and there is no *zebul* except the Temple, for it is written: I have built thee a *bêth zebul*" (1 Ki. 8 13). This proves conclusively that זבול was used by itself of the temple in Jerusalem. Similar passages found in Jer. Berachoth, ix. 1 (Zitomir ed., fol. 56 *b*), Ruth R. קמן ונרוך (Warsaw ed., 1725, p. 30 *b*), and Tosefta Sanhedrin 13 *z* (ed. Zuckerman 434 *z*).

In the Aboth de Rabbi Nathan, c. 37, in a passage which is attributed to Rabbi Meir, a pupil of Akiba, a list of the seven heavens is given: זבול, שחקים, רקיע, ירקון, מרקון, מעון, and ערבות. In Hagigah 12 *b* the list of the seven is given with a description of each. Zebul is that one in which are situated Jerusalem and the temple and the altar; beside the altar the great prince Michael stands and offers sacrifice.

The other six heavens are similarly described, and the descriptions are accounted for by texts. וילון (Latin, *velum*) is said to be the קַן of Is. 40 22; רקיע is derived from Gn. 1 17; שחקים comes from Ps. 78 23, where it is parallel to שמים; מעון is from Dt. 26 15; מכון from 1 Ki. 8 39; ערבות is deduced from the parallelism of Ps. 68 5 and Dt. 33 26.⁹

The two passages quoted in connection with *zebul* are 1 Ki. 8 13 and Is. 63 15:

יהוה אמר לשכון בערפל בנה בניתי בית וכל לך
מכון לשבתך עולמים

and

הבט משמים וראה ¹⁰ מוכל קדשך ותפארתך

These show that by *zebul* was understood both the temple and heaven. They also show whence this particular usage was ultimately derived. There are two other passages that have been influential in this direction — Hab. 3 11 and Ps. 49 15:

שמש ירח עמד ובלה

and

תצורם לבלות שאל מוכל לו

Ibn Ezra's comment on the first of these passages is: כל אחד: כח אחד; מהם עמד וכולו "stands," i.e. ceases to shine¹¹ in the *zebul*.¹² שמש is prob-

⁹ There is also in the same place mention of a discussion whether there were two or seven heavens; Rabbi Jehudah concluded from Dt. 10 14 that there were only two, while ריל (who Bacher, *Agada der Tannaiten*, vol. ii (1890), p. 65, n. 3, thinks was Simon b. Lakish, or perhaps Rabbi Levi) held that there were seven. Those who held to the seven differed among themselves as to their contents. The Slavonic Secrets of Enoch, c. 3 ff., and the Testament of Levi, c. 3, both give descriptive lists differing from each other and from the Talmudic list.

¹⁰ This can only be translated: "from thy holy and glorious 'zebul,' " whatever 'zebul' is. The ordinary translation, "from the dwelling of thy holiness and glory," must mean from the dwelling place of thy holiness, etc., i.e. thy holy dwelling.

¹¹ Cf. Jonah 1 15, Josh. 10 12.

¹² Alongside of ובלה I should like to place מענה in the following passage from Deut. 33 26: אין כאר ישרון רכב שמים במורך ובנאותו שחקים מענה: There is none like the God of Jeshurun, Who rideth through the heavens to thy help, And in his majesty through the skies. In heaven is the God of old, But underneath are the everlasting arms.

ably to be taken with the preceding verb. The other passage has presented difficulty to commentators. Our chief interest is to know how the later Jews understood it, and this is clear. The Targum, followed by Rashi, has taken לִּמְזַבְּלָא to mean 'because they stretched out their hands against the temple to destroy it.' This interpretation is also found in the Talmud and the Tosefta,¹³ and I think in all probability it is correct, the last few words being an annotation. We may note in passing that Rabbi Jonah, quoted by Ibn Ezra, understood *zebul* in this passage as heaven, for he says, "the judgment of heaven is on every one."

I took it for granted above that the ordinary meaning of *zebul* was dwelling, and of this there is little doubt. That is the meaning given by Abu'l-Walid and Kimḥi in their dictionaries. Rashi has understood it so on Gn. 30 20, 2 Ch. 6 2, Hab. 3 11, Ps. 49 15; Ibn Ezra on Gn. 30 20, Is. 63 15, Ps. 49 15; likewise the Targum on Gn. 30 20, Is. 63 15, Hab. 3 11, Ps. 49 15. This meaning is quite suitable in 1 Ki. 8 13 and Gn. 30 20. In the one case it is a more or less poetic expression, for which Rashi (on 2 Ch. 6 2) gives the prosaic מְדוּרָה. One might compare Ps. 26 8,

יהוה אהבתי מעון ביתך
ומקום משכן כבודך

with 1 Ki. 8 13,

בנה בניתי בית זבל לך
מכון לשבתך עולמים

In the other case it is probable that an etymology has been forced for the occasion from a denominative verb. There is no reason to suppose that the Greek translators were better acquainted with peculiar Hebrew words than the later Jewish commentators. The Greek of Gn. 30 20 (*αἰπετεῖ*) may well be nothing more than a good guess or a free translation.¹⁴

¹³ Rosh ha-Shanah, 17 a. T. Sanhedrin, 13 s (ed. Zuckermann, 484. 26 f.).

¹⁴ The theory of Guyard (*Journal Asiatique*, vii. 12, p. 220 ff.), which was accepted by Fried. Delitzsch (*Heb. Lang.*, p. 38) and Franz Delitzsch (*Comm. on Genesis*, on 30 20) that the root idea of the word is "height" does not carry conviction, nor has it won assent. Cf. Nöldeke, *ZDMG*, xv.

This makes it clear that *zebul* was understood specifically of the dwelling of God, whether that was thought of as the temple on earth or the heavens; in later ages when the temple had long disappeared it was still used of heaven. The poets of the eleventh and twelfth centuries of the Christian era frequently use the word in this way. The Spanish poet, Shelomo ibn Gabirol (d. c. 1058), wrote as follows (44. 1 f.)¹⁵ :

שָׁחַק וְכִלְהֶמוֹן וְבוֹל לְאֵל מְסֻלוֹתָם יִרְמוֹן
תִּבְלַל יִשְׁבִּי בָּהּ לְמוֹל יוֹצְרִים פְּנֵיהֶם הֵם יִשְׁיִמוֹן

Bahya ibn Pekūdā (first half of 11th cent.) has used the word in the same way (54. 5):

הֶמוֹן מִים וְשָׁמַיִם וְאֶרֶץ יִקְרַע יִרְחַ וְאוֹר עֲמֵד וְכִלְה

Ibn Ezra (d. 1167) bears the same testimony (135. 27):

בְּרֵאשִׁית וְכֵן קָרָא וְאֶרֶץ עֲמֻדָה מְהֵרָה

and again (132. 20 f.):

וּמְמָרוֹמוֹ יִתֵּן קוֹלוֹ שְׁרָף בְּכֶסֶם וְכֵלֵן

One more example may be cited, this from Yosef ibn Zebara (beginning of 13th cent.) (148. 26):

פְּתִיכֵי אֵשׁ טָסִים בְּשֵׁשׁ כְּנָפַיִם בְּרוּם וְכֵלֵן

There is little reason for thinking that the emphasis was placed much differently in the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era, or that at that time the temple was immediately associated with the idea of 'dwelling of God.' Of course a prophet might say :

Yahwe is in his holy temple,

Let all the earth keep silence before him (Hab. 2 20),

and the suppliant at the Jerusalem temple might cry :

He heard my voice in his temple,

And my cry came into his ears (Ps. 18 7).

729 ; and Halévy, *Revue des Études Juives*, 1885 a, p. 290 ; 1887 a, p. 148. The Greek translation of Gn. 30 20 which is entirely explicable, and the Assyrian usage, which seems still to be uncertain, are not sufficient grounds for this conclusion.

¹⁵ These examples are taken from Brody u. Albrecht, *Neuhebräische Dichterschule*, 1905. The figures give the number of the poem and the line.

Isaiah, in vision, had seen the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty, and his train filled the temple — but it was the heavenly temple (Is. 6 1). Jeremiah warned his people against worshiping the temple, against crying: “the Temple of Yahwe, the Temple of Yahwe, the Temple of Yahwe are these” (7 4). And this deeper note is frequent; 586 succeeded 701:

Yahwe is in his holy temple,
Yahwe — his throne is in the heavens (Ps. 11 4).

“Doth God really dwell on earth? Behold the heavens and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less the house that I have built!” (1 Ki. 8 27 = 2 Ch. 6 18). “Who is able to build him a house, seeing the heavens and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him?” (2 Ch. 2 6). “Heaven is my throne, and the earth my footstool, what kind of house will ye build unto me? Or what kind of a resting place?” (Is. 66 1).

The New Testament presents the same picture. Men went in and out of the temple; there the teachers taught, the people worshiped. But “the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands, as saith the prophet. The heaven is my throne, and the earth the footstool of my feet” (Acts 7 48 f.). “The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands” (Acts 17 24). “And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof” (Rev. 21 22). Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς. This explains why when the temple disappeared nothing happened.

I have presented facts to show that *zebul* means ‘dwelling,’ and *par excellence* the dwelling of God — heaven; but that does not complete the discussion of the word. There are a considerable number of traces of its use as the name of a god. These are found in very different places and at very different times.

An officer of Abimelech bore the name זְבֻל (Ju. 9 28. 30. 36. 38. 41). “When a personal or geographical name is a single

א of כעלאזכל it cannot be said to resemble very closely the other two א's in the same inscription; it resembles the מ of אשת just as closely, and that reading would be explicable.²² A proper name, Zabullus, finally, is found on an altar dedicated to the Dii Manes in the walls of an old mosque at Tremezen.²³ After this accumulation of evidence there can be little doubt that Zebul was also a name applied to a god.

For all that has been said regarding the usage of זבול, there is a complete parallel in מצון. This word is used of a lair of jackals (Jer. 9 10, 10 22, 49 33, 51 37), or a den of lions (Nah. 2 12), with the general idea of habitation. It is used of the dwelling place of Yahwe, both of the temple on earth (Ps. 26 8, 2 Ch. 36 15) and in a general way of heaven (Dt. 26 14, Zech. 2 17, Ps. 68 6, 2 Ch. 30 27). In a similar way Yahwe is said to be the *māḥn* of his people (Ps. 90 1; cf. 71 3, 91 9):

אדוני מצון אתה היית לנו בדר דדר

Like *zebul* it is the name in Rabbinical literature of one of the heavens — the fifth²⁴; and in medieval poetry is a designation of heaven itself.²⁵ What idea was associated with the use of *māḥn* as the dwelling of God is a question raised by Dt. 33 27: מצנה אלהי קדם ומתחת ורעת עולם, and is answered as follows: ²⁶ כתיב מצנה וגי אין אנו יודעין אם הקביה מצונו של עולם : ²⁷ ואם עולמו מצונו מן מה דכתיב ה' מצון וגי הוי הקביה מצונו : ²⁸ Like *zebul* again it was a place name: ²⁹ בית בעל מצון, ³⁰ or ³¹ בית בעל מצון by itself,

²² There is a name on one of the ostraka recently found by the Harvard Expedition at Samaria that is written בעלשטר.

²³ *Corpus Inscrip. Lat.*, viii. 9947, on which see Shaw, *Travels*, ed. 3, 1808, p. 68. In viii. 5987, a part of the same name is found.

²⁴ Aboth de Rabbi Nathan, c. 37; Hagigah, 12 b.

²⁵ Brody u. Albrecht, *op. cit.*, no. 16, l. 21; no. 34, l. 3. Cf. מבק, no. 34, l. 7. It seems to be so used in Dt. 33 27; see n. 12.

²⁶ Bereshith R., 68, 67 c (Levy).

²⁷ Ps. 90 1, אדני מצון אתה היית לנו בדר דדר.

²⁸ Shabbath, 139 a.

²⁹ Jer. 48 23; Jer. Erub. v. (Zitomir ed. 26 b).

³⁰ Nu. 82 23, Ez. 26 9, 1 Ch. 5 9.

³¹ Jos. 13 17, Tosefta, ed. Zuckermann, 71. 23.

From this it may be inferred that it was also the proper name of a god, though in what sense it was used we cannot tell any more than we could in the case of Zebul.

Zebul is heaven; Beelzebul is lord of heaven. With these facts decided we may proceed at once to the solution of the problem. It was the Pharisees who used the name; Beelzebul was chief of the demons; the gods of the nations were considered by the Jews to be demons; in each of the prominent religions of the period one god held a preëminent place, and he was a sky-god—these are the considerations on which the solution will be based.

The Pharisees, Matthew tells us, were the people who said that Jesus was casting out demons by Beelzebul, the chief of the demons; according to Mark it was the scribes who came down from Jerusalem—who in this case were in all probability of the Pharisaic party. These people were the makers as well as the observers of tradition. They were students and teachers of the Bible who represented the observant and progressive side of Judaism—the advocates of the new religion. They are the people from whom we may look for some information on the subject of demonology.³²

Beelzebul is chief of the demons; that is plain from the gospel narrative—“this man doth not cast out demons but by Beelzebul, the prince of the demons.”³³ It is necessary to see what was meant by ‘chief of the demons,’ and whence a ‘chief of the demons’ might come. The later Jewish demonology was composite in structure; its materials were drawn from all accessible sources. Natural developments at home were combined with borrowings from abroad; and the organization of it all was certainly a gradual and not necessarily a logical process.³⁴

Satan was a product of Jewish history. At one time an officer of the celestial court, he later became the representative of all that was evil, appropriating the functions and the

³² See *Ency. Biblica*, “Scribes and Pharisees,” § 6 f.

³³ Mt. 12 24; cf. 9 24, also Mk. 3 22, Lk. 11 15.

³⁴ Cf. Toy, “Evil Spirits in the Bible,” *JBL*, 1890, p. 17 ff.

names of various other prominent evil and supernatural beings, the evolution of the idea associated with him keeping pace with the development of Jewish angelology and demonology.³⁵ In a somewhat similar fashion the impulse to evil that is in man from his youth (Gn. 8 21) was personified; the *Yeser ha-Ra'* joined the number of the demons, and before long it was said³⁶ that Satan, *Yeser ha-Ra'*, and the Angel of Death³⁷ were one and the same. Belial is another of the important demons. In the early Hebrew literature this word is found chiefly in such expressions as בְּנֵי בַלְעֵל, "vile scoundrels,"³⁸ in later literature by a natural development it has become a proper name which is applied to the chief of the demons.³⁹

The general state of affairs may be illustrated very well from the New Testament. In it there is frequent mention of demons or unclean spirits. Among these powers there is one that is regarded as chief—*ἄρχων τῶν δαιμονίων*. He is ordinarily known as *Σατανᾶς* or *ὁ Σατανᾶς*, *Διάβολος* or *ὁ Διάβολος*; but many other designations are also employed: *ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου*, *ὁ ἄρχων τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ ἄερος*, *ὁ ἄνομος*, *ὁ πειράζων*, *ὁ ἐχθρός*, *ὁ πονηρός*, *βελιάρ*, *ὁ ὄφεις*, *ὁ ὄφεις ὁ ἀρχαῖος*, *ὁ δράκων*. The number caused no difficulty whether they were regarded as epithets or real names; on occasion several of them were used side by side: *ἐβλήθη ὁ δράκων ὁ μέγας*, *ὁ ὄφεις ὁ ἀρχαῖος*, *ὁ καλούμενος Διάβολος καὶ ὁ Σατανᾶς*, *ὁ πλανῶν τὴν οἰκουμένην ἅλην* (Rev. 12 9).

The demons that we have discussed so far, demons that came to be known as 'chief' demons, were the result of native development, though there is little room for doubt that this development was fostered by foreign influence, especially by that of Babylonia and Persia. In addition to this external influence on the development of native Jewish

³⁵ Cf. Blau, *Jewish Ency.*, s.v. "Satan," p. 69 a.

³⁶ By Simon b. Lakish, *Baba Batra*, 16 a.

³⁷ Cf. 1 Chr. 21 15, 2 Ki. 19 35, 2 Sam. 24 15.

³⁸ Moore, *Judges*, p. 417; cf. also p. 419.

³⁹ Ascension of Isaiah, 2 4 2; and many passages in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs.

demonology there is to be observed a certain direct dependence on foreign religions—on the one hand, a direct borrowing from the foreign religion; on the other, explanations necessitated by the very existence of these religions.

Direct borrowing from a foreign religion, naturally rare, may be illustrated by Asmodeus,⁴⁰ the great demon of whom we learn chiefly in the book of Tobit. Whatever be the correct explanation of this name, there seems no longer room for doubt that in origin he was the great representative of evil in the Parsee religion, and that he was borrowed and “modified by the sovereign will of the popular imagination,” and made into a chief of the demons⁴¹ for the Jews.

The other phase of direct dependence is more apparent. Hebrew religion had not advanced very far before it was necessary to explain the fact of foreign religion and foreign worship. Different explanations of the fact could be given, and were given. Yahwe might be considered the God of the Hebrews, and a foreign god the god of the foreign people concerned—the opinion of monolatrous theology. Or it might be said that a god of a foreign people was no god at all. On the other hand, it was possible to associate the two gods as the same god under different names. Origen in combating this view illustrates it. He says it is wrong for Christians to call God Zeus, that they are to be defended when they struggle even to the death to avoid calling God by this name or by a name from any other language.⁴² He discusses the question further: *νομίζουσι μηδὲν διαφέρειν, εἰ λέγοι τις· σέβω τὸν πρῶτον θεὸν ἢ τὸν Δία ἢ Ζῆνα, καὶ εἰ φάσκοι τις· τιμῶ καὶ ἀποδέχομαι τὸν ἥλιον ἢ τὸν Ἀπόλλωνα καὶ τὴν σελήνην ἢ τὴν Ἄρτεμιν καὶ τὸ ἐν τῇ γῆ πνεῦμα ἢ τὴν Δήμητραν καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα φασὶν οἱ Ἑλλήνων σοφοί.*⁴³ I suppose this was the course the Hellenists at the time of the Maccabæan struggle and later had to pursue unless they were prepared to give up their own religion altogether.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ See Cheyne, *Ency. Biblica*, s.v.

⁴¹ Called so in Git. 68 a; Pesach. 110 a; Targ. to Eccl. 1 1a.

⁴² *C. Cels.*, i. 25.

⁴³ *Exh. ad Martyr.*, § 46; cf. Justin Martyr, *Apol.*, i. 54.

⁴⁴ Cf. Cheyne, *Religious Life*, p. 196.

The explanation that was most generally accepted at that period, however, was different. πάντες οἱ θεοὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν δαιμονία (Ps. 95 (96) 5; cf. 1 Ch. 16 28); ἐμίγησαν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν καὶ ἔμαθον τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν . . . ἔθυσαν τοὺς υἱοὺς αὐτῶν καὶ τὰς θυγατέρας αὐτῶν τοῖς δαιμονίοις (Ps. 105 (106) 37); οἱ λοιποὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων . . . οὐδὲ μετενόησαν ἐκ τῶν ἔργων . . . ἵνα μὴ προσκυνήσουσιν τὰ δαιμόνια (Rev. 9 20). This same idea apparently finds expression in 1 Corinthians: *ὅτι ἃ θύουσιν, δαιμονίοις καὶ οὐ θεῷ θύουσιν.*⁴⁵ It was further explained that it was really God's doing that foreign nations should do so, for to all the people under the whole heaven he had at the beginning allotted the sun, moon, and stars, and all the host of heaven.⁴⁶ A slightly different theory held that when the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the children of men, he set the bounds of the people: *κατὰ ἀριθμὸν ἀγγελῶν θεοῦ* (Dt. 32 8). So *ἐκάστῳ ἔθνει κατέστησεν ἡγούμενον* (Ecclus. 17 17). There is special mention of princes of Persia (Dan. 10 13. 20) and Greece (Dan. 10 20), and likewise of Israel; that of Israel is called Michael (Dan. 10 13. 21 12 1).

The steadfast Jew of the Maccabæan period would have been more than human if, altogether apart from theological opinion, he had considered the god of the heathen oppressor aught else but a demon, and a very powerful and vicious one at that, when he saw the blasphemies (2 Macc. 6 4) that were committed in Judah and Jerusalem, the destruction of the people, the desolation of the holy city, the sanctuary in the hands of strangers (1 Macc. 2 1-14), the high priest sending sacrifices for Herakles at Tyre (2 Macc. 4 19), the foreigner commanding that the holy temple be called by the name of Zeus Olympius (2 Macc. 6 2), the stranger coming as a man of peace and then cutting down the unsuspecting multitudes on the Sabbath day, and when he saw his own brethren forsaking the law of his fathers and of his God (1 Macc. 1 52).

This particular state of affairs of course was transient, but on that account not necessarily quickly forgotten. It was

⁴⁵ 1 Cor. 10 20; cf. Baruch, 4 7 (Swete), Dt. 32 17 5.

⁴⁶ Dt. 4 19; cf. 29 25. A different explanation in Enoch 19 1.

one phase of a condition that was not transient, but one that was to endure. The cosmopolitan ideas of Alexander the Great, carried on by warrior and trader, pervaded the whole civilized world during the Hellenistic age. The greatness of the man is seen in the ambition that set itself to carry not only Greek arms to every land, but also Greek manners and customs, Greek language, Greek culture, enlisting all the virtues and energies of Asian life, and organizing them in a system and with a spirit that was Greek. His greatness is seen in the permanence of this conquest of Greek civilization in the face of the dissolution of Greek rule. With so much new in this life that was attractive, — opportunities for military service, for political and financial usefulness; more fertile lands abroad, commerce, cities, — with so much that was repellent, and the inability of any man to flee it or avoid it, it would be incredible if its influence on Jewish religion could not be seen, if the influence that lay behind this movement did not make itself felt — the influence of its religion, its gods, its chief god. The gods of the nations are demons.

In each of the prominent religions of the period one god held a preëminent place, and he was a sky-god. We have already mentioned in connection with the discussion of the relation of 'temple' and 'heaven' to 'dwelling of God' that this was the case in the Jewish religion. It is worth pointing out here to how great an extent it is true that the God of the Jews was God of heaven. In the first book of Maccabees there are almost a dozen examples of the use of heaven by metonymy for God;⁴⁷ in the second book there are almost as many.⁴⁸ The God of the Jews is called God or Lord or King of Heaven in many places.⁴⁹ This is found put in the mouths of Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus, and in the edicts of Darius and Artaxerxes; it is used by the Jews in

⁴⁷ 1 Macc. 3 13, 50 4 10, 24, 40, 55 5 31 9 46 12 15 16 a.

⁴⁸ 2 Macc. 7 11 8 20 9 4, 20 11 10 14 34 15 34.

⁴⁹ Ezra 1 2 5 11, 12 6 9, 10 7 12, 21, 22, 23, Neh. 1 4, 5 2 4, 20, Dan. 2 18, 19, 37, 44 4 37 5 23, Jonah 1 9, Ps. 136 26, Tobit 13 11, 2 Macc. 15 22. Cf. for the identical usage in the Assuan papyri, Sachau, *Drei aram. Papyrusurkunden*, no. I, 2, 27; II, 26; III, 3.

addressing men of other religions, and in speaking among themselves. Such expressions as אֱבֵינֵינוּ שְׂבַשְׁמִים are very common in Rabbinical literature,⁶⁰ and simply represent the popular usage of the time.⁶¹ Jesus adopted this usage as suitable to his purpose: Πατήρ ὁ ἐν (τοῖς) οὐρανοῖς is found thirteen times in Matthew, Πατήρ ὁ οὐράνιος seven times.⁶²

Similar to this is the cultus of Baalshamem — “the god who dwells in the heavens, to whom the heavens belong.”⁶³ A great deal of the material on this subject has been gathered together by Lidzbarski;⁶⁴ from this it is clear that for the later time traces of this cultus are to be found in the whole north Semitic world from Sardinia and Carthage to Palmyra. In many cases he had risen far above the local Baals, e.g. at Palmyra; in some it may be that he had supplanted them. Lidzbarski's results need now to be revised in two respects: the occurrence of the name in an inscription of Esarhaddon,⁶⁵ and in one of Zakir, king of Hamath and La'ash,⁶⁶ necessitates a much earlier date for the beginning of the cult than Lidzbarski had supposed;⁶⁷ and the occurrence of the name in the Zakir inscription alongside of the names of other gods removes the objections he raised against supposing that the Dhū Samāwī of South Arabia was equivalent to Baalshamem.

The same general conditions prevailed in the important non-Semitic religions of the period. It is not necessary to demonstrate this;⁶⁸ our problem is to show how the Jews

⁶⁰ In the Mishna: Sota 49 a, b, Aboth 23 a, Rosh ha-Shanah 29 a, Yoma 85 b.

⁶¹ Dalman, *Words of Jesus*, p. 188.

⁶² Hawkins, *Horæ Syn.*¹, p. 26.

⁶³ Moore, *Ency. Biblica*, “Baal,” § 4.

⁶⁴ *Ephemeris*, i. p. 243 ff.

⁶⁵ Schrader, *Keilinschriften*², p. 357.

⁶⁶ Pognon, *Inscriptions sémitiques*, 1908, pp. 156–178.

⁶⁷ Cf. Lidzbarski, *op. cit.*, iii. p. 1 ff.; Montgomery, *JBL*, 1909, p. 67.

⁶⁸ Farrall, *Cults of the Greek States*, says: In the Greek theory concerning the physical world and the powers that ruled it, we find beneath the bewildering mass of cults and legends a certain vague tendency that makes for monotheism, a certain fusion of persons in one; namely, Zeus. This tendency is genuine and expressed in the popular cult, and is to be distinguished from the later philosophical movement. Thus Zeus could be identi-

regarded the situation, and that is clear. The religions with which they were brought face to face in no uncertain way in the New Testament period were those of Greece and Rome with their gods, Zeus and Jupiter.

The one passage in the Old Testament which throws light on the Jewish attitude to these religions is the famous שקן שמים of Daniel.⁶⁰ There seems no longer any reason for doubting that this is a contemptuous allusion to בעל שמים,⁶⁰ from which we may infer that בעל שמים was the name applied by the Jews to the god worshiped by Antiochus. We need not stop to inquire whether that be Jupiter or Zeus; whichever it was, he was thought to be the one who had brought about the desolation of the sanctuary. The passage that bears the strongest testimony in favor of the theory that שקן שמים is a perversion of בעל שמים, 2 Macc. 6 2, gives further proof of the fact that בעל שמים was the name the Jews applied to the god of the Greeks and Romans. In the Syriac version of this verse Zeus in the name Ζεύς Ὀλυμπίος and Ζεύς Ξενίος is rendered בעל שמים; in the Vulgate, Jupiter.

There is outside testimony to show that this association was general. Jerome in discussing Dan. 11 31 says that there was a statue erected to Jupiter Olympius; Syncellus⁶¹ says in the same connection that the temple was defiled by setting up in it Διὸς Ὀλυμπίου βδέλυγμα. Josephus,⁶² further, quotes Dios as saying that Hiram joined to the city of Tyre

fied with Poseidon as Zeus ἐνάλιος and in Caria as Ζηνο-Ποσειδῶν; he would be identified also with Hades, not only in the poetry of Homer and Euripides, but by the worshipers at Corinth or Lebadela. The fortunate mariner could offer up his thanksgiving either to Poseidon or Zeus ἀποβατήριος or Ζωτήρ. The man who wanted a wind could pray to the various wind gods or to Zeus οὐριος or εὐάνεμος (i. p. 47). His worship has a political significance higher than any other (i. p. 61), a political significance such as belonged to no other Hellenic divinity (i. p. 63). No other Greek deity possessed so long a list of cult-names derived from names of people and towns (i. p. 63).

⁶⁰ Dan. 9 π 11 π 12 π; cf. 8 13.

⁶⁰ Cf. Nestle, ZATW, 1884, p. 248.

⁶¹ *Corpus Script. Hist. Byzan.*, vol. xi. 1. p. 548. See Grätz, *Gesch.*, ii. 2. p. 314 f.

⁶² *Ant.*, viii. 5, 3; c. *Ap.*, i. 17.

the temple of Olympian Zeus, which had stood by itself, and Menander as speaking of Hiram's dedication of the golden pillar that was in the temple of Zeus at Tyre. This temple is distinguished from those of Hercules and Astarte; that, together with the name applied to it, makes it very probable that it was the temple of Baalshamem. Philo of Byblus, according to Eusebius,⁶⁸ makes this association directly: *τούτου γὰρ θεὸν [Ἡλίου] ἐνόμιζον μόνον οὐρανοῦ κύριον, βεελασμήν καλοῦντες, ὃ ἐστὶ παρὰ Φοίνιξι, κύριος οὐρανοῦ, Ζεὺς δὲ παρ' Ἑλλήσι.* It is not of importance here that he confuses the sun with both Baalshamem and Zeus.

The people who were troubling the steadfast Jews in the New Testament period and for some generations preceding were from Greece and Rome. The god who had been the cause of all this trouble, the one whom these people worshiped, was known to the Jews as בעל שמים. He was a demon, that was plain; but as such it would never do to call him בעל שמים, for that, as we have seen, was the name of the god of the Jews. The mutilation of that name in Daniel shows how distasteful it was, to some of the Jews at least, to apply it to any but the true God. There were other words for heaven that were free from this association, that would suit the situation just as well—יילון, רקיע, שחקים, ובול, מעון, מכון, ערבות were all used of heaven at this period. One, *zebul*, was chosen; why this particular one we do not know. Some of the above list, of course, are unsuited, but others not so unsuited. We have seen that *zebul* had often been used as the name of a god. It may be that this usage had persisted (there is some evidence that it had), that it had been interpreted in accordance with the developing meaning of *zebul*, and so had grown to fit the situation to which it was now applied.

To conjecture further on this subject would be to guess. But whatever may have been the reason of the choice of *zebul*, it is beyond dispute that the god of the hated foreign religion was a sky-god, that the word that would first sug-

⁶⁸ *Prep. Evang.*, 1. 10 beg.

gest itself as the proper designation for him as chief of the demons was unsuited on account of its associations, that Beelzebul was not so unsuited, but was satisfactory in every way, and was so applied. So Beelzebul, Lord of Heaven, came to be chief of the demons.

The one passage, which has a bearing on the subject of Beelzebul, which we have not yet discussed, only confirms this result. "A disciple is not above his master, nor a servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more shall they call them of his household!" Various suggestions have been made as to why Beelzebul is introduced here. The question that is to be answered is why the word *οικοδεσπότης* is used, and not some other word; and the answer is because of the ordinary meaning of *zebul*. It is a play on each other of the words *בעל הבית* and *בעל זבול* — אדם: *לבעל הבית קראו בעל זבול* וכול חד כמה לבני ביתו: (cf. Peshitta).

Very little need be said of the interpretations of Beelzebul that have been offered hitherto. Almost all who have regarded Beelzebul as a real name have started out with the assumption that *zebul* meant dwelling, and then conjectured or guessed at its application in a name 'lord of the dwelling': because the demon took up his abode in human bodies; or because he had his dwelling in Tartarus or the nether world; or because he was prince of the powers of the air; or a planet was referred to; to be more exact, the planet Saturn, or perhaps the sky. This is not, so far as we know, an esoteric name; but if it were and there were no way of finding out its application but by guessing, it would be as well not to guess.

Some have supposed that Beelzebul is a euphonic modification of Baalzebub of Second Kings. Examples of changes similar phonetically have been adduced in sufficient number. The difficulty (which most who hold to this theory have avoided) is to explain the development in thought from Baalzebub to Beelzebul. To say that the fly is an unclean

and troublesome animal does not help much; nor yet is one persuaded that the missing link is found in כַּעַל דַּבְּבָא—a phrase that is quite intelligible though apparently not understood by some who write on this subject. All the conjectures that have been made along this line have to be viewed in the light of what we *know* about how the Jews themselves in the New Testament period understood Baalzebub. There is positive evidence from Josephus, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, and a passage in the Babylonian Talmud. Josephus⁶⁴ says that Ahaziah sent to Ekron to inquire of *Mviā*, “for that was the god’s name.” In the Greek translation of 2 Ki. 12 we read Ahaziah’s command: ἐπιζητήσατε ἐν τῇ βάαλ μνίαν θεόν Ἀκκαρῶν. We may feel confident that *μνία* is a translation of זַבְּבֵי, and in the light of Josephus’ explanation, that it is here also regarded as a proper name. A Baraitha preserved in the Babylonian Talmud⁶⁵ goes somewhat beyond this. It connects Baalberith, who is said to have been worshiped at Shechem after the death of Gideon, with Zebub of Ekron; and explains that the latter was a fly, and that people made images of him, and would carry one about in their pockets and kiss it. Early Christian interpreters, likewise, know nothing of any interpretation but that which connects the name with a fly—Theodoret on 2 Ki. 1; Philaster, *Divers. Hæres. Liber*; Gregory Nazianzen, *Contra Julian.*, orat. iv; Procopius of Gaza on 2 Ki. 1.

So we are forced to the conclusion that facts have not been adduced to show nor a suggestion made that would reasonably explain how the chief of the demons was evolved out of a Canaanite god taken over by the Philistines, who had a certain reputation as a giver of oracles, but about whom we have no further information, nor reason for supposing that the Jews of New Testament times had.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ *Ant.* ix. 2. 1.

⁶⁵ *Shabbath* 88 b.

⁶⁶ If, as seems probable, Baalzebub is a perversion of Baalzebul, it must be due to the author of the story or a very early editor. The earliest version knows only Baalzebul, and, what is more important, the *Baal* is intact, which would not have been the case had the word been changed in a late period. But there is no reason that I know of to suppose that any one in

The theory, proposed by Lightfoot⁶⁷ and adopted widely, that Beelzebul is an odious epithet applied to the chief of the demons, rests on error. He cites a passage of the Palestinian Talmud :⁶⁸ אפילו אותם שפשטו ידיהם בזבול יש להם במחון, which he translates "Etiam illis, qui manus suos extenderunt, in stercororio (id est, in Idoleo vel Idololatria) est spes." To make his translation of זבול doubly sure he points to the occurrence of the word מזבלין in the same passage a few lines below. The passage he has translated owes its position to the fact that it is an interpretation of part of Ecclesiastes 9 4 : מי אשר יחבר אל כל החיים יש במחון, which differs from one given directly above it. It has no connection whatever with מזבלין. What פשטו ידיהם בזבול does mean was pointed out on page 36. For further proof he quotes the expression יום ניבול חיבול היה. This is not our word at all; it is written with *yod*, and is doubtless to be pronounced with the same vowels as שקיץ⁶⁹—so it has no place in this discussion.

the New Testament period had any idea that Baalzebul was a perversion of Baalzebul. This with reference to C. Harris in Murray's Bible Dictionary (ed. Piercy, 1908, s. v. "Baalzebul"), who though he knows what Zebul means, fails in this respect to connect the names Baalzebul and Beelzebul, and also to interpret correctly the Zebul of Beelzebul.

⁶⁷ *Horæ Hebr.*, 1st ed. 1674, Eng. trans. 1684; on Matt. 12 24, Lk. 11 14.

⁶⁸ In the Zitomir edition it is Berachoth 56 b.

⁶⁹ So far as I know both the abstract noun and the verb from the same root are always found in the intensive stem.