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satans, but they are not. In the next section, we will see a **satan** who is not called an Angel but (by implication) a Son of God.

1.2 A SON OF ELOHIM AS A SATAN: THE SPY AND TESTER OF THE BOOK OF JOB

The Book of Job is a mystery. It does not deal with the history of Israel, and its form is unusual. It begins with a prose Prologue of two chapters, explaining how Job came to be in his unfortunate situation, followed by a long versified debate between the afflicted Job and various interlocutors, beginning in chapter 3 and continuing to the end. But it is possible that the Prologue was added later, constituting therefore a prequel.

Most authorities consider the book, or at least the prose framework, to have been written after the return of the Israelites from the Babylonian Exile in 537 BC; others place it before the Exile (that is, before 597 or 587 BC), while still others place it during the Exile. A recent theory (again, out of Harvard²) theorizes that it is by someone who is responding to the view of D.H. We can say at least that the author of the Prologue seems to be familiar with the "satans" that we have tentatively assigned to D.H.

The book starts out, after briefly introducing us to Job and his family, like this:

One day Sons of God [*Bene ha-Elohim*] came to present themselves before Yahweh, and the satan [*ha-satan*] also came among them. Yahweh said to the satan, "Where have you come from?" The satan answered Yahweh, "From going to and fro on the Earth, and from walking up and down on it." Yahweh said to the satan, "Have you considered My servant Job?" (*Job 1.6-8*)

And so on. We all know what follows. Yahweh praises Job as a man who fears God and turns away from all that is bad. The satan advises Yahweh to test him by stretching out His hand against him. Yahweh

² I refer to Peckham, *History and Prophecy*, again.

gives the satan power over all his goods, and the next thing we know, fire from God destroys Job's servants and sheep, and other horrible disasters occur, but Job still blesses Yahweh.

Then, in chapter 2, there is an almost exact repetition of the text we have just quoted: "One day Sons of God came to present themselves before Yahweh, and the satan also came among them to present himself before Yahweh." Again Yahweh asks him where he has come from, and again the satan gives the same answer: patrolling the Earth. Once again Yahweh asks him, "Have you considered My servant Job?" Yahweh goes on to praise him as before, but this time He adds, "He still persists in his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him for no reason" (Job 2.3). The satan maintains that he needs more testing, and Yahweh agrees.

There is no follow-up of this Heavenly scene at the end of the book, and no hint of what the other Sons of God do when they present themselves before Yahweh. And we must remember that the actions of Yahweh and the satan have been hidden from Job and the other Humans of the story.

The first sentence of this episode can be paraphrased to say, "One of the Sons of God who served as a satan came before Yahweh," or, "One of the satans among the Sons of God reported to Yahweh." We can speculate that this characterization is simply an extension of the sort of language and ideas that we saw in previous books of the Bible. But it may be that the author of the prose prologue took inspiration from the poetic dialogues that he was prefacing.

First, let's look at the discourses of one of Job's so-called friends, Eliphaz the Temanite. He notes that God charges even His Angels with error (4.18) – something that we have seen Yahweh do with the satan, telling him that he was mistaken about Job. Later on, Eliphaz says, "God puts no trust even in his Sons of God, and the Heavens are not clean in his sight" (15.15). He also tells Job, "Call now; is there anyone who will answer you? To which of the Sons of God will you turn?" (5.1), as if he can surely find no hope of aid from Angels.

Job eventually responds: "Even now, in fact, my witness is in Heaven, and he that vouches for me is on high" (16.19). As we have seen, Yahweh Himself was keeping tabs on Job – and Job resents it and calls God, "you Watcher of Humanity" (7.20). But Job may be referring to a Guardian Angel or Angelic spokesman of some kind. (If Job does have a Guardian Angel, he has not been able to guard him from the satan-inflicted disasters.)

The Guardian-Angel idea seems to be confirmed by the fourth friend, Elihu the Buzzite (Job comes from the land of Uz and Elihu from the land of Buz: Uz and Buz were nephews of Abraham). Elihu says that, if a person should be in dire straits and close to dying and to going into the Abyss of Sheol, "if there should be for him an Angel, a mediator, one of a thousand," who would declare him upright and find a ransom for him, God may repay him for his righteousness and bring him back from the Abyss (33.22–30).

Finally, Yahweh Himself responds, and, in describing His creation of the World, He says that, at that time, "the Morning Stars sang together and all the Sons of God shouted for joy" (38.7). (We will hear about another *the* Morning Star later.)

So, there you have the Book of Job's indications of the various functions performed by Angels, ranging from attendants at the Court of Yahweh, singers and applauders, guardians, observers, testers, and even agents of entrapment; and there is also a hint or two that some of the Angels have sinned or have somehow offended God.

Where did the satan figure come from? We will entertain some speculations about his origin in the next section.

I.3 A CELESTIAL SATAN AS ACCUSER: THE TRIAL OF JOSHUA THE HIGH PRIEST IN THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH

The next appearance of a supernatural satan in the Hebrew Scriptures comes just after the Exile, back in Jerusalem, among the prophecies of Zechariah.

The book begins with a vision, dated very precisely to the middle of February of the year 519 BC. Zechariah sees the vision, and

converses with an Angel who explains it to him, but it is still rather confusing, like a dream. It is night-time, and Zechariah sees a man who is both standing among the myrtle trees of the glen and sitting astride a red horse, and behind him are other horses, red, sorrel, and white. "What are these?" asks Zechariah, and the Angel says, "I will explain."

But then the man standing in the myrtles speaks, and says: "They are those whom Yahweh has sent to patrol the World." Presumably he is speaking of the riders of the horses, or of charioteers who are pulled by the horses.³ He is saying, in effect, that they have the same function that was being filled by the satan of the Book of Job before making his reports to the Court of Heaven.

The "cavalry" then reports to the man standing among the myrtles, who turns out to be the Angel of Yahweh. They say, "We have patrolled the Earth, and, as you may see, the whole Earth is at peace and rest." Then the Angel of Yahweh actually addresses Yahweh Himself, as Ruler of the Hosts – the Sabaoth – of Heaven: "Yahweh Sabaoth, how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which you have been angry these seventy years?" Yahweh then replies with consoling words to the Angel who was speaking with Zechariah, and this Angel passes on to Zechariah the words of Yahweh Sabaoth: "I feel jealous love for Jerusalem and Zion, but bitter anger against the proud Nations." He ends by saying that He will once more make Jerusalem His own (Zech. 1.7–17).

In another vision, Zechariah sees a man set on measuring the boundaries of Jerusalem, and the Angel who is speaking with the prophet comes forward, and another Angel comes out to meet him, with instructions to the man not to measure Jerusalem; there is no need, for Yahweh will be a wall of fire around it (Zech. 2.1–5).

³ In a later vision, in chapter 6, he sees four chariots, pulled by red, black, white, and piebald horses, respectively, and once again, no riders are mentioned; they represent the four winds of Heaven, or have jurisdiction over the four winds of North, East, West, and South. The steeds are ordered to patrol the Earth.

In the next vision, "he" – presumably the prophet's Angelic interlocutor – shows him the High Priest Joshua in a court of justice, perhaps in the very Court of Heaven, or at the Gate of Heaven. Joshua stands before the Angel of Yahweh, and at the priest's right side is the satan, exercising the function of accuser. But before we hear any accusation from the satan, Zechariah says that "Yahweh" [the text should say, "the Angel of Yahweh"] intervenes, saying to the satan, "May Yahweh rebuke you, O satan! May Yahweh who has made Jerusalem His own rebuke you! Is not this man a brand snatched from the fire?" (Zech. 3.1–2).

What follows indicates not so much that the satan's charges of wrongdoing have been rejected, but rather that they have been admitted and absolved. Joshua had come to Court dressed in filthy clothes, which indicated that he was in a state of mourning over a national calamity and also that he was confessing guilt and repentance because of it. The Angel of Yahweh orders his clothes to be removed and replaced with robes of state. He proclaims, "You see, I have taken your iniquity and guilt away from you." He adds, "Thus says Yahweh Sabaoth: 'If you will walk in My ways and keep My requirements, then you shall rule My House and have charge of My Courts, and I will give you the right of access among those who are standing here'" (Zech. 3.3–7). In other words, Joshua will be able to communicate with the Court of Heaven. Whether this will involve any further dealings with the satan is not clear.

Back in 1939 Adolphe Lods⁴ analyzed both the Zechariah satan and the Job satan with an eye to seeing whether they resemble government ministers in any of the surrounding kingdoms or supernatural figures in the Mid-Eastern religions. He concluded negatively concerning the sort of attorney general or official prosecutor seemingly suggested by Zechariah. There is no accusing or prosecuting functionary evident in terrestrial or celestial contexts, either elsewhere in

⁴ Adolphe Lods, "Les origines de la figure de satan: ses fonctions a la cour céleste," *Mélanges syriens offerts a M. René Dussaud*, 2 vols. (Paris: Geuthner, 1939) 2:649–60.

the Hebrew Bible or in any surviving historical or literary religious and political contexts. Admittedly, in the Zoroastrian world-view, there is a "triage" that takes place after Human Beings die, in which they are classified as good or bad, but there is no trial or even pronouncement of sentence. The good simply make it over the bridge to Heaven, and the bad tumble down to Hell. Only later does a tribunal of three judges appear.

As for the satan of the Book of Job, however, Lods finds that he resembles a widespread figure in the Human governments of the time, namely the official inspector and informer employed by the central authorities. For instance, in Egypt, we hear of "the Two Eyes of the King in Upper Egypt" and "the Two Ears of the King in Lower Egypt." But it is particularly in the Persian kingdom that the "Eyes and Ears of the King" attracted notice. Xenophon speaks of these functionaries in his *Cyropedia* (8.6.16), and Lods surmises that Zechariah applies this concept not only in his earlier vision of the four horsemen, as I suggested above, but also and especially in another vision of Seven Lamps, which are the "Seven Eyes of Yahweh that range through the whole Earth" (Zech. 4.10). We can see a reflection of this in the New Testament as well, in the Lamb of the Apocalypse, who has seven horns and seven eyes, "which are the Seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth" (Rev. 5.6).

Xenophon reported on the Persian system of regional inspectors under Cyrus the Great, who captured Babylon in 539 BC and allowed the Jews to return to Israel in the following year. But the organization of the inspecting network became especially well developed under Cyrus's powerful successor, Darius I, who came to power in 522 and died in 486 BC. Zechariah's vision of the satan accusing the high priest should not be taken, therefore, as implying a permanent prosecutor but rather the activity of one of the field-inspectors who returns to court to make occasional accusations as his "research" warrants. This would reflect the situation in Jerusalem early in Darius's reign, and, if the author of the Prologue to Job was influenced by Darius's organization of government agents, it follows that he was writing after

Zechariah. Lods is inclined to date him accordingly, while admitting other possibilities (as noted above, the date of the whole of Job is still much debated).

We remember (see the Introduction) that the chief religion of the Persians was that of Zoroaster, but the government policy was one of religious toleration, and there was never any attempt to impose the Mazdean forms of worship upon conquered peoples, nor has any Biblical scholar or historian made bold to scent a whiff of the evil Angra Mainyu in either of the satans we have been discussing here, Job's persecutor or Joshua's accuser.

In the case of Job, we observe that the satan not only reports on earthly matters but also serves as the executor (*exécutor* or *éxecutor*) of the approved action. But it is Yahweh who makes the decisions. The satan advises extreme measures and Yahweh approves them, even though He is convinced that they constitute uncalled-for harassment of a law-abiding citizen.

Another "Eye of the Heavenly King" who both observes and executes, or at least commands execution, is to be seen in the Book of Daniel, in a section that may come from the Persian period (539–333 BC) or from the following period (Early Hellenistic, 333–168 BC). In the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, which he reports to Daniel: "There was a Watcher, a Holy One, coming down from Heaven," who ordered the great tree that he saw in his vision to be cut down. Then the "it" (the tree) becomes a "he" (Nebuchadnezzar himself) in the Watcher's proclamation: "Let his mind be changed from that of a Human, and let the mind of an animal be given to him." The Watcher concludes: "Such is the sentence proclaimed by the Watchers, the verdict announced by the Holy Ones, so that every living thing may learn that the Most High rules over Human sovereignty" (Dan. 4.13–17). We noted above that later Watchers will neglect their duties and be punished, but without being characterized as satans, as we shall see in the so-called Inter-Testamental Period (**chap. 2.1–2**).

To sum up, the satan of Job 1–2, the satan of Zechariah 3, the Angelic patrolers of Zechariah 1, and the Watchers of Daniel 4 all seem

to function as Eyes of the King: they are on the look-out for both good and bad behavior and they report everything back to Divine headquarters. If we may generalize from these data, along with the episode of the Angel of Yahweh of Numbers 22, and include the Troubling Spirit of 1 Sam. 16 and the Lying Spirit of 1 Kings 22, we should be able to come up with a summary for the Department of Angelic Resources, which would run something like this:

Job Description of Official Satans. Patrol the Earth, observe Human behavior, test ostensible virtue by various means. Be prepared, upon consultation with High Command, to instigate preventative or punitive measures against sinful actions. Function as accusers in tribunal, and announce verdicts against culprits.

I.4 REVISIONS AND TRANSLATIONS: SATAN AND SATANS, DEVIL AND DEVILS

"*satan* stood up against Israel and incited David to count the people" (1 Chron. 21.1). This is how the author of the Book of Chronicles renders the passage in 2 Samuel about "the Anger of Yahweh" making David take a census.

What does he mean?

To back up a bit, let me explain that the Book of Chronicles (later divided into two books) originally formed the conclusion to the Hebrew Scriptures, but in the Greek Septuagint it is placed much earlier, after the Books of Samuel and Kings, and given the title of *Paralipomena*, that is, "Left-overs [Concerning the Kings of Judah]." The work is actually in large part an abridgment of Samuel and Kings, and it may have been written not long after those books were first compiled, still in the sixth century, or, alternatively, as much as 300 or 350 years later, in the second century BC.

The Chronicler omits the two episodes in the Books of Samuel in which the word *satan* is associated with David, and he also eliminates the three uses of the term in connection with Solomon in the First Book of Kings (he presents Solomon as completely