

A COMPARISON OF JESUS' HEALING
WITH
HEALING IN TRADITIONAL AND CHRISTIAN SAMOA

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

The thesis compares the healing miracles of Jesus with the healing practices of traditional and Christian Samoa. Jesus' healings can be appreciated more within a healing environment like that of the gospels. The Samoan healing perspectives present an interesting and challenging framework in which one may recapture the significance the healing miracles served for the evangelists and also for those whom Jesus healed. Jesus' healing emphasized the holistic cure of the sick person rather than simply the physical remedy of the body. The comparison of Samoan and Jesus' healing motifs helps re-enforce the reality of holistic healing, which includes not only physical cure but other significant healing dimensions as well.

Chapter one deals with Samoa, highlighting the traditional and Christian world-views within which healing may be understood. Peoples' concept of health and sickness is associated with their view of the world. The social and religious realities influence people's concepts of causality and remedy of illness. Within the framework of these world-views, Samoan healing is understood.

Chapter two is a comparison of the world-view of first century Judaism with the Samoan, in relation to evil spirits and demons and the Samoan spirits and deities. Even though both spirit-worlds were influential in the causality of illness and possessions, the nature of the spirits is not always the same. The Jewish view of spirits is dualistic whereas the traditional Samoan spirit-world tends to be complementary. Despite these differences, there is a common ground by which one may understand both systems.

Chapter three compares exorcisms in the gospels with *aitu* [spirit] possessions in Samoa. Both reveal similarities not only in the nature of the phenomenon, but also in its significance. The difference in the nature of the spirits presents a significant contrast. Many of the Samoan spirits were seen as respected family and ancestral spirits and therefore *aitu* possession indicates different functions from those of the gospels. The impact of Christianity upon traditional culture however, relegates traditional spirits to the realm of evil spirits and demons.

Chapter four presents a comparison of the sin-sickness motif implicit in Jesus' healing, with sickness caused by the breaking of traditional and religious taboos in Samoa. The relationship of morality to sickness implied in some of Jesus' healing miracles was characteristic of the wider framework within which health was understood in the first century AD. Such perspective on illness is also true of the Samoan understanding of the causality and remedy of illness. Religious and social obligations to the supernatural world, to the family and community and also to God, are integral aspects of maintaining health and well-being in Samoa.

Chapter five compares the holistic nature of Jesus' healing with the concept of health, healing and wholeness in Samoa. Jesus approached healing holistically rather than simply the remedy of the physical symptoms. His healing miracles should not be equated with medical healing, but may be seen as an attempt to understand sickness within the whole context of the human person, who has social, religious and spiritual relationships, in the family, the community and to God. Samoan healing perspectives highlight social, religious and moral dimensions of healing. When the remedy is set within the patient's social, religious and moral framework, holistic healing and genuine well-being may be successfully achieved.

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and constitutes the results of my research in this subject.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
b	Babylonian Talmud
BAGD	Bauer, W., Arndt, W.F., Gingrich, F.W. & Danker, F.W. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature</i> , 2nd ed., Chicago:University of Chicago Press, 1979.
BTB	Biblical Theology Bulletin
BZ	Biblische Zeitschrift
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CH	The Churchman
EQ	Evangelical Quarterly
ER	The Epworth Review
ExpTim	Expository Times
HeyJ	Heythrop Journal
HThR	Harvard Theological Review
IDB	Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible
JAAR	Journal of the American Academy of Religion
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JJS	Journal of Jewish Studies
JME	Journal of Medical Ethics
JPS	Journal of Polynesian Studies
JRAI	Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute
JSJ	Journal for the Study of Judaism
JSNT	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
LMS	London Missionary Society
Miss	Missiology
NovT	Novum Testamentum
NZJH	New Zealand Journal of History
NTS	New Testament Studies
Oceania	Oceania
PGM	Greek Magical Papyri
PEQ	Palestinian Exploration Quarterly
SBL	The Society of Biblical Literature
SC	Second Century
SJT	Scottish Journal of Theology
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SSJ	South Sea Journals
SSL	South Sea Letters
Str-B	Strack-Billerbeck, <i>Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch I & II</i> , München:C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1956.
t	Tosephta
TDNT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> , ed. by G. Kittel & G. Friedrich, Grand Rapids, Michigan:Wm B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964-176.
ThSt	<i>Theological Studies</i>
TynBul	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
y	Jerusalem Talmud
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

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INTRODUCTION

The objective of the thesis is to identify similarities and differences between Jesus' healing ministry and the concept of sickness, healing and wholeness in traditional and Christian Samoa. The writer believes that an understanding of the important motifs in both the healing activities of Jesus and Samoan healing practices may help foster a positive appreciation not only of the healing miracles of Jesus but also of traditional healing practices in Samoa. I propose that the healing miracles of Jesus present an holistic approach to sickness and healing, a feature which was and still is prominent in the Samoan framework of sickness and remedy. This approach to sickness and healing is not an alternate or a substitute for the popular medical paradigm of healing, however, it may be seen as complementing scientific medical practices and organic remedies of the body. The holistic approach considers the sick person not only as a physical being, but a social, spiritual and religious entity

whose welfare is not limited to the physical condition of the body but incorporates other aspects of his/her humanity. The thesis hopes to show that Jesus' healing ministry goes beyond the cure of the body to include the social and spiritual welfare of the sick person. This framework of healing fits in well with the many aspects of sickness which continues in Christian Samoa today.

The first chapter specifically deals with Samoa. In order to understand the healing perspectives of the Samoans, it is necessary to understand the Samoan world-view and how people see themselves and their welfare within that framework. The concept of causality and remedy of illness may only be understood properly when set within the framework of the Samoan world-view. Chapter one has four

sections. The first briefly deals with the setting and historical background of the Samoan islands. The second section attempts to reconstruct the traditional world-view before the contact period with the West and with Christianity. The third traces the development of this traditional world-view within Christianity and the impact of Western culture. In the framework of the traditional and Christian world-views, sickness and healing in Samoa is presented. Therefore, the final section of the chapter looks at sickness and remedy not only in traditional but also in Christian Samoa today.

The next four chapters are presented in the form of a comparison between the healing ministry of Jesus and Samoan healing practices. I have selected four areas by which differences and similarities between the two can be best conveyed.

Chapter two compares and contrasts the world-view of Jesus and first century AD Judaism with that of Samoa in relation to the nature of evil spirits and demons which are held responsible for sickness and physical malady. The understanding of illness in the Synoptic Gospels which gives emphasis to spirits and demons lies deeply in the way people conceive of their world and the various spirit forces present. The dualism of spiritual forces in the New Testament presents an important comparison with the Samoan spirit world. Although the nature of the spirits may not necessarily be the same, however, their influence and impact on physical well-being provides a common ground from which one may start to understand both systems. I propose that the New Testament framework of sickness and remedy is relevant and intelligible within traditional and Christian Samoa, and it may be easier for Samoan Christians to relate to the healing ministry of Jesus directly than by interpreting it within the framework of modern and Western Christianity.

Chapter three specifically deals with exorcisms. Exorcisms constitute a large proportion of Jesus' healing ministry. The phenomenon of demon possession is not unique among contemporary Jews; however, evidence shows that demonic possession was an ancient phenomenon and it occurred among many different peoples and cultures. In many non-Western cultures today, possession by spirits is very much a part of their everyday life. In traditional and Christian Samoa, the activities of *aitu* [spirits] and their influence upon the lives of people have close similarities as well as differences with the activities of evil spirits and demons in the gospels. *Aitu* possessions in Samoa indicate significant social and religious functions within the family and community. A comparative study of exorcisms in the gospels with *aitu* possessions in Samoa is important not only in identifying significant motifs in both, but it would also help Samoan Christians to understand the significance of Jesus' acts of exorcism in the light of their own spirit-world.

One possible cause of sickness and physical handicap in the gospels may be attributed to sin. The moral responsibility of an individual or community for the illness and disease that afflict them is a universal principle. We often have some share and responsibility in the sickness and misfortune that affect either us, our children, or those around us. Jesus and his contemporaries believed in a connection between one's moral status and his/her physical welfare. The same principle of understanding health and well-being within the framework of morality and ethics is also present in Samoa where sickness and physical misfortune are sometimes seen as consequences of the breaking of religious and cultural taboos. Right moral and religious conduct towards family spirits and family members is seen as significant in maintaining health and well-being. Chapter four therefore, presents a comparison of the sin-sickness motif in the gospels with sickness and physical

malady caused by the breaking of social, moral and religious taboos of the family and community in Samoa.

Chapter five compares the holistic nature of Jesus' healing with health, healing and wholeness in Samoa. The main objective of this concluding chapter is to emphasize that the healing ministry of Jesus is not simply a remedy of the physical and organic disorder, but that he was very much concerned with the holistic welfare and well-being of those whom he healed. His healing ministry reveals an understanding of illness and disease within the whole context of the human entity which is a unity of not only the mind, body and soul, but a social and religious being with all his/her relationships and responsibilities to the family, to the community and also to God. In the light of this more comprehensive understanding of health and healing, the traditional concept of sickness and well-being in Samoa is of special interest. I propose that Jesus' attitude towards sickness and matters relating to health and healing in the gospels closely resembles the holistic framework within which traditional Samoa understands sickness and healing. The social and anthropological approaches to the healing miracles of Jesus make us aware of the significant impact of the social realities of the time in determining the nature and character of illness and diseases that people suffered from. The community ideals and belief system of the sick person are not only crucial but integral in the diagnosis and remedy of an illness. Jesus' healing activities in the gospels which were conducted within the framework of contemporary beliefs and practices portrayed this sensitivity. Traditional healing acknowledged the complexity of our human nature and of the various social, religious and spiritual dimensions which are detrimental to our physical health and well-being. True and holistic healing must be conducted within this complex framework.

CHAPTER ONE

SAMOA

A. SETTING AND BACKGROUND

1. Introduction

Samoa is a group of islands in the South Pacific. There are two groups of islands; Western Samoa and American Samoa. Although there are two Samoas, yet, there is one people who belong to the one and same ethnic group, speaking the same language, and historically, having the same customs and culture. They share many common beliefs both social and religious, and many of the Samoan legends and myths which serve as vehicles of their belief-systems are held and valued among both these communities. Most of the people who live in these two groups of islands are inter-related and they share common ancestors and kinship. Bradd Shore writes,

Culturally and linguistically, the entire Samoan group reveals a remarkably unified identity and striking homogeneity.¹

Therefore, apart from their political differences, they are very much a one people who have been divided politically during the colonial partition in 1900. American Samoa is a Trust Territory of the United States of America, and Western Samoa, an Independent State since 1962.

In the course of this thesis, much of the discussion on modern Samoa will be

closely related to Western Samoa. However, reference to the early period of the history of the islanders presupposes the one whole united archipelago and people before the colonial partition of 1900.

2. Location and size

The Samoa islands are located between latitude 13 degrees and 15 degrees south of the equator, and longitude 168 degrees and 173 degrees west. There are about nine inhabited islands in the whole of the Samoa group, although only three are of any significant size. These three main islands are called Upolu, Savai'i and Tutuila. Upolu and Savaii are the two main islands in Western Samoa, with two smaller islands Manono and Apolima. Western Samoa has a total area of about 1100 square miles and a population of approximately 160,000 people. American Samoa has one main island, Tutuila, with the smaller island of Aunu'u closely attached to it. Both islands have a combined area of about 50 square miles and a population of about 30,000 people. Other islands in American Samoa include the Manu'a group, which consists of three small islands of Ta'ū, Ofu, and Olosega, all fairly small with a few hundred people living on a few square miles of land. These islands became well-known much earlier in the anthropological world because of the significant and yet controversial research on Samoan adolescent women, carried out on the island of Ta'ū by the well-known American anthropologist, Margaret Mead in the 1930s.²

3. Brief history

The first European explorer to visit Samoa was Jacob Roggeveen, a Dutchman who landed in the Manu'a islands in 1722. More than forty years later, Samoa was

visited by the French navigator de Bougainville in May 1768, and he called it the Navigators islands after the Samoan superior construction of traditional boats as well as their skill in sailing far out into the open sea.³ Others include La Pérouse [1787], Edwards [1791], and Kotzebue [1824].⁴ Davidson points out that at the time of Roggeveen's visit in 1722, the Samoans had already some knowledge of Europeans. It was noticed however by Roggeveen that a woman was wearing a string of blue beads, and there was a very strong interest among the Samoans in obtaining iron.⁵ These early contacts with the outside world were very minimal and temporary, with a few whaling vessels and sailors that called in for short periods of time for fresh fruits and water. Williams also mentioned of a few earlier visitors to the islands which included run-away sailors and other Europeans as residing among the people and doing them incalculable mischief. Many of these were convicts from New South Wales who had stolen small vessels and had made their escape.⁶

There was also constant contact between the Tongans and the Samoans which preceded the arrival of the missionaries, and through these contacts, the Samoans were able to learn of the Europeans and little of their culture, as well as the new *lotu*⁷ through their Tongan informants. The Tongans had earlier contacts with Europeans and especially with Christianity before the Samoans. However, it was not until 1830 with the arrival of the pioneer missionaries John Williams and Charles Barff of the London Missionary Society [LMS], that comprehensive and detailed accounts and information about the Samoans and their way of life began to be recorded.⁸ About five years after the LMS missionaries established themselves in Samoa, other Christian mission groups followed, and these included a Wesleyan missionary, Peter Turner who arrived with some of his Tongan converts at Satupaitea, Savai'i in 1835, and the Roman Catholic Marist Mission in 1845. The

Marists arrived at Lealatele, Savai'i, and since then, they started to set up various mission stations throughout the islands.

The modern political history of the Samoa group began with the division of the Samoan islands between the United States of America and Germany in 1900. The Germans and the Americans had signed an earlier treaty [17 January 1878] allowing free access of the German and American vessels in the islands, however, it was not until December 1900 after the Berlin Conference of 1899, that Western Samoa was officially annexed by Germany, and American Samoa by the United States of America.⁹ Western Samoa became a German colony until the outbreak of the First World War [1914] when New Zealand took over the western group on behalf of Great Britain. Western Samoa was a British Protectorate under the administration of New Zealand until 1962 when it became the first Pacific group of islands to gain its independence. Since 1962, the islands became known as the Independent State of Western Samoa. It is at present a full member of the Commonwealth of Nations and the United Nations Organization. American Samoa has continued to remain a Trust Territory of the United States of America, and it maintains close links with the United States of America both politically and economically. Any major social and cultural differentiation between the two people may be witnessed in the apparent modern and Americanised lifestyle of the American Samoans compared to the more modest and traditional existence of the Western Samoan people. Culturally, Western Samoa continues to maintain its *fa'a-Samoa* [the Samoan way of life], despite pressures for change that any non-Western culture would inevitably come into contact with today.

B. TRADITIONAL WORLD VIEW

1. Sources

Much of what we may know of the religious beliefs and the ancient customs and practices of pre-Christian Samoans has come down to us through the early written records of Westerners, some who visited temporarily and others who settled more permanently in the islands. Many of the early accounts were the works of early missionaries who were among the first Europeans to have visited and settled in the Samoan islands in the first half of the 19th century. Some of the records contain legends and myths which are often the means by which the religious beliefs of a people are conveyed concerning the origin of things, and how they perceive life and the world that they live in. The nineteenth century was a very significant period in the history of the Samoan people, since many of the written records of the missionaries during this period referred to early religious beliefs and customs of the Samoan people, before and during the period of contact with the West. The early writings and correspondence of missionaries such as John Williams, Charles Hardie, Samuel Wilson, William Mills, George Pratt, John Fraser, George Turner, John Stair, George Brown, and some of the *Vailima* letters and writings of the Scottish writer Robert Louis Stevenson who lived at Vailima on the island of Upolu from 1889 till his death on 3 December 1894, as well as some of the observations of early ethnographers like Horatio Hale, give valuable insights into the way of life and beliefs of the early Samoans.

There are of course many limitations in some of the early mission accounts of Samoan life, customs, and beliefs [as one would naturally find in the early historical writings by Europeans in the Pacific]. Early missionaries like John

Williams and Charles Barff, George Turner and John Stair were neither historians nor social anthropologists, but good men, full of zeal and commitment to proclaim the message of salvation to those who 'lived in darkness'. They may lack the awareness of the intricacies of social and religious relationships and the way in which such aspects of a different culture influence behaviour. Perhaps social anthropologists would pay more attention to such matters. However, many missionaries did spend many years in the islands, and their good command of the language had enabled them to converse and gather information from their sources first hand, instead of through an interpreter. Such direct access to the people and their culture indicates some form of reliability of the material they later presented.

John Williams, the pioneer missionary to Samoa, was a Congregational Independent who first joined the LMS in Tahiti in 1818. Frustrated with the lack of progress of their Tahiti mission, he instigated the extension of LMS mission work to southern Cooks [1823] and later on to Samoa [1830]. He became the most active LMS missionary in the South Seas until he fell victim to the people of Erromanga, New Hebrides in 1839. John Williams did not spend long periods of time in Samoa as the latter and more permanent group of missionaries did; however, his extended visits in 1830 and 1832 enabled him to make observation of Samoan life and beliefs which he presented in his *Journal* of 1832. Prior to the fatal mission to Erromanga, Williams had spent several months in Samoa.

The writings of John Williams are among the earliest written records of the life and beliefs of the Samoan people. His first visit in 1830 formally introduced Christianity, however, it was during his second visit in 1832 that he was able to keep a long and detailed *Journal* of his missionary activities in Samoa and other South Sea islands he visited. This *Journal* was later published in 1837 under the

title *A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Seas*. In his *Journal* and some of his correspondence with the LMS headquarters in London, Williams showed a sympathetic and sensitive view of some of the cultural aspects of the life of the Samoan people. His initial reaction was not outright condemnation but a willingness to observe and evaluate some of the intricacies of Samoan life. One example is shown in his attitude to polygamy. Williams, instead of demanding that Samoan chiefs should expel all wives other than one on embracing Christianity, was willing to accept the polygamous status of those who were already in that situation; but he ensured that polygamy was unacceptable in the new *lotu* and must be abolished.¹⁰ Williams' relationship with Malietoa was seen to be very warm and trusting. He was willing to listen to and be advised by the chief, to whom he had entrusted the safety of his mission and the lives of the Rarotongan teachers he left behind. His willingness to take the advice of Malietoa was criticised by the first group of six resident missionaries who arrived in June 1836. They saw Malietoa as a hindrance to the progress of LMS work and therefore, he was gradually excluded from taking an active role in the course of mission work.¹¹ The last time an important decision was referred to Malietoa was in 1836 when he was consulted concerning the allocation of missionaries.

John Garrett has shown much respect for Williams' *Journal*. He wrote,

the detailed observations of Samoan life at the end of his 1832 *Journal* show a clear eye and ability to record faithfully.¹²

Firth points out that the writings of John Williams and others provide a detailed and more accurate account of the highly developed religious life of the early Samoans in the 1830s, as well as of Christianity from that time onward.¹³ The observations of Williams and other missionaries of the early 1830s, were notably augmented by Horatio Hale, an ethnographer who accompanied the Wilkes

Expedition on its visit to Samoa in 1839. Some of the insights of Hale support Williams' observations in relation to tutelary deities and other categories of gods such as the family, district, village and war gods.¹⁴ Hale's observation of the religious life of the Samoans with their many deities and spirits confirms Williams' reference to the "gods many and lords many" of the Samoans.

Perhaps the main drawback of Williams' account is the fact that he did not spend much time in Samoa, which suggests that much of what he recorded may have come from a few sources that he was able to make contact with during his short visits. No mention is made of his command of the language; it seems that his contacts with people were mainly through interpreters such as Faeā.

George Pratt, George Turner, Thomas Powell, John Stair, John Fraser, George Brown, each lived among the Samoans for several decades. These missionaries were well versed with the language and although they may have lived in mission stations and not necessarily with the people in the villages, yet their easy access to the people through their command of the language was a significant feat in their attempt to understand the social and religious beliefs of the Samoans in the 19th century.

George Turner, John Stair and John Fraser have collected materials during their mission years in Samoa which became the basis of their works. Stair points out that although what he has said about Samoa was not written until 1897, most of his research notes and accounts were collected 50 years earlier when he was a resident missionary in Samoa.¹⁵ However, despite Stair's defensiveness about the purity of his account, it would be hard to dismiss the inevitable development of Samoan social and religious beliefs over that half century through contact with the

lotu and Western culture. Fraser also defended his record of the mythologies by stressing the reliability of his Samoan informant.¹⁶ The obsession of these early missionaries to defend the authenticity of their accounts implied that they were aware of the difficulty of maintaining without blemish the beliefs and traditions of the Samoan people, even during the early contact period. Cultural contact for more than 50 years would undoubtedly bring changes in the life and beliefs of the people. No culture can claim to be completely immune from influence during an intensive period of cultural contact. Therefore, it would be wrong to assume that these early records were entirely free from Western and Christian input.

The Methodist missionary George Brown has presented what proves to be a thorough and detailed account of Samoan religious beliefs and life activities during the latter half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Published in 1910, his work *Melanesians and Polynesians* produced a valuable source of the interaction of two cultures within a period of almost a 100 years since Western contact and the new *lotu*. His work presents a realistic process of the cultural change that was already affecting Samoan religious history.

Apart from mission writings, works by early consular officials such as W.T. Pritchard [1856], W.B. Churchward [1887] and the Scottish writer R.L. Stevenson [1889-1894], provide valuable information of Samoan life during the latter half of the 19th century. The work of the German scholar A. Krämer on the Samoan islands, which appeared in 1902, is of monumental significance. The first half of the twentieth century has seen an upsurge of interest in the life and beliefs of the Samoans, a consequence of Margaret Mead's study on adolescent women in Manu'a, American Samoa [1928]. Since then, Samoa has become the focus of many anthropological studies, the most significant being the works by Freeman [1983] and

Shore [1982]. The two thorough and perceptive historical works by R.P. Gilson [1970] and J.W. Davidson [1967] provide a wealth of historical information about Samoa from the early contact period till the emergence of a nation in 1962.

In mission reports about some of the cultural beliefs and activities of a society, there was often a wealth of thought and belief systems behind the many customs and traditions of the local people. These significant thoughts were often behind what historians may portray. These thoughts may either be deliberately ignored or not made available to the foreigners by the local people, for fear of breaking traditional taboos and customs relating to such practices. Peter Munz rightly points out that sometimes the historians themselves ignored them, because "such thoughts themselves were fundamentally non-historical".¹⁷ Davidson refers to another limitation of the early historical accounts. He writes,

Those who produced them possessed an imperfect understanding of indigenous societies; they were more often concerned with recording matters of primary interests only to themselves, and they wrote in languages ill-suited to the description of exotic cultures.¹⁸

Another problem concerning such historical records, is the natural inclination of foreign writers to view elements of these local customs and traditional beliefs from within the framework of their own culture. To present a belief or custom within the historian's framework of understanding may deprive it of its true significance and real meaning within that traditional society. Davidson was aware of this problem also when he wrote,

The foreign historian, be he New Zealander, American, or Frenchman, never escapes entirely from the boundaries of his own culture. He tends to place the past of other societies in a framework similar to that in which he has learnt to place his own.¹⁹

Therefore the task of trying to reconstruct the pre-contact beliefs and customs of a

traditional community is a difficult endeavour. However, despite their short-comings, these accounts when compared with what was recorded of other Polynesian societies during this early contact period, may help in the search for an authentic reconstruction of the belief systems and customs of pre-Christian Samoans, especially since we know that the early Polynesian societies originally shared many similar and significant religious beliefs and social systems.

2. Samoa and its Polynesian neighbours

The Samoans are Polynesians. Various theories have been put forward concerning the origin of the Polynesian people of which the Samoans are a part. The character and the time-scale of Polynesian migration are still a subject of investigation and debate.²⁰ One theory which was initiated by Thor Heyerdahl traced the origin of the Polynesian people to South America. Although he was successful in demonstrating the possibility of a route of travel across the Pacific ocean from South America, relying entirely upon the forces of nature like the wind system, the sea currents, the moon and the stars for navigation, anthropologists believe that the cultural identity of the Polynesian people better fits an origin among the people of South East Asia than among those of South America. The Polynesians are members of the Mongoloid race who may have been expanding from the South-East Asian mainland into Indonesia, migrating eastward to the Pacific ocean to populate what is now called the Polynesian triangle.²¹ This vast area within the Pacific ocean is bounded by Hawaii in the north, New Zealand in the south and Easter Island in the east. Migration according to recent research shows that the movement started as early as between 2000 and 1000 BC.²² The discovery of the *Lapita* pottery by excavation throughout Polynesia, strongly support the theory of the movements of the Polynesian people from west to east, with the

Samoan islands among the early Polynesian groups to be settled.

Despite the Samoan ethnocentric assumption that they are distinct from any other people in Polynesia, Samoan culture bears a close relationship to those of other Polynesian peoples. The languages spoken by various Polynesian groups show close similarities of vocabulary and linguistic character so that these languages could be more rightly referred to as dialects than different languages altogether. The Polynesians speak about 30 closely related languages which form one branch of a very widespread family known as Austronesian. The Austronesian languages as a whole numbers between 700 and 800, and are spoken throughout Indonesia, the Philippines, Micronesia, Polynesia, Madagascar, and parts of South Vietnam and Malaya.²³ Polynesian languages may all be considered to be dialects of one common language; their social relations and primal technology, their traditions and religious beliefs are in many ways closely related. The early records of Polynesia show a strong cultural identity among the Polynesian people throughout the Pacific. Missionaries who were observant of the religious beliefs and practices of the Polynesians have recorded various religious myths and beliefs which are to a large extent common throughout the Polynesian societies.

The belief in the god *Tagaloa*, for instance, appeared in all the Polynesian main island groups as a deity of prime importance in both worship and myth. The status and function of *Tagaloa* may vary from one group to another, but the deity was present in all the Polynesian societies. The legacy of *Tagaloa* was one of the many ancient mythologies and religious beliefs which were closely inter-related within Polynesia. The highly developed concept of chieftainship and aristocracy and the well-structured social organization were prominent throughout Polynesia in the 19th century.²⁴ In a discussion of early Samoan social and religious beliefs, it is

necessary that they be set within a larger framework of Polynesian mythologies and the religious mores of the time.

3. The spirit-world

i. Introduction

John Williams reported misleadingly that the Samoans had neither temples nor rites nor ceremonies, thus confirming the false assumptions of the Rarotongans and the Tahitians that the Samoans were a 'godless' people.²⁵ The apparent lack of visible symbols of their religious piety in the form of temples and sacred *malaes* for the offering of sacrifices, the absence of physical evidence of public rituals and worship of the gods, the lack of an independent system of religious priesthood, may all present the image of the Samoans as 'godless'.²⁶ However, the Samoans did have temples known as *malumalu* [house of refuge] and *faleaitu* [spirit house] or some other shrine as a sacred grove,²⁷ and they did make offerings to their gods and use other observances.²⁸ The remnants of what is believed to be the *fale o le fe'e* [the house of the cuttlefish]²⁹ points to what may have been a *malumalu*. While they did not have bloody and barbarous ceremonies dedicated to deities, the Samoans were far from being an impious race. Holmes suggests that references to 'godless' Samoans undoubtedly stemmed from ethnocentric perspectives shared by pagan Rarotongans and Christian missionaries.³⁰ Perhaps the lack of a visible worship of the high god *Tagaloa*, and the absence of idols, as well a noticeable and distinct class of priesthood which had been encountered in eastern Polynesia, may have contributed to the Samoans being identified as 'godless'.³¹ However, despite John Williams' hasty observation about the lack of these religious features when he first arrived in 1830, even he pointed out that pre-contact Samoans had

'lords many and gods many'.³² These lords and gods were identified by Williams as of three kinds; the deified ancestors, idols and *etus* [ie. *aitu*].

Margaret Mead mistakenly asserts that Hawaii, Tahiti, New Zealand and the Marquesas, all out-distanced Samoa in richness and variety of religious forms and beliefs and "in relative importance of religion in the lives of the people."³³ When compared with other parts of Polynesia, the Samoans gave, she claims, but "the slightest attention to religion, and had no temples and no religious festival."³⁴ However, Freeman points out that a fuller investigation of the records of John Williams which may be dated as early as 1832, provides a more detailed and accurate account of the highly developed religious life of early Samoa.³⁵ Williams emphasizes that the Samoans had many gods, and that each chief and every individual had his own god or *aitu*.³⁶ Williams' account is confirmed by Horatio Hale who mentions the practice at childbirth of invoking numerous gods, and the god whose name is invoked during the birth of the child becomes the child's tutelary deity.³⁷ Turner also referred to similar practices among the Samoans. He wrote,

at birth, a Samoan was supposed to be taken under the care of some god or *aitu* and these gods were invoked on various occasions in the life of the child.³⁸

Turner mentioned a total of 120 of these tutelary deities. Most of the gods and supernatural beings were believed to be responsible for the well-being of their worshippers and/or to regulate the affairs of nature and people. On the other hand, their anger was recognised and they were feared accordingly. It should be noted that it was the neglect of worship and the giving of offerings to themselves that more especially excited their wrath.³⁹

Freeman rightly points out that Mead was mistaken in her assumption that the early

Samoans were irreligious. As evidence shows, there was in ancient Samoa a profound fusion of the theological and the social, and the Samoans were, and still remain [contrary to her assertions] a profoundly religious people.⁴⁰ Crawford has also acknowledged this religious aspect of Samoan life. He points out that in practically every aspect of Samoan activities, religious concepts and practices form an important and perhaps indispensable part.⁴¹

Ancient Samoa provided a religion which recognised the possibility of the interaction between the supernatural and the living. The ancestral spirits and the spirits of the dead were very much an integral part of family life. Their advice was often sought and consulted in important family matters. Family gods and *aitu* were honoured at all levels of activity.⁴² The same also may be said of village deities. Special festivals were done in honour of them, and *faleaitu* and *malumalu* were erected on their behalf. Stair points out that there was a desire among the people to get on well with their deities, and a custom of casting aside a small portion of food on the commencement of a meal, as well as making a libation of 'ava [a ceremonial drink from the root of a plant] as peace offering to the family *aitu* or deity. Such ceremonies were important in maintaining good relationships with the deities.

ii. The high god - *Tagaloa*

Tagaloa was the highest *atua* [deity] in the Samoan spirit-world. There were many *atua* of varying status, some national and district deities and a vast number of family *atua*, however, *Tagaloa* stands out in early mythologies as the most supreme of all of them. Fraser has rightly indicated that the name *Tagaloa* is a combination of two words, *taga* and *loa*. *Taga* means 'bag' or 'that which

envelopes or encloses', and *loa* means 'eternal', 'long' or 'far off'.⁴³ *Tagaloa* therefore has the meaning and significance of a deity which "encompasses all things" a "timeless and an eternal god."⁴⁴ The whole of creation according to the mythologies is attributed to this high god.

In Samoa, Tonga and Rarotonga, *Tagaloa* or *Taaroa* was the supreme being and creator.⁴⁵ He was a pre-existent deity who lived in the immensity of space. Outside this area, *Tagaloa*, although still a prominent figure among the deities, was never spoken of as a supreme deity. For the Maori and the Tahitians, it was *Io* or *Ihoiho* who was the supreme being. Handy suggests that *Io* as the supreme being was "truly an ancient feature in Polynesian religion."⁴⁶ In New Zealand and the Marquesas, the part assigned to *Tagaloa* was that of the 'lord of the ocean' and the living creatures in the sea were spoken of as the children of *Tagaloa*.⁴⁷ In New Zealand, it is said that when *Tagaloa* fled to the sea, some of his children deserted him and took refuge with his brother *Tane* [lord of the forests], becoming the reptiles of the land [lizard]. Interestingly enough, the *pili* [lizard] in Samoa was regarded as a separate deity, and it was believed to have been an incarnation of *Tagaloa*. The *fe'e*, a sacred creature of the past, was identified as a deity, however, there is no firm evidence which suggests a link with the 'lord of the ocean'. In Hawaii, *Kanaloa* was also associated with the sea.

The different accounts of the creation mythologies of the Samoans all point to *Tagaloa* as the creator. Since the myths were recorded during the contact period, it is difficult to assess their authenticity. How much can be ascribed to the influence of the creation stories of Genesis, where a supreme God like *Tagaloa* is said to have created the universe from nothing? How far is the traditional understanding of *Tagaloa* being influenced and coloured by the Jewish concept of

the creator *Atua* [the term *Atua* with a capital *A* refers to God in the Bible] or *Ieova* [Yahweh] in the Old Testament? A knowledge of the creation myths of other Polynesian societies during this early period may show common features between them which suggest some common system of beliefs in relation to the origin of the world and the many different categories of deities and spiritual beings.

Early accounts of the creation mythologies have come down to us through the writings of missionaries. Some aspects of these early Polynesian creation stories may suggest Christian influence, as one can find in the controversial account of the Maori creation story of *Io* which was substituted for the name *Taaroa* for the supreme being.⁴⁸ However, it is important to note that there are also quite significant similarities among the creation stories from one Polynesian society to another which may indicate some degree of the reliability and authenticity of the accounts themselves. Like many Polynesian creation myths, the Samoan creation stories which Williams,⁴⁹ Fraser,⁵⁰ Turner,⁵¹ Stair,⁵² and others have recorded, speak of the supreme deity of the Polynesians named *Tagaloa* in Samoa, or *Taaroa* among the Tahitians, and *Ta'arua* in the Society islands and other Polynesian societies.

These creation stories which are referred to in later works by Handy, Mead,⁵³ and Freeman, all speak of the high god *Tagaloa* who was responsible for all creation. The myths ascribe the chief place in the Samoan pantheon to *Tagaloa a lagi* [*Tagaloa* in heaven] who was the principal god, the creator of the world and progenitor of other gods and people. The creation myths speak of other deities which help in the creation of the *Tagaloa* and are identified as manifestations of the original deity.⁵⁴

In the creation myths, the *papa* or rock formations become the physical foundation of all living things. The creation of the two *papa* formations, *papa-lagi* [heavenly foundation] and *papa-fanua* [earthly foundation] to which various living things owe their existence, helps to explain the existence of both the spiritual and physical aspects within the created order. People are born through the union of both *papa* and they are said to have natures both physical and divine. The idea of *Tagaloa* creating *papa* from which all living things had their origin was shared by the Society islanders who spoke of *Ta'arua* breaking his shell from which the sky was made. The *papa* has affinity with the shells of *Tagalua*.⁵⁵ The Tahitian version refers to deities being born between the upper and the lower shells of *Ta'arua*. *Ta'arua* made the great foundation [*tumu nui*], apparently associated with or derived from the upper shells, to be the husband; and *papa fanua* [earth] which was identified with the lower shells, he made to be his wife. A traditional Marquesan chant speaks of man as from *papa una* [the high rock] and woman from *papa a'o* [the lower rock].⁵⁶ A clear correspondence with such beliefs is evident in the Samoan genealogy in which the 'high rocks' which were male and the 'earth rocks' female were the progenitors of various natural phenomena on earth including the local gods and chiefs.⁵⁷

The idea of the elevation of the heavens from the earth is found in the ancient myths of Polynesia. Handy refers to *toko* or props in the Maori myth which *Tane* used to hold up *Rangi* [heaven]. In the Marquesas, the word *to'o* [the same as in Samoa], and the Tahitian *pou* [cp. *pou* in Samoa meaning posts or props], all convey the meaning of posts or props upon which the sky rests.⁵⁸ The Samoan myth also describes the elevation of *lagi* and its separation from *fanua*.⁵⁹ Fraser wrote,

....hitherto earth and sky had been one, but now the sky is lifted up above the earth and secured in its place by props; then the dimensions length, breath, and height appeared; and then, all things being ready for him, man came upon the scene.⁶⁰

The episode of the elevation of heaven from earth is itself an interesting element in Polynesian mythology. After the separation of *papa-lagi* from *papa-fanua*, various physical things were thought of as emerging upward and outward from the union of the two *papa*. The word *tupuga* meaning 'descended from' comes from the word *tupu* which means 'to grow out of' or 'to grow up from.'⁶¹ In relation to genealogy, it implies the meaning of 'ascending from,' i.e. having the notion of *papa* or rock formation which everything grew out of. This is a significant aspect of understanding the world and it explains why traditionally, the Samoans had seen life as complementary of the natural and supernatural. The spiritual and physical were understood not as polarised spheres of existence, but as complements, demonstrating unity in life. A separation of the two would go against traditional understanding of life, as Samoans perceived no gulf nor division between the natural and the supernatural. What the modern person sees as ordinary, natural activities such as planting, building houses, fishing expeditions, sickness and healing, births, deaths and funerals as belonging to the profane, this may not be necessarily so with a traditional person who saw the close relationship between these activities and the realm of the divine. Handy wrote,

When a native planted, tended his crops, and harvested, he did so psychically as well as physically, rituals including consecration, purification, prayers, charms, and offerings, accompanying every phase of his physical husbandry.⁶²

Despite the supreme place accorded to *Tagaloa* in Samoan mythology, very little else is ascribed to this deity apart from creation. John Garrett has rightly observed that idols and the high god of Polynesia were not widely worshipped by

the Samoans.⁶³ Instead, the worship of nature spirits and the veneration of family and ancestral spirits were the popular religious activities. The early sources do not mention any worship of *Tagaloa* nor were there temples and sacrifices associated with it. The non-existence of *Tagaloa* worship in the daily life of the people may have puzzled some of the earlier missionaries. John Williams points out that

the Samoans had a vague idea of a supreme being in whom they regarded as the creator of all things and the author of their mercies. They call him *Tagaloa*.⁶⁴

Pratt,⁶⁵ Kramer,⁶⁶ and Freeman,⁶⁷ all refer to the high and supreme god *Tagaloa*, but have no mention of any worship associated with it, nor of any significant influence of the god in the daily affairs of the people. The kings and chiefs [*ali'i*] were said to have their origin from *Tagaloa* but no worship nor cult was attributed to the deity. *Tagaloa* was considered a high god who was far removed from the daily affairs of the people.⁶⁸ There were some activities associated with *Tagaloa* but his name was not directly invoked in relation to them. Krämer mentions the fishing of the bonito as part of the *Tagaloa* cult. For any fishing expedition, the first bonito caught was named as the bonito of the god *Tagaloa*, and yet the name of the deity himself was not invoked in the fishing trip.⁶⁹ The fishing may have some connection with *Tagaloa* the 'god of the ocean' as he was known in other parts of Polynesia. The art of building houses was also closely associated with the cult of the supreme deity. The chief builder was and is still known as the *tufuga*, a title often used for *Tagaloa*.⁷⁰ The *tufuga* and his group of carpenters were acknowledged as the workmen of *Tagaloa*, but again the name of the deity was not invoked in the course of the work.⁷¹

The title *Tagaloa* remains attributed to a paramount chief in the district of Safune, Savai'i. In the oratory of the district he is addressed as a god, an understandable ascription in the light of the belief in the divine origin of the title. However,

since the introduction of Christianity, the creator god *Tagaloa* is no longer a significant religious force except within specific localities where the title is associated with a paramount chief.

iii. National and district deities

Turner lists about 43 gods which may fall into this category. Many of these gods were known in places by the same name but evidently manifested in different ways. Such gods include *Salefe'e* which was known as the god of the underworld; *Moso*, *Sepo*, *Lesā*, *Nafanua* and many others.⁷² Some legends associate the god *Fe'e* with the sub-district of Vaimauga in the Tuamasaga district. The existence of the remnants of the famous *fale o le fe'e* [the house of the cuttlefish] behind the main town of Apia points to the belief and locality of the deity. Turner associates the god *fe'e* with war.⁷³ This association may have come from the popular legend of *Fe'epō* whose sons *Tuna* and *Fata* are said to have helped defeat the old enemies of the Samoans, the Tongans. However, there seems to be conflicting views about this deity. Stair suggests that *Sa le fe'e* is another name for the *nu'u o aitu* [land of the spirits].

Pritchard describes the god *Moso* as a national god. He refers to *Moso* as a "rapacious monster who ate those who angered him".⁷⁴ Turner points to *Moso* as a land god in opposition to *Tagaloa*, the god of the heavens.⁷⁵ According to Williamson,⁷⁶ *Moso* was invoked for the destruction of enemies. Krämer associated *Moso* with the war god of the village of Sagafili in the A'ana district. Even today, people still speak of the legendary *Moso* in terms of a strong and fierce *aitu* from Falealili. *Sepo*, according to Krämer was a god similar to *Moso*; in fact, Krämer was convinced that *Sepo* was only another name for *Moso*.⁷⁷

However others, like Turner, would see *Sepo* as a separate god altogether. Turner thinks that *Sepo* was a war god worshipped both in Upolu and Savai'i. Another god of national identity was *Lesā* [the 'sacred' or 'taboo one']. Pritchard⁷⁸ identified *Lesā* as the god of the plantations, and the success and failure of the crops grown would depend upon the pleasure and displeasure of the deity. *Lesā* was incarnated in lizards, and in some places as an owl. Turner indicates that in cases of sickness, the patient as an offering to *Lesā* would weed a piece of the bushland, and the consequence was often a wonderful cure to the 'indolent dyspeptic'.⁷⁹ Interestingly enough, the title *Lesā* has become a prominent chiefly title within the Asau district in Savai'i, an important farming region of the islands. This may not be surprising since these titles according to traditional myths may be traced back to deities and divine beings. The goddess *Nafanua* was one of the most well-known and popular deities among early Samoans so that even today, reference to the deity is very much associated with fond and pleasant memories. An early Samoan tradition speak of *Nafanua* as a war goddess who once helped her people ~~to fight~~ against an evil oppressor, *Tilafaigā*. The legend indicates that *Nafanua* had concealed her true identity as a woman by covering her breasts and her waist with coconut leaves which thus became the distinguishing mark of her troops and followers. This incident is given as the origin of the fastening of coconut leaves round trees as a taboo, a popular practice not only in Samoa but in other Polynesian cultures.⁸⁰ In Samoan traditions, *Nafanua* is hailed as the goddess who prophesied the coming of the new *lotu* and *Atua*.

These national and district *atua* did not survive the impact of the *lotu*, and all of them are simply referred to in the legends and myths of the past which have no religious significance upon the present lives of the people. They are often mentioned in oratory, but they no longer have any significant influence in the

beliefs and daily affairs of the Samoan people today.

iv. Nature spirits and objects of power

In some Polynesian groups such as the Maori, the Marquesans, and Easter Islanders, the carving of figures in human and animal forms representing deities, groups, families, and individual objects of worship and patrons, was a significant aspect of religious life. The words *tiki* [figure, design, symbol] and *toko* [staff, posts] were often applied to such objects of veneration.⁸¹ The Marquesans made large figures of wood and stone representing their deified chiefs and priests. Such figures were prominent features of their tribal temples and meeting houses. The Easter Islanders are famous for their stone carving of human figures [the largest one is about 70 feet high], which undoubtedly had social and religious significance in their early community. In western Polynesia, the carved representation of ancestors appears to have been less in use than elsewhere in Polynesia. In Tonga and Samoa where the artificial representations of ancestral gods were little used, the place of carved figures and images was filled to a large extent by human mediums and a variety of living embodiments of the gods. The use of carved symbols and images were less used in early Samoa. The only reference to carved objects of worship in Samoa was made by Wilkes when he reported that carved blocks of wood and stone were set up and worshipped in memory of chiefs.⁸² However, many of the Samoan deities and objects of worship were manifested in living things and people. Birds, fish and reptiles were the popular totems or items of veneration in pre-Christian Samoa. These were identified by Turner as inferior or household gods of which he mentioned 22 different kinds. Turner gave these deities the Polynesian name *aitu*. They were respected and revered throughout the community, and sometimes they were dreaded and feared because of their ability to

cause harm to members of the family. Every Samoan according to Turner was believed to be taken under the care of a family god or *aitu* and visible incarnations of these gods may be seen in the form of an eel, a shark, a turtle, dog, owl, lizard, and birds.⁸³ A man can eat the incarnation of other family gods, but it is taboo to eat his own. Stair also mentions these nature gods which Samoans venerated as family deities.⁸⁴

The nature gods were among the first to go when the missionaries came. Many of these deities in the form of birds and fish were quickly freed of taboo. The simple test was for early Christian converts to eat their gods as a proof that such reptiles, fish and birds, no longer had the *mana* to inflict them.

v. Ancestral and family spirits [*tupua* and *aitu*]

This category of divine beings constituted the most popular in early as well as in present Samoa. In fact, this is the only category of traditional divine beings which has continued to exist within the Christian spirit-world, although their status as respectable entities has diminished considerably. The *tupua* which denoted the deified spirits of ancestors have been known in many different kinds of manifestations. Stair points out that many beautiful emblems were chosen to represent their immortality; some of the constellations such as *Li'i* [the Pleiades], *Tupua le gase* [Jupiter], *Nuanua* [rainbow], *Laoma'oma'o* [the marine rainbow].⁸⁵ Brown agrees that *tupua* represented the deified spirits of chiefs, and that they constituted a different category from the original gods.⁸⁶ Hale referred to the souls of the chiefs when they died as going to *Pulotu* and to have become deities.⁸⁷ The early Samoans honoured their dead. The family ancestral spirits were venerated as family deities and their continued presence was acknowledged as

a reality within the daily activities of the family. Various rituals associated with the dead indicated the great respect Samoans gave to their dead ancestors. The practice of providing food for the dead and the burning of fire before and during funerals and for a few days afterwards, were seen as rituals for honouring the continued presence of the dead.⁸⁸ The placing of graves very close to family homes, and the keeping of lights near the graves, indicated the affection and respect given to the dead, and the belief in their continued presence.⁸⁹ This practice continues today, where graves are not only built alongside homes but are also housed and lighted. One Samoan bus driver buried his father in his family home, the grave providing a feature of his sitting room.

The term *aitu* originally meant deity. It was used synonymously with *atua* to mean god or deity.⁹⁰ However, the tendency was to associate *aitu* with spirit deities such as ancestral spirits and the spirits of the dead. The later dictionary by George Milner reflects the change in the meaning of *aitu* in which they are indicated as evil entities. Stair refers to *aitu* as the descendants of the original gods.⁹¹ The *aitu* was the order of beings that was commonly invoked by family members and traditional healers and priests [*taulaitu*] to help in healing and exorcisms. Stair mentioned that the traditional prophets and 'sorcerers' sometimes invoked these divine spirits which acted as war and family gods. An interesting version of the origin of *aitu* is mentioned by Von Bülow⁹² who wrote that the Samoans believed in the one god, *Tagaloa a lagi*, who has several sons known as *aitu*. However, he rightly pointed to the popular belief among early Samoans that when people died, they became *aitu*, and as *aitu*, they received the power to do good or evil to the living. Evil *aitu* were those who did not live good lives; their souls have become evil and malicious spirits when they died. A spirit may become malicious and vengeful if families failed to perform proper funeral rituals or did

not fulfil their responsibilities to the ancestral spirits. Robert Louis Stevenson pointed out that the spirits of the dead especially those not properly buried, haunted the place where they died until their *aitu* were properly appeased.⁹³ The *aitu* were not cosmically evil entities but ordinary human spirits who had not made peace with their families, or who by their own failure to live good lives had brought evil upon their own spirits.

There are two prominent family *aitu* called *Telesā* and *Sauma'iafe*. These two family *aitu* were young women who were taken alive by *aitu* in the past, and therefore became family spirits. *Telesā* is said to be the sister of *Mata'afa* [a paramount *ali'i*], and therefore she has considerable power within her village and district. [see:discussion of *ali'i* in section on 'social system']. The same also may be said of *Sauma'iafe* though from a lesser chiefly family. Both were respected and feared within their area of influence and many have attributed misfortune and sickness to their activities.

Many Samoans today are generally afraid of *aitu* irrespective of their natures and inclinations. The fear of *aitu* may have come from their being identified as demons and evil spirits in the gospels. People often associate the dark lonely paths and graveyards with *aitu*. The presence of *aitu* and their activities should not necessarily be thought of as consequences of their malicious and evil nature, however they may indicate the failure of family members in their relationship with their spirit-world. The *aitu* acted as guardians of family morals and values and their inflictions were often understood as punishments rather than malicious or evil deeds.

In modern Samoa, *aitu* constitute the most popularly recognised category of divine

being which people fear on the one hand and invoke on the other to relieve them of certain physical affliction and illness that affect them. Practically any supernatural being outside the realm of the Christian concept of *Atua* is identified as *aitu*. The deified spirits of chiefs [*tupua*] are categorised as *aitu* today. The spirits of the dead turn into *aitu* and their presence and activity indicate that they are evil *aitu*. Through Christian influence, the spirits and souls of the good are seen not as roaming the countryside but resting peacefully in anticipation of the parousia when they are raised to a new life with Christ. Many believe that the whole of the Samoan countryside is full of *aitu* and they are mainly the spirits of the dead. Goodman, who wrote about modern *aitu* beliefs, pointed out that "Samoa has long been considered a centre of *aitu*, usually translated as ghost, spirit, or fairy."⁹⁴ The belief in the *aitu* has remained in both Western and American Samoa, it is far stronger however, in Western Samoa where custom and tradition have greater vitality.

Many have recently written accounts on some aspects of the *aitu* phenomenon in Samoa, often pointing out that such beliefs are still very much alive and significant among modern Samoans and even among Samoan migrant communities in the United States of America and New Zealand.⁹⁵ The *aitu* phenomenon continues to influence the community despite its condemnation and denial by the *lotu*. Many still acknowledge their existence and influence upon physical well-being. The phenomenon of *aitu* sickness and *aitu* possession continue to affect many Samoan people so that even in the migrant community in the west coast of the United States of America, Lazar records incidents of *aitu* possession which he tries to explain as social and psychological outcomes of suppressed emotions and social deprivation.⁹⁶

4. Divine chiefs, priests and prophets

Williams, Brown, Freeman and others all indicate the central importance given in ancient Samoa to direct communication between specific individuals with the gods and spirits.⁹⁷ It was common for each family to have its own medium in the form of a *taulaitu*, a position usually held by the chief [*ali'i*], his sister, or some other member of the family.⁹⁸ Many Samoans believed in the living embodiments of the *mana* of family deities and ancestors within the family *ali'i* and *taulaitu*. Sometimes the *ali'i* functioned as a healer, a priest, and a prophet for the family although this may not necessarily be the case. The lack of a distinct class of priests and prophets in Samoa, since all three roles could be performed by the family chief, indicates the authority and importance Samoan society invested on its *ali'i*. The chief functioned as the mediator between members and family deities and spirits. As mediums of the *mana* of the deities, they also acted as traditional healers and exorcists. Turner points out that the head of the family offered during the evening meal a short prayer for the well-being of the family, and determined the occasions of feasts in honour of household gods. When the family assembles, the chief pours a libation of 'ava out upon the ground for tutelary gods who were supposed to be present.⁹⁹ For his role as the family priest, the chief was the guardian of the sacred places, mainly the *faleaitu* [spirit houses], *malumalu* [temples] and sacred tombs of ancestors. As priests, they were seen as embodiments of the gods.¹⁰⁰ A priest was believed to be possessed by a god or spirit, and he functioned in communal, family and private worship.¹⁰¹ The priest or prophet was highly venerated in the community, and he was treated as a god.¹⁰² The traditional priest was replaced by the new class of Christian *faiife'au* [pastors], whom John Garrett refers to as maintaining the same authority, status, and tradition that was once ascribed to traditional priests.¹⁰³

Williams and Stair were able to identify and described the different classes of *taulaitu*. Stair pointed out that there were four types of priesthood. The first was known as the *taulaitu o aitu tau*, [priests of the war gods] and they were consulted in times of war. The second group was the *tausi aitu tau* implying that they were the guardians of material objects associated with district war gods. The third was called the *taulaitu o aina* [sic]. I think it should be *taulaitu o 'āiga*, meaning family priests and healers who were responsible for invoking the help of various gods on behalf of individual members or of the family as a whole. The family healer was responsible for curing sickness and communicating to the patient and family members the intention of the *aitu* concerning the prognosis.¹⁰⁴ The fourth, the *taulaitu vavalo ma faitui*, were known as prophets and sorcerers. The use of magic and sorcery in ancient Samoa is uncertain. Stair spoke of prophets as sorcerers, however, what he really meant were the 'spells of cursing *taulaitu*'.¹⁰⁵ There was not much evidence of the practice of magic and sorcery in early Samoa. Brown pointed out that "neither exuvial magic nor sorcery in general was, however, practised by the Samoans".¹⁰⁶ If there were such *taulaitu*, then they must represent a very small and an insignificant class within the priesthood system in Samoa. They would be a less respectable and more feared group of diviners.¹⁰⁷

Brown noted that spirits and *aitu* were supposed to enter into and take temporary possession of a spirit medium. It was not unusual for individual families to have their own healer who was often the head of the family. Sometimes, the sister of the chief may assume the responsibility as family healer, and she became not only the healer but the mouth-piece of family *aitu* and ancestral spirits. She has a special place in the family. She was known as the *feagaiga a le 'āiga* [family covenant] and she had significant rights and privileges within the family system.

Such privilege may include being the family medium and healer. Freeman has rightly pointed out that direct communication with the family gods and spirits was considered very important within the society that so much valued its relationship with its spirit-world.¹⁰⁸

The traditional priest and prophet were replaced by the *faiifeau* [pastor] but the traditional healers continued to function alongside the modern medical profession. The healers are recognised as gifted men and women who possessed the charisma and *mana* handed down from generations of family healers. Their help is often sought in dealing with *ma'i Samoa* [Samoan sickness], where very often the cause may be ascribed to some spiritual causation. Certain *aitu* sickness related to the more widely known *aitu Telesā* and *Sauma'iafe*, were treated by these healers whom many have acknowledged as having direct access to the *mana* of the *aitu*. The help of the *faiife'au* was often sought in cases where people suffered from *aitu* possession or from illness caused by the anger of the Christian *Atua*. Many do believe that the *faiife'au* possess the *mana* of the new *Atua*, and by virtue of that *mana*, they are able to heal and to exorcise.

5. Sacred places

The Samoans were thought to have lacked the impressive structures and *malaes* for the worship of the gods known in eastern Polynesia. However, Bellwood points out that ethnographic records indicate that the Samoans maintained open spaces for ceremonies [*malaes*]; as well as god-houses built on rectangular or star-shaped mounds. This observation is based on the large stone mound *Pulemelei* situated in Palauli, Savaii. This mound covers 60 by 50 metres at the base and is 5-6 metres high, with potholes and stone heaps on the top. Tradition ascribed the mound to

a war fort. However, Bellwood suggests that it represented a massive ceremonial house of some religious significance. If Bellwood is correct, then Samoa has the largest surviving pre-historic monument in Polynesia.¹⁰⁹

The absence of the worship of the high god *Tagaloa*, and of a specific class of priesthood such as one finds in places like Rarotonga, Tahiti and Hawaii, obviously caused some of the early visitors to conclude that the early Samoans had a very insignificant religious life. It seems that the emphasis in Samoan religion was not on a high god but on nature deities and family spirits and deities. The emphasis was focussed more on family and local deities rather than the national ones. Instead of having an elaborate class of priests, prophets and healers, who acted as mediums of the spirits and deities, the chief and head of the family [*ali'i*] performed the functions. The same also was true in the case of temples and *malaes*. Instead of having centralised temples of worship, each family or village had its own special *faleaitu* and *malumalu* where communications with family spirits were conducted. Some Samoan villages have special houses dedicated to the tutelar god of the community. The house of the chief can be used as *malumalu* for the worship of the family gods. Religion was set within the framework of the family and the chiefs were seen as the embodiments of family *aitu* and spirits. In Tonga and Samoa, there were no elaborate temples in conformity with the less formalized system of worship, but the tombs of sacred chiefs on certain occasions have been used as places of worship.

6. The social system: '*āiga* [family] and *nu'u* [village]

The '*āiga* is the basic social unit in the Samoan society. It is, according to Keesing, "the unit of life rather than the individual."¹¹⁰ The traditional '*āiga* goes

beyond the confinement of a nuclear family. The concept of *'āiga* corresponds more to the extended family system or clan, where kinship and membership is qualified by 'common descent' which may go back many generations before. Members of a Samoan *'āiga* may claim genealogical descent from a common ancestor. Davidson writes,

The individual family, or *'āiga*, was a group claiming descent from a common ancestor. It possessed a name, a *matai* title to be held by its head, and lands that were passed down from generation to generation.¹¹¹

An *'āiga* has a *matai* title which is invested upon the most suitable member of the family. This titled person becomes the head of the family. A *matai* title can either be an *ali'i* [chief] or *tulāfale* [orator or talking chief]. In many villages, the hierarchy of *matai* gives more status to an *ali'i* than to the *tulāfale*. However within the family, both perform the same functions as heads of their families, and their titles symbolise the authority and status of the family over its family land and affairs, and the family to the village.

The *'āiga* can be geographically dispersed over many villages. However, members have a strong sense of belonging and loyalty to their *matai* who symbolises the integrity and authority of the *'āiga*.¹¹² Some families in one village may be related to families in other villages, and these family ties are often based on genealogical connections and other traditional factors. The family is thus a non-local group, structurally, which includes all people descended from a common ancestor; but functionally, it is in many respects a local unit, since it holds the land and a *matai* title in a particular locality.¹¹³ The election of a family *matai* is the responsibility of the whole family and traditionally, this is often achieved through consensus of family members.

The *matai* or chief of the family has the authority over family land and its

members. He regulated the daily activities, allocated the land, and acted as the family priest and healer.¹¹⁴ In the Samoan myths, the gods are called chiefs and they are addressed in the formal language used only for chiefs and deities. Family chiefs are known as deities [*atua*] and they are addressed in the formal language of the chiefs.¹¹⁵ Milner also refers to the polite language which signifies the dignity and high status of the chief in the community.¹¹⁶ The traditional authority of the chief was absolute and in the past, such authority demanded the unquestioned obedience of family members. The respect of family deities and spirits was an important part of family life so that violation of religious responsibilities and the family code of ethics and taboos could lead to severe punishment either directly by the *ali'i* or by the family deities and spirits in the form of illness and physical misfortune.

Samoa, like many Polynesian societies, has a very important chiefly system and hierarchy. The chiefs were vested with supernatural sanction and the paramount chiefs or *ali'i* were known as direct descendents from the gods themselves. Bellwood points out that "the Polynesians in fact developed aristocracy to a far higher pitch than any other Pacific or South-east Asian peoples in prehistoric times."¹¹⁷ Chieftainship in Samoa depends very much on descent and the Samoans would make sure that whoever succeeded as chief of the family must be a direct descendent of the family ancestors. In traditional Samoa, the chiefly authority was highly maintained and paramount chiefs were imbued with a kind of supernatural aura of power known as *mana*. By nature of its divine origin, the chief and his possessions were regarded as taboo.¹¹⁸ Keesing also refers to the superior social status of chiefs in traditional Samoa so that the highest chiefs were feared almost as gods.¹¹⁹ Supernatural influences were important in Samoan life and these divine elements gave sanction to the whole political and social systems as established by

tradition.¹²⁰ With the introduction of the *lotu*, the authority of family chiefs was instrumental in drawing whole families into the new faith. Davidson points out that "a *matai* would decide if the village would embrace the *lotu* then all 'āiga in the village must obey the decision."¹²¹

The next social unit in the Samoan social system is the *nu'u* [village]. The *nu'u* is made up of a number of individual 'āiga which sometimes are inter-related. Davidson defines a village as a "basic territorial unit of political, as of economic, organization."¹²² It has a ruling authority known as the *fono* [council of chiefs], which is made up of the family *matai*. The *fono* was the ultimate repository of authority in the village, and village affairs were legislated on and decided upon by the *fono*. It provided the instrument of law and order and of social integration at the village level.¹²³ Violation of village laws and taboos were punished by the village *fono*. Samoa was and still is an authoritative society, and obedience to authority, be it the family deities, ancestral spirits, *matai*, or *fono*, was considered very important in maintaining harmony and welfare within the village community and family. Traditionally, Samoan life was communally oriented and the individual was understood within his multiple relationships to the family and village community. Shore points out that the notion of personality is understood in terms of relationships.¹²⁴

The larger social unit is the *itumālō* [district]. This unit consists of many villages which were inter-related in their system of chieftainship. Traditionally, it is believed that a district had its origin in a single village community which over generations had evolved into many village communities eventually forming a larger unit with a common form of ancestorship. Because of the inter-related descent and chieftainship, the land rights were closely integrated. Politics at the district level

were highly complex, and the rank of village chiefs determined the status of the various chiefs at district level. These various categories of inter-related social units explain the various status accorded to chiefs, some confined to local significance and others of much wider influence beyond the family and village level. Family titles like Malietoa, [the chief who accepted the *lotu*] belong to a district paramount chief, an *ali'i* who had considerable status and influence over the affairs of the many villages and people. In a structured social system where the three social units, the *'āiga*, *nu'u* and *itūmālō* are significant, the category of traditional deities also follow suit; in the order of local and national deities [Turner], or inferior and superior deities [Stair]. The impact of the *lotu* has led to an adoption of a national high *Atua* who at the same time is believed to be a family and personal deity.

Samoa was and still is a very community-oriented society, so that the notion of personality is understood in terms of relationship to the family and society generally. The authority invested upon a *matai* symbolises the authority of the family which demands obedience and loyalty from its members over their own individual interests and preferences. Samoa is an authoritarian society based principally on socially inherited rank.¹²⁵ However, this authority invested upon the chief is symbolic of the family's authority and status over individualism and self-interest. This is seen in cases where a *matai* became authoritarian for his own interest; the family as a whole reserved the right to remove him in favour of a new chief.

The authoritative nature of the Samoan society influenced greatly the new class of elite which was developed by the *lotu*. The authority of the *faiife'au* in the village community and the *matai* over his/her household, remained central to the Samoan

concept of religion.¹²⁶ The elements of Christian life as it was taught by the missionaries accorded well with the elaborate formalism of Samoan custom. But the equal emphasis that the mission placed on the development of individual responsibility through private prayer and study accorded far less easily with the traditional ethos.¹²⁷

7. The taboos

Williamson points out that taboos and restrictions based upon fear of supernatural punishments played an important part in Polynesian life.¹²⁸ In most Polynesian and Melanesian societies, the institution of taboo was a significant aspect of their social and religious systems. In Samoa, the taboo system was very much a part of its early life. George Brown refers to the common use of taboos in early Samoa as comparable if not more widely used than in Melanesia. In early Samoa, there were various kinds of taboo, and these taboos varied in their importance and seriousness when violated. Turner¹²⁹ and Krämer¹³⁰ mentioned numerous kinds of taboo which regulated social and religious life of the Samoan people. The various incarnations of traditional deities in the forms of living creatures were considered taboo and therefore prohibited from being used as food.¹³¹ The *tapui*, as it was called in Samoa, provided a working code of behaviour in the early religious life of the Samoan people.¹³² The taboos were restrictions that society puts on certain things and property to protect them from abuse and damage on the one hand, and on the other to safeguard individuals from being affected by the sanctity of such objects and people. There were taboos associated with chiefs who had access to the *mana* of the deities. The chief and his possessions were considered taboo because of the *mana* of the deities. These taboos were effected by the sanctity accorded to chiefs, and anyone who came into contact with a chief would be

affected. The taboos therefore protected those outside from the *mana* of the chief. The taboo of the chief was extended to his properties and violation of the restrictions might lead to sickness and physical misfortune. The various objects and places associated with the deities and divine spirits were also taboo. The *faleaitu* and the *malumalu* were taboo places, and only the chiefs and *taulaitu* were able to freely enter them.

There were food taboos which were associated with food restrictions for young people, women, and expectant mothers. Such restrictions have either health or social dimensions, however, they were enforced by their association with the supernatural. Because they were sanctioned by the supernatural, the violation of taboo might lead to divine punishment. A taboo ordained by a family would place the object tabooed under the protection of the family *aitu*, who would punish the person who tampered with it.¹³³

8. Holistic view of the world

Traditionally, Samoans see their world as an integrated whole between the spiritual and the physical. Because of their aboriginal belief in the origin of all things from the divine *Tagaloa*, they therefore see the world as a spiritual and dynamic entity, where there is the inter-play of the natural and supernatural. The world is not merely a physical entity, simply explained and understood from the mechanics of nature, but a spiritual one too, operated and comprehended through the activities of spirits and supernatural beings. Many would see the wholeness of life and the world as a spiritual entity. Things which happen do not just happen or occur naturally on their own, however, there must be some spiritual power and supernatural force that make such things to happen. So everything must have a

spiritual or supernatural causation. For example, when one dies prematurely, people automatically think of punishment from the deities, be it family deity or *aitu* or some other angry spirit of the dead. When one gets sick, the immediate reaction is, What wrong has been done? Who is being offended? What remedy may be used to soothe the anger of the spirit involved? The same is also true when things appear favourable, when fishing expeditions are successful and the harvest is plentiful, when people are well and healthy, when babies are born successfully, the immediate reaction is that the family deities are responsible for their success and well-being. All these questions and answers were significant in the minds of many Samoans when things did or did not happen, because of their close connection with the spiritual and religious beliefs of the community.

The close relationship between the spiritual and the natural world within the belief systems of the early Samoans presented a holistic understanding of life. Every aspect of human life such as birth, growth, marriage and death was closely integrated with the divine so that the two worlds, spiritual and physical were simultaneously encompassed within everyday existence. The realm of the gods and spirits penetrated the realm of human beings, so that people could speak naturally of the influence of spirits and deities in the causality of things in their daily life. This way of understanding the world presents an orientation to life and a way people interpret their existence. Many do not see life in a dualistic way where the secular is separated from the sacred, but see the two as complementary parts of the one complete whole. Life is seen in terms of the relationship between the sacred and the secular in the ordinary events of life. This complexity of existence between the two spheres represents the way the early Samoans had seen their world and how they themselves understood the various events and activities within their lives.

The *mana* of their deities pervaded everyday activities. They saw that *mana* within and over everything. Success and failure, sickness and health, were understood in terms of their relationship to the supernatural within their midst. The *mana* of their deities can be a force for their benefit or a source of affliction and punishment for their misdemeanours. The taboo system was very closely associated with the *mana* of the deities. Violation of taboo meant the violation of the *mana* of the deity behind it, and such violation would expect punishment from the *aitu* in the form of sickness and physical misfortune.

The communal orientation of the religious life was also an important characteristic of traditional religion. The deities and *aitu* were set within the framework of the family and the village community. Members of these communities included not only the living but also those who had already passed away. They continued to be part of the family, and their presence were recognised in the form of *aitu* and spirits of ancestors. Religious response and duties were set within the context of the family with public religious practices and rituals performed under the guidance of the head of the family chief. An individual violation of a religious duty was seen as corporate violation, and the consequences might not necessarily be upon the individual concerned but upon any other member of the family. The responsibility of appeasing the deity was a corporate responsibility of the family.

This indigenous view of the world and life affected the Samoan understanding of Christianity when it was introduced. The traditional view of the *atua* and *aitu* and the *mana* that they possessed, the taboo system that they practised, their view of discipline and ethics, the strict materialistic emphasis in relation to spiritual things, their strong sense of divine presence, and the strong emphasis on communal rather

than individual style of living, had strong influences upon the type of Christianity which the Samoans have accommodated.

A similar outlook to life continued with the coming of Christianity. The inclusion of the new deity within the old framework of deities and spirits did not necessarily change their view of the world. The spirit-world of Christianity includes a multitude of spirits and supernatural beings. This framework fits within the Samoan spirit-world where the divine was seen to be involved with the daily activities of the people. The Samoans conceived the new *Atua* in the same framework of their own traditional deities and divine spirits. When people get sick, it is because of some violation of the moral values of the new *lotu*. The *Atua* becomes the moral sanction behind the new taboos associated with the *lotu*. The violation of Christian taboos may lead to physical punishment in the form of sickness and affliction from the Christian *Atua*. Many will seek reconciliation with the *Atua* through the *faiife'au* whom they respect as the medium between them and the *Atua*. The *mana* of the *Atua* becomes the means by which *aitu* related sickness and *aitu* possession were remedied and exorcised.

9. Summary

What do all these traditional beliefs and traditions about deities and spirits say about early life in Samoa?

First, the belief in the multiplicity of supernatural beings implies that Samoans see their everyday existence as closely related to and bound up with the activities of the divine and the supernatural. This close relationship suggests that the supernatural realm freely intermingle with the ordinary. Events do not happen on

their own, but they occur as consequences of one's relationship with the divine. There is always a supernatural explanation for the various events and activities that occur throughout life.

Second, life at present is only part of the whole existence of an individual which embraces the past, present and the future as one complete whole. Irwin speaks of the Maori concept of the past and future as holistic. He refers to the Maori term *nga wa o mua* which is inaccurately translated as 'the old times' or 'in the days gone by,' for *mua* means 'in front' which rightly indicates how the Maoris understand history as "not something which lies behind but that which is spread out 'in front' of the speaker."¹³⁴ In the same way also, one may understand the Samoan term for the past - *anamua*. *Mua* means 'in front' and *muamua* means first as in a line or in a list. *Tala anamua* does not mean events or stories of the past, but events that lie in front, and those who are alive participate by sharing in that ongoing process. Lazar refers to this traditional ideology in the continuity between the living and the dead. He finds that even today, Samoans immigrants in California abhor the practice of cremation of the dead as a violation of their belief in the continued presence of the dead.¹³⁵ *Tua'ā anamua* means ancestors, which again indicates the concept of ancestors and family dead not having gone in the past but 'out in the front' all leading and sharing with those who follow them their experience and their wisdom. This is why the advice and guidance of the ancestors are of great significance to families when important decisions are to be made. In this way, the whole divine order of the *atua*, *tupua* and *aitu* continue to be part of the present life of the Samoan people. The past, present, and future, are not only complementary, but they are holistically conceived within the traditional Samoan time schedule.

Third, the Samoans do not see their world as a closed entity with its own and independent natural rules and laws that govern it. Since creation, the world has been open not only to activities of the *atua* or the deities who originally live in the *lagi*, but also those of the spirits of the dead, the *aitu*, *tupua* and *sauali'i* who live in the underworld of *Pulotu*, *Fafā*, or *Sa le Fe'e*. These supernatural beings constantly invade human existence since they are also a part of that world. They are not understood as dead, but as living spirits, and they will continue to share and participate in the everyday activities of the living. The Samoans continue to acknowledge this reality and they understand the existence of these supernatural beings as a natural feature of their world. A strict division of things between the divine and the ordinary does not exist in their view of life, and thus the *aitu* and all the other spirits including the new *Atua* continue to pervade and influence their everyday existence.

Fourth, traditional religion put a lot of emphasis upon doing things the right way rather than on abstract beliefs and philosophical systems of doctrines. Religious activities are important and they are the necessary components of their spirituality. Beliefs are conveyed through rites and rituals and adherence to right discipline is essential for maintaining a good relationship with the divine deities and spirits.

C. CHRISTIAN WORLD-VIEW

1. Introduction

The Samoans received their first contact with Christianity through Tonga, where Methodists had succeeded by 1827 in converting the king of Tonga. Several Tongans married to Samoans had settled in south Savai'i and they secured a

following for the new religion by 1828. John Williams and Charles Barff led the first LMS mission to Samoa in July, 1830. Their ship the *Messenger of Peace* arrived at Sapapalii on the island of Savaii, one of the home villages of the paramount chief Malietoa. Through the interpreter, Faueā [a Samoan orator] who thoroughly expounded the purpose and importance of their mission, Malietoa indicated that he was keen to accept the new *lotu*. John Williams refers to their successful arrival as due to the timely death of Tamafaigā, a notorious chief of Manono, whom Faueā had anticipated as the main obstacle to the introduction of the *lotu* in Samoa.¹³⁶ Williams had brought six Tahitian and two Cook Island teachers whom he had left to the care of Malietoa. These early Polynesian teachers were instrumental in the introduction of Christian teaching and worship, and were responsible for the success of mission in its pioneering stages.

The arrival of the Wesleyan missionary Peter Turner at Manono in 1835, brought about the official presence of the Wesleyan mission in Samoa. This official presence was however short-lived. In 1839, Turner had to leave on orders from the Wesleyan headquarters in London. John Williams does not refer to the subject in his *Journal*, but he claimed later that in 1830, he and Barff had come to an agreement with the Wesleyan mission at Tongatapu assigning Fiji to the latter and Samoa to the LMS.¹³⁷ Despite the absence of Wesleyan expatriate missionaries, some of its adherents had continued to maintain their separate churches with the assistance of Tongan teachers. In 1857, the Methodist mission was re-established under the auspices of the Australian Conference of the Wesleyan Methodists; but like the Roman Catholic mission which arrived in 1845, it gained the support of only a minority of Samoans. Davidson points out that "the history of the LMS as the mission with which the majority of the people were associated, is thus, broadly, the history of the Christian church in nineteenth century Samoa."¹³⁸ The LMS

emphasis in teaching people to read and write, and the priority given to the translation of Scripture by the early missionaries has tremendous impact upon the people's perception and understanding of the new *lotu*.

2. Bible translation

One of the main strengths of early Christian mission in evangelising came through its effort in the translation of the Bible into the vernacular language of the people. Lammin Sanneh has rightly pointed out that the language of a people is

the intimate, articulate expression of culture, and so close are the two that language can be said to be synonymous with culture, which it suffuses and embodies.¹³⁹

Mission entails the process of involvement and communication, and Sanneh points out that the two characteristic ways of evangelization are either through diffusion or translation, with the former as characteristic of Islamic mission, and the latter as the "vintage mark of Christianity."¹⁴⁰ Christian Protestant missions strongly encouraged the translation of the Bible into the vernacular as part of their strategy for mission. Sanneh praises mission effort in translation because genuine translation involves the process of reception and adaptation, and it makes the recipient culture the authentic destination of God's salvation. He rightly points out that a genuine and an authentic access to Jesus as saviour, redeemer, and also as healer, can only come through cultural self understanding.¹⁴¹

One of the main thrusts of early LMS mission work in Samoa involved teaching the people how to read and write. Translating the Bible into the Samoan language and teaching the people to read and write was one of the LMS priorities in mission. This was possible because of the commitment of early missionaries to convert the Samoan tongue into a written language. George Turner, who first joined the

Samoaan LMS mission in 1841 after a narrow escape following an unsuccessful seven months in Tanna, New Hebrides, was very much involved in translation work right from the beginning of his mission assignment. He reported that by 1850, the whole of the New Testament was completed and 15,000 copies were printed by the British and Foreign Bible Society. Five years later, the whole of the Old Testament was translated and printed. Within a period of about 25 years since the LMS missionaries first arrived in Samoa, the whole Bible, both the Old and the New Testaments, was translated and printed in the Samoan language.¹⁴² Teaching people to read and write became of utmost priority and a very significant means of evangelising the Samoan people. The translation and the availability of the Bible to early converts meant that they were able to learn and understand of their Christian faith through the reading of Scripture. Turner mentioned the great eagerness of the locals to learn of the *lotu* through the Bible, and there was great response to mission classes on reading and writing. For example, out of an aggregate population of 2152 people in 8 villages, about 551 children and 902 adults attended day schools run by missionaries and local teachers.¹⁴³ The establishment of the Malua Theological College in 1844 to train local teachers and missionaries not only for mission work within Samoa but also to other Pacific islands such as Papua New Guinea, Kiribati and Tuvalu [Gilberts and Ellice], New Caledonia and Niue, indicated the great need for teachers to teach people to read and write and also to teach and preach the new faith. A public confession by Makea, a Rarotongan convert whom John Williams brought with him on his second visit to Samoa in 1832, revealed the similar results of mission work in Rarotonga. As a testimony to the success of mission work in Rarotonga, Makea spoke of the benefits that Christianity brought. Emphasis on translation and the opportunity to read and write came as one of the most significant benefits from LMS mission.

We enjoy happiness to which our ancestors were strangers; our ferocious wars

have ceased; our houses are the abodes of comfort; we have European property; books in our own language; our children can read, and above all, we know the true God and the way of salvation by his Son Jesus Christ.¹⁴⁴

The Bible in the vernacular language undoubtedly enabled many Samoans to learn more of their new faith. It became as in the words of Lammin Sanneh, "the great force in people's understanding of Christianity."¹⁴⁵ However, translation could lead to different notions of things, especially when a translator comes from a different culture from that of the translation. Sometimes, there would be dual notions of things, the Western notion and the indigenous.

3. The shift of meaning

i. *Tagaloa*

Although *Tagaloa* was the high and supreme deity within the Samoan pantheon and the creator god of traditional mythology, the term was never used to refer to the God of the new *lotu*. Instead, the generic term *atua* which meant deity was used to refer to the Christian God. Samoans were polytheists, and Turner refers to the superior gods as *atua* over against the lesser divinities which include family *aitu* and *tupua*. *Tagaloa* was identified as an *atua* like other national and district deities. The fact that the term *Tagaloa* was not used to translate Yahweh, Adonai, or Elohim, suggests that the early translators doubted whether the traditional concept of the supreme deity was adequate to convey the full implications of the Christian deity. Traditional religion had no mention of a worship of *Tagaloa*, neither was the deity involved with the daily activities of the people. He was only significant in relation to creation, and though he was acknowledged to be at the apex of the hierarchy of deities, yet he was so far removed from life to be of any

direct significance to the everyday life of people.

Christianity is a monotheistic religion with a strong emphasis on a supreme deity, God or Yahweh. In traditional Christianity, Jesus is seen as the incarnation of the Word of God and so no less divine than God himself. The emphasis on the sovereignty of God is in some ways similar to the concept of the supreme *Tagaloa*, who lived in the ninth heaven, and who was the creator of the world. The Christian God unlike *Tagaloa*, is believed to be active in the affairs of his people. The Samoans had family deities and spirits which were much closer and more accessible to people. It was to these lesser deities that the people prayed and invoked for help in times of need as well as in healing and exorcism. People sought help and advice from their own personal deities and spirits. Many believed that these were the deities that protected them, and who also disciplined them if they failed to perform their duties and responsibilities. It was not *Tagaloa* that they had to appease and be reconciled with, but family *aitu* and ancestral spirits. These divine beings were more important to them than the high god.

The Christian emphasis upon the one, sovereign God closely corresponds the traditional concept of the supreme *Tagaloa*. However, the remoteness of *Tagaloa* from human life distinguished it from the Christian God. The concept of *Tagaloa* does not fully represent the Christian deity. His aloofness and lack of personal accessibility was filled by the existence of lesser divine beings. Kamu points out in the conclusion of his thesis¹⁴⁶ that the traditional god *Tagaloa* was the same god as the one introduced by the missionaries. Kamu's conclusion falls short of acknowledging the major difference that existed between the traditional concept of *Tagaloa* and the Christian *Atua*. *Tagaloa* was the supreme god in the hierarchy of divine beings, however, he was not directly involved with the affairs of the people.



The everyday life was the responsibility of the family deities and spirits. On the other hand, the supreme deity of the new *lotu* was not only responsible for all creation, but at the same time, he is believed to be present and actively concerned in the daily affairs of his people. The Christian belief in the one God as experienced in Jesus Christ who performs all the functions attributed to *Tagaloa*, as well as those of the lesser family deities and *aitu*, meant that the term *Tagaloa* was inadequate to convey the concept of the Christian *Atua*. The Christian God not only accommodated the functions attributed to *Tagaloa* but also those of the family deities and spirits. The use therefore of the term *Atua* instead of *Tagaloa* may be the most appropriate terminology to convey the concept of the Christian deity. *Atua* represents not only the functions of superior deities but also those of family deities and spirits. These characteristics of the traditional spirit-world conveyed by the generic term *atua* were all accommodated within the concept of the Christian God.

Christianity with its strict and uncompromising monotheism in the worship of Yahweh could mean the alienation of traditional deities and spirits from the framework of Christian divinities, relegating them to the category of pagan deities, demons and evil spirits as one may find in the Bible. Lammin Sanneh writes,

Christianity carries with it an irreconcilable attitude to polytheism, and owed this temper to its Judaic heritage. There is only one God or one source of true divinity, and other deities cannot be autonomous centres of divinity without encroaching on this sacred territory. However it is approached, polytheism in the Judeo-Christian view is an unsustainable fragmentation of divine power, and then it weakens faith and trust in that power, then it deserves to be opposed.¹⁴⁷

The early writings of the missionaries on Samoa showed a negative reaction to the traditional beliefs concerning the multitude of divine spirits and deities. Turner mentioned that at an early stage of mission work, the worship of the traditional

deities were referred to by the missionaries as the "service of Satan."¹⁴⁸ Thus the Samoans were actively discouraged from worshipping their own deities and divine spirits; their spirit-world was identified with pagan idols and images, which were condemned as inconsistent with the worship of Yahweh [*Ieova*]. They became identified as demons and evil spirits such as those referred to in the gospels. The term *tupua*, which meant the deified ancestors, is used to translate the concept of images and idols generally in the Bible [cp. Exod 20:4]. The same term is used to translate the 'pillar of salt' [the remains of Lot's wife when she looked back to the cities of Södom and Gömor'rah; Gen 19:26]. The same also can be said of *aitu* which are seen as in the same category as ghosts, demons and evil spirits in the gospels. Even though evil spirits and demons are not translated as *aitu* in the gospels, the negation of *aitu* in early Christian mission and churches today as evil powers against people and the *lotu*, reduced them to such negative entities.

With the conversion to the new *lotu*, the sanctity that once surrounded the paramount chiefs [*ali'i*] as earthly descendants of Polynesian gods was gradually transferred to chiefs in general, as the elect of the Christian *Atua*. The Christian *ali'i* would speak of the society as a hierarchy with the *Atua* instead of *Tagaloa* at its apex. The offering of libation of 'ava for the *Atua* instead of for the traditional deities indicates the transfer of allegiance and respect from the old system to the new *lotu*. This transfer may to some extent seem nominal since the old framework still operates with only the names of the deity altered. Many still believe that traditional spirits are very much present, and traditional healers are often sought in the search for an explanation, remedy and a solution to the many problems that may arise. Forman writes,

The incorporation of Christian memories into island life did not necessarily mean the banishment of the old deities to the realm of unreality. Many people continued to recognise the existence of the old spirits, although believing them

to be inferior to God.¹⁴⁹

ii. *atua, ali'i*

The term *Atua* with a capital *A* is used in the Samoan translation of the Bible to refer to God [*Elohim*], as in Genesis 1:1. The name Yahweh in the first translation [1855] is simply a transliteration of Jehovah [*Ieova*]. However, in the "light revision" of the Samoan Bible in 1969, Yahweh is translated *Ali'i*, meaning a paramount chief in contrast to a chiefly orator [*tulafale ali'i*], or an orator [*tulafale*]. *Ali'i* means lord, and in the context of the Samoan classification of chiefs, *ali'i* implies a paramount chief in relation to lesser chiefs [*tulafale*] in the hierarchy of the *matai* system. The term *ali'i* does not deny the existence of other *ali'i* but the supreme among the hierarchy of *ali'i*. In the 1969 revision, the reference to Yahweh and Jesus Christ as *Ali'i* might not necessarily be understood by the native speakers in terms of 'the one and only' lord and god, but the supreme and paramount chief within the hierarchy of *ali'i*. Deities mentioned in the Bible other than *Elohim* and Yahweh are translated as *atua* with the small *a*. These deities are identified as other gods [*o isi atua*], and as foreign deities [*o atua 'ese*; Ex 20:3]. The traditional deities and family spirits are known as *atua o 'āiga, o aitu o 'āiga, o tupua o 'āiga*. They are not classified in the same category as foreign deities in the Bible. However, they are a category of their own, very much respected outside the church where they are referred to in Samoan oratory and within the framework of the traditional and ceremonial etiquette of the Samoan people. The uniqueness of the Christian's God is indicated by the definite article *o le* without any qualification to indicate whether it is a family, district, or national god. *O le Atua* can mean no other than the God of the new *lotu*.

iii. *tupua*

The term *tupua* is translated by Milner [1966] to mean an 'idol' or an 'image'. This is how the word is used in both translations, [1855, 1969]. The concept of idol or image implies the notion of inanimate objects which people use as objects of worship. In Exodus 20:4, *tupua* means a 'graven image' or an 'idol'. This contrasts a meaning from the traditional concept of *tupua* which comes from the verb *tupu*, meaning "to grow, to arise out of, to occur, to happen."¹⁵⁰ The usage of the word *tupua* also suggest the meaning of something which is dynamic, alive and growing. Therefore, both etymologically and usage, the word *tupua* suggests life and growth. It indicates the living not the dead spirits of ancestors and family *ali'i*. Unlike inanimate objects, they are human spirits, alive and present among the living. The association of the term *tupua* with the concepts of idols and pagan images in the Bible deprives the term of its original meaning and significance. Traditionally, Samoans did not have many carved images of wood and stones; their *atua*, *tupua* and family spirits were incarnated in living nature and among its *ali'i*. *Tupua* were living spirits whom people believed to be present and active in daily life. Today, when Christians speak of *tupua*, the implication of dead images and idols which are man-made comes to the fore, a loan meaning from the concept of idols and images in the Bible. However, the deified spirits of *ali'i* and ancestors are much more than dead images. In fact they are human spirits believed to be alive and present within the family, and they are often invoked as guardians of family members and traditions. One may find within the setting of Christian worship that *tupua* means idols and images, while outside the church, *tupua* implies spirits which are alive and present. The *ali'i* and heads of families are often addressed as *tupua o 'āiga* which indicate that they are deified spirits of families. Such an ascription bears the notion of family chiefs in direct succession to the

living spirits of ancestors. In Samoa today, *tupua* is honoured as one of the three paramount *ali'i* in the islands and the bearer of the title is thought to be in direct succession to the living deified spirits of family ancestors.

iv. *aitu*

In Pratt's early dictionary of the Samoan language, he describes *aitu* as a "spirit, a god, or a feast in honour of a god."¹⁵¹ *Aitu* was a synonym for *atua*, meaning deity or god. The same meanings of *aitu* are also referred to in the revised version of Pratt's dictionary edited by Whitmee 16 years later. However, Milner's dictionary which came almost a hundred years later, has no reference to *aitu* as a synonym for *atua*. He defines *aitu* in terms of ghost or spirit. Milner's use of the term has a negative connotation. For example, he points to the use of the term as an adjective in the sentence: *E leaga le fanua e aitua*. It translates, "The land is evil because it has many *aitu*."¹⁵² The change of meaning may be observed in the term *aitu*, from that of a deity or spirit, to a divine entity which is evil and malicious. It is most likely that the development of the meaning of *aitu* from something respectable to a malicious demonic force, is a consequence of Christian negation of such divinities within its spirit-world, an understandable response of the *lotu* to anything that may compromise its strict monotheistic framework.

The traditional understanding of *aitu* as deities like *tupua* and *atua* has changed considerably through the impact of the *lotu*. The strong and uncompromising monotheism of Christianity has undoubtedly relegated the traditional divine order of the Samoans into those of 'other powers' and 'other principalities' which are outside the orthodox divine order. The *aitu* are being identified in the same category as

the demons and evil spirits mentioned in the gospels. What else can they be other than the evil beings that caused harm and sickness to human beings? However, the framework of evil spirits and demons in the New Testament does not quite correspond that of the Samoan *aitu*. The *aitu* was not necessarily evil, nor its inflictions an outcome of its malicious nature; the activities might be understood as warnings or disciplinary actions for the failure of family members to fulfil either their duties and responsibilities or to abide within the traditions of the family. *Aitu* represented a divine order within the Samoan society which functioned to maintain and protect the integrity of its traditional value system and beliefs. Interestingly enough, despite the negative label attached to them by the *lotu*, the *aitu* continued to operate as the guardian of Samoan values. This time, the religious tradition is seen as endorsing not only traditional values but also those of Christianity. Thus we find Samoans possessed by the *aitu* admitting that their affliction was due to their failure to continue within the Christian worship required by their deceased parent. For example, one young woman was possessed and the cause given by the *aitu* possessing her [who claims to be her dead father], is that she left the Congregational Church of the family and joined the Roman Catholic Church. She must give up her present affiliation, and resume the family tradition within the Congregational Church.¹⁵³

The *aitu* when identified with the evil spirits and demons of the gospels automatically becomes a negative entity, not only in that it originates from the realm of evil as opposed to that of good, but its intention and motivation are those associated with malicious and evil beings. The *aitu* of the family dead and the deified spirits of *ali'i* were not necessarily malicious; they could be respected and helpful entities towards family members who upheld the good values of the family and the society. The traditional divine beings are the guardians of the

cultural values of the community against those who violate them.

4. The *Siovili* cult

One of the problems that early Christian missions faced on the return of John Williams in 1832 was the existence of other teachings all of which were in some way inspired by Christianity. The largest of these was the cult originating with *Siovili*, who had seen the LMS and the similar movement [*Mamaia*] at work in Tahiti. The *Siovili* cult as it was known, presented the LMS mission with an ardent foe in the early part of the nineteenth century. The movement is said to have been started by Joe Gimlet, a wayward Samoan sailor who had travelled widely in the Pacific [even as far as Australia], and may have had earlier contact with a similar *Mamaia* movement in Tahiti. The *Siovili* cult has incorporated prophecy, spirit possession, miracle working, and the millennium in its rites and doctrines.¹⁵⁴

The cult expressed a local expectation of Christianity as the religion which would bring about material wealth and goods as seen in Western culture.¹⁵⁵ The movement with its promises of ships laden with material goods like muskets and beads, revealed that the Samoan expectation of Christianity was already an attempt to 'appropriate from below' the power and *mana* of the new *lotu* and the new *Atua*. The *Siovili* movement drew a lot of support in the first few decades of the *lotu*. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, it had diminished significantly as a separate movement. Since the cult's disappearance, Christianity has maintained a view of the world and of life which reflects the aspirations of the movement. A materialistic approach to Christianity and a unified perception of the physical and spiritual within daily life, underlies the appropriation of the Christian

faith within the traditional framework of reality in Samoa.

5. *Lotu* and taboo [*tapu* and *sā* both mean taboo in Samoa].

The traditional taboo system continued within the context of Christianity. The new *tapu* system emerged from the study of the Bible.¹⁵⁶ The Bible is translated as *Tusi Pa'ia* [holy book] but it is also referred to as *Tusi Sā* meaning a taboo book. Both ascriptions imply the divine origin of the book. Like all traditional objects which have the taboo, the Bible was considered as possessing the *mana* of the *Atua*, so that disrespectful treatment and false swearing upon the Bible may lead to punishment from the *Atua*. The Ten Commandments provided the basis of the new *tapu* system. The various aspects of the Christian religion such as the church buildings, furniture and the residence of the *faiife'au* are all part of the taboo system associated with the new *lotu*. The Holy Spirit is referred to as *Agaga Sā* [taboo spirit] which indicates its supernatural character and *mana*, and at the same time, differentiates the Holy Spirit from other traditional spirits. The church building is known as *falesā* [taboo house], and certain rules and taboos are devised to regulate proper usage of and behaviour in such premises. Sunday is strictly observed as sabbath. Sunday is called *Aso Sā* [taboo day], and strict rules are observed as taboos in order to maintain the sacredness of the Lord's day. Early missionaries were strong sabbatarians who believed that on the Lord's day, there should be neither work nor play.¹⁵⁷ Samoan Christians responded enthusiastically to the recognition of a taboo day which fitted well with their own taboo system. The recognition of a sacred time, a taboo day, fitted with the older ideas about religion, a substitution for their traditional festivals and also a demonstration of the power of the Christian *Atua*. The many taboos associated with Christianity were believed to have been sanctioned by the *mana* of the new

Atua, that violation would lead to physical punishment in the form of sickness and physical misfortunes inflicted by the *Atua*.

6. Christianity and *fa'a-Samoa* [Samoan culture]

Samoa has been a Christian society for more than 160 years and with the impact of Christianity, many changes have come not only in the religious beliefs but very much so in the way of life. Samoa has gone through many decades of change and adaptation to the new *lotu* with its new value and belief system. The blending of the traditional understanding of the supernatural with the new *lotu* has provided some distinctive marks in the type of Christianity that the Samoans practise so vigorously. Charles Forman points to the island church's understanding of Christianity which presents what is to the Westerner a strange combination of views yet an understandable and a very biblical one. It has simultaneously a worldly view of religion and a religious view of the world. He writes,

many were not inclined to make the sharp distinction to which sophisticated Europeans are accustomed between the material and the spiritual or the natural and the supernatural. The two categories flowed back and forth into each other.¹⁵⁸

There is undoubtedly a very strong sense of the unity between the spiritual and the material within the form of Christianity that is practised in the islands. There is the great emphasis put upon the external practices and the visible aspects of the Christian religion. Christianity has to be an active and visible religion and not simply a personal faith and an inward change of heart. External rules and rituals, elaborate church buildings, strict observance of Sunday as sabbath, regular church attendance, wearing white on the Sunday, church taboos, open charity to the strangers and visitors, very generous giving to the church and the *faife'au* [pastors] are all very important marks of Samoan Christianity.

The church buildings are important in people's concept of the church; Samoans tend to look on the concrete ^{rather than} the abstract side of things. As Forman rightly points out, "where the church building was impressive, they found religion impressive."¹⁵⁹ Material things appeal to the Samoans understanding of religion. Spiritual things must always be associated with material. For them, religion is not just a spiritual phenomenon, but has to be expressed outwardly in the form of rites, rituals, disciplines and rules, buildings, and a visible and distinct class of *faife'au*. The blessings of the religion, like its curses, must also be very visible and abundant in physical and material form.

Religion is not something to be hidden and contemplated in private but has to be expressed openly and publicly. Private prayers and private meditation have little place in the Samoan concept of religion. Religious rites, rituals and the offering of gifts are public acts of worship performed, which are understood as conveying a significant spiritual dimension. It is rather hard for a Westerner to understand the public nature of the offering in the church, since in the West, one's offering is a private affair. Every offering made to the church by the members is publicly proclaimed, an aspect of Samoan Christianity which draws a lot of criticism from outside observers. Forman points out that "an observer often remarked on the deep piety on the one hand and gross materialism of the people on the other."¹⁶⁰ However, this open and materialistic approach to spiritual things was something engrained within their own traditional concept of reality, where the spiritual and the physical are closely integrated.

A powerful God is made known in the activities ascribed to it. The central location of church buildings in the Samoan villages is symbolic of the place of the

church in village life. John Garrett writes that

Chapels made of solid stone were built to dominate the villages. The church stood as a sign of the partnership between pastors, the *matai* and God.¹⁶¹

The whole life of the village was permeated by religion in which prayers and services are conducted for every kind of activity. For the birth of every baby, the dedication of every house, the departure or the arrival of any family member to or from a long journey, for anyone who is sick, prayers are offered either by the head of the family or by the *faipe'au*. Forman writes,

the necessary counterpart of all this was their sturdily materialistic emphasis in relation to spiritual things. ... Prayers were used to secure success in fishing and other endeavors and for protection against natural enemies.¹⁶²

Because of the great significance attached to the externals of religion, church discipline was and still is a significant mark of a good Christian. The traditional understanding of *agasala* [sin] is a violation of rules or customs which would bring about punishment from the deities and *aitu*. Traditionally, *agasala* is an act of external disobedience which could be set right by the payment of fine and the fulfilling of the ritual of *ifoga* [traditional penance] to the party concerned. Thus sin within the Christian context is seen as an external violation of church rules which brings about the wrath of *Atua*. Such violation can lead to physical punishment either by the church authorities or by sickness and physical misfortunes brought about by the angry *Atua*. Punishment for sin must come in visible form, and thus every misfortune and sickness implies a sin.

The *mana* of the traditional deities and *aitu* was seen throughout the daily activities of the people. It pervades the whole life of the community. Such concept of the continual presence of *mana* is continued in connection with the new *Atua*. God is not involved only with a part of life nor remote from all existence,

but is in and over everything. In this way, Samoans are able to ascribe all activities to the power and *mana* of God. People live with a strong sense of divine presence and matters of their common life are constantly being referred to God.

The concept of an evil personal spirit such as Satan did not exist in the traditional Samoan spiritual system. Satan as a supernatural being which is understood within the framework of the new *lotu* as the source of all evil, an independent adversary of God, is absent from the Samoan realm of divine beings. The Samoan world-view does not have a trickster like *Maui* of the Maori which Irwin refers to as similar to the European poltergeist. Irwin writes,

The aborted fetus, as it was not a completed human being, was greatly feared. It would seem to be rather like the European poltergeist. A good example of this is found in the myth cycle of *Maui*. *Maui* was an aborted fetus and, although later join the human race, he proves to be troublesome, a trickster with malicious tendencies, who challenges both men and the gods and only finds his humanness in the failure of his last challenge [to gain immortality for man] when he dies.¹⁶³

In the traditional Samoan society, the source of evil and suffering is set within the framework of the family and society generally. The cause of sickness, misfortune and suffering, is not sought in some external divine being from outside the confinement of the family and the community. However, it is within the setting of the family and society and the nature of the relationship between those alive and the dead, as well as the relationship to their deities and spirits, that suffering and evil activities may come about. The spirits that people traditionally worshipped and respected are the same divine beings which are responsible for causing sickness and physical pain to them. The nature of the relationship between the living members and the family spirits determines the course of events, either beneficial or damaging to family members. The malicious *aitu* that sometimes cause harm are no other than the *aitu* of their own family spirits who may have had discontented former

lives, and therefore have come back as *aitu* to take revenge. They may by nature be evil and nasty characters, and therefore, their spirits would likewise become malicious *aitu* when they die.

Despite the fact that Satan was a concept foreign to the traditional religious system, yet the Samoans were able to adopt such concept of an evil being within their modified system. The absence of a traditional entity to which personal and cosmic evil could be attributed has been mitigated in the Christian concept of Satan and the evil spirits. The driving wedge that the *lotu* had inserted between good and evil beings, polarises the traditional spirit-world over against the Christian divine realm. Undoubtedly, this has led to the categorising of family *atua* and *aitu* within the group of divine beings which are outside God's realm, and consequently, they are identified as forces different and contrary to the *Atua*. The concept of evil entities in Christian Samoa was taken over from the evil spirits and demons in the gospels, yet these traditional spirits were not understood as foreign entities, but as the spirits of the dead who through their own failure in life had brought such condition upon themselves. The concept of Satan is not of a divine being separate from and foreign to human beings, nor should it be understood as an outside personality that constantly harasses humanity from its evil and demonic realm; but an evil being active within the framework of the family and community. Freeman points out that Samoans try to explain Satan as an alternative power to God which is present in human character. He writes,

Samoans at present acknowledge that one part of its character is under the power of God, another part of it is under Satan.¹⁶⁴

There is a tendency to externalise the responsibility of evil action or behaviour of a person by blaming *Satani* [Satan] or the *tiapolo* [devil], both loan words from Christianity. However, despite attributing the causes to these entities, they are at

the same time, understood to be internalised within our own human nature and character. Therefore, life is seen as a continuing struggle between the forces of evil and good within each individual. Bradd Shore reports a similar portrayal of Satan by a minister who was trying to explain Samoan existence today as being "an ongoing war between Satan and God within each person,"¹⁶⁵ and it is common to hear a Samoan account for having violently attacked someone, by saying, "Satan overcame me."

Such understanding of these negative forces within Christian Samoa follows closely the traditional and holistic view of the world, where all beings, both divine and human, exist and belong together within the framework of the family and community. Evil beings emerge from people within the family and the community. Satan is one of them, not necessarily by nature but by one's own design, intention, and activities.

D. SICKNESS AND HEALING

1. Introduction

In Samoa today, there are two bodies of beliefs and practices relating to health and healing. One is widely believed to be indigenous and the other introduced. The indigenous framework of understanding sickness and healing gives emphasis to the influence of supernatural forces in the causation and remedy of illness. This pre-contact model was relatively stable in a community which was very much isolated and free of contact from the outside world as the case was of the Samoan islands in the latter years of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries. During this early period, biological remedies were not conceived of nor thought to

be effective, and the apparent isolation of the islands from contact with the West helped kept the islanders free from some of the Western health hazards. MacPherson writes,

In Samoa before 1830, the range of illnesses which the medical paradigm had to explain was limited by minimal contact with the outside world and by beliefs and practices which reduced the risk of environmental illnesses.¹⁶⁶

Within this early context, all serious illnesses and many less serious ones were thought to be produced by the supernatural agents of various types known by the generic term *aitu*. The identification of the offended and the offense made possible the execution of an appropriate remedy and intervention usually focussing on the appeasing of an *aitu*. Cluny and La'ava Macpherson pointed out that "the availability of this supernatural paradigm apparently meant that the development of a secular, biological paradigm was unnecessary."¹⁶⁷ However, things changed when the islands were open to regular contacts, some temporarily and others more permanently with European visitors and missionaries. Hence, the traditional concept of causality and remedy became inadequate and ^{too} limit to explain the impact of new epidemics and other types of afflictions which were the direct result of contact with the outside world.

2. Sickness within the early-contact period

One of the consequences of the Samoan contact with Europeans in the beginning of the 18th century was the onset of many unknown diseases and sicknesses which the local people then had no immunity against. Early accounts by the missionaries showed how devastating the effects some of these diseases had upon the island communities. John Williams reported severe cases of influenza in 1837 which raided the islands for long periods of time, sometimes, even up to seven months.¹⁶⁸ William Mills, a missionary in Apia wrote in May 1839 of the

devastating effect of influenza in the islands.

For several weeks past, influenza has been prevailing to a most alarming extent over all the islands of the group. .. The primary symptoms are very similar to what they are in England, but the secondary effects are far worse.¹⁶⁹

Similar reference also to influenza was recorded by Alexander Murray who was stationed at PagoPago, American Samoa in 1839.

This meeting was held at Leone on the Wednesday of May, having been delayed on account of an epidemic. .. This disease which was literally universal carried off 30-40 persons. It has been I have no doubt the means of spiritual food to some.¹⁷⁰

George Pratt an LMS missionary on the island of Savai'i also wrote in November 1840 of the influenza epidemic that was affecting the population of the islands.

We have lately been visited in these islands with a disease much resembling influenza. Formerly, many of the natives died of it but this seldom happen now, where the natives are able to obtain medicines.¹⁷¹

These flu epidemics were also mentioned by Turner who pointed out that the epidemics occurred every year and often lasting for a period of at least a month.¹⁷² Other diseases like whooping cough and mumps were recorded in 1849 and 1851 respectively. Whooping cough lasted for several months and such epidemic was tragic especially with children,⁵⁰ that a good many was recorded to have died from it.¹⁷³

Early missionaries were very much involved in attempts to help the local people against the onslaught of these new epidemics. In the record of the "Minutes from the Meeting at Apia 4 April 1837 of the Samoan Mission," there was a request for a supply of "salt and other cheap medicines to be entrusted to the Native Teachers for the sick."¹⁷⁴ Samuel Wilson in his letter on the 7 April 1837 wrote of the great demand from the Samoans of mission medicines and salts for their illnesses.

...and useful medicines of which a great proportion must be salts. I hope you get a good proportion of medicine as the calls for it among these islands are continually reiterating in our ears.¹⁷⁵

Charles Hardie on the 7 April 1837 mentioned of the importance of the role of tending to the sick in the mission field.

The visiting of the sick and the administering of medicine and advice has tended in a high degree to gain us favour of the people. Having administered medicine with success in several cases of severe illness my number of patients rapidly increased. The desire of people indeed for what they called *vaila'au a le Atua*, the medicine of God, became so strong that the people crowded [sic] with their sick from all parts of the island. I have as many as 100 patients of a morning the greater part with diseases of the eye. .. Persons of all parties have come for medicine and advice. In this way, the attention of the people to the words of your missionaries has been obtained and favourable impressions conveyed to all the island. .. My labours among the sick are now much lessened having but little medicine to give to the people. We feel it very painful to see the people languishing under disease whilst we want sufficient supply of suitable medicine for their relief.¹⁷⁶

Turner mentioned two resident medical practitioners among the Europeans at Apia from whom the Samoans also sought medical help. European medicines were eagerly sought after; so much so, that every missionary was obliged to have a dispensary and to set apart a certain hour everyday to give advice and medicine to the sick.¹⁷⁷

The impact of these new and unknown diseases like influenza, whooping cough, mumps, etc., and the failure of the indigenous method of healing to deal with them successfully, led to the expansion of the old healing paradigm to include the new understanding of sickness and healing introduced by the early missionaries and European settlers. The acceptance of the new system of healing did not wipe out the indigenous model; they continued to operate alongside each other for many years and even today. The existence of both ways of understanding health and healing has led to the indigenous paradigm being categorised as *ma'i Samoa* [Samoan sickness], and the introduced as *ma'i Papalagi* [European sickness]. Both these concepts have continued to exist within the early Samoan communities, with the people resorting either to one or the other or both simultaneously, in their search for a successful remedy of their ailments. Cluny MacPherson has pointed

out that the reasons why the Samoans did not abandon their old model of understanding sickness and remedy in favour of the new Western model are twofold.

i. First, the illnesses which their own paradigm had explained so well continued to afflict Samoans, and there was no reason to suppose that the *aitu* who had dominated their lives for so long had suddenly relinquished their power. Even the Samoans who were converted to Christianity did not, to the missionaries despair, abandon their belief in the power of the *aitu*. The role of supernatural agents in sickness, then, was not denied. It is acknowledged today. But this belief could not, on its own, explain new patterns of illness.

ii. Secondly, the missionaries and other Europeans were not particularly successful in preventing or treating the illness among their own ranks. The mission record is a depressing one involving a remarkable number of deaths, miscarriages, protracted illnesses, and departures from the field on account of sickness. This vulnerability was due to limited medical expertise and also to the fact that many arrived unaccustomed to the climate and living conditions which they found in Samoa. Since only a few missionaries were medically qualified [such as Turner, Bullen, Macdonald and Pratt, each of whom had some medical education], most were obliged to fall back on prayer and a small range of herbs and simples in cases of illness. The tragic record of the missions can hardly have impressed the Samoans with the superiority of the medical practice which visitors introduced; in many respects, they suffered worse health than the Samoans.¹⁷⁸

The survival of these indigenous understanding and practices in health and healing continues to influence Samoan thinking despite the development and progress in medical science and the health care system in the islands today. Many Samoans would still see the relevance of their old model alongside these new advances in medical knowledge. Some of the recent literature on healing portray this popular belief in the supernatural causality of illness and physical misfortune as very much alive and important in people's concept of causality and remedy, and as a result, they will continue to seek remedies and well-being within that indigenous framework.¹⁷⁹ Thus, alongside the modern medical practices of healing, the traditional model continues to exist with the patients simultaneously moving from one to other in search of a lasting cure.

3. Indigenous sickness and healing practices or *ma'i Samoa*

Turner and Brown both have lists of pre-contact illnesses that the Samoans suffered from. These sicknesses include pulmonary consumption [*māmā pala*], paralysis often in the form of hunchbacks [*tuapi'o*], eye infections [*ma'i mata*], skin diseases especially skin ulcers [*papala*], boils [*ma'i faisua*], elephantiasis [*mūmū* or *kupa*], and some rare cases of leprosy [*lepela*], epilepsy [*ma'i maliu*] and lunatics [*vale*] which were commonly ascribed to demonic possession, as among the most common illnesses that the early Samoans suffered from.¹⁸⁰ Stair pointed out that because of the nature of the climate and open living, they give rise to many forms of consumption like coughs, colds, inflammation of the chest and lungs, fevers, rheumatism, pleurisy, diarrhoea, lumbago, diseases of the spines, scrofula, etc.¹⁸¹ Turner and Stair both observed that the Samoans were not great users of herbal medicine as the Tongans were, however, they were much more daring in their surgery, lancing ulcers with shells or shark's tooth, local bleeding for inflammatory swellings, and rubbing of affected area with coconut oil. Bathing wounds in the sea was also considered to be a common practice for healing wounds.¹⁸² The traditional paradigm did not deny the natural causality and remedy of some illness, however, the emphasis was very much on the supernatural framework. Although many of the sicknesses may be identified medically during the contact period, yet the Samoans have continued to regard them as being caused by the supernatural forces who had the power to enter into a person [*ulutino*], causing the physical ailment.¹⁸³

i. Causality

Indigenous understanding of sickness and healing was very much related to the way

the people understood the world and the many supernatural forces and deities in the form of *atua*, *aitu*, *sauali'i*, and *tupua* which they believed to be integrally involved in the everyday affairs of the people. Brown pointed out that the Samoan world is full of spiritual beings, some good and some malicious, and sickness is often attributed to the activities of these supernatural beings.¹⁸⁴ He indicated that sickness was generally believed to be caused by the anger of some deities, and it was the responsibility of the family *matai* who may also be the healer, to identify the reason of the anger of the *aitu* in order to formulate an appropriate intervention.¹⁸⁵ Turner mentioned one belief among the early Samoans that for a person to kill and eat anything considered to be under the special protection of his/her deity, was supposed to be followed by the god's displeasure, thus resulting in sickness or death.¹⁸⁶ Sometimes family deities were called upon to intervene against another deity that might be causing the problem. In some cases, acts of propitiation through sacrifices and gifts of offerings might help to avert the calamity.¹⁸⁷ Stair mentioned *aitu* being rebuked in order to free victims from their influence and activities. Such cases implied that the spirits causing illness were doing it for no other reason than of their own malicious and evil nature. He quoted some of these traditional rebukes.

O thou shameless spirit, could I grasp you,
I would smash your skull!
Come let us fight together.¹⁸⁸

It is hard to know whether the spirit was originally regarded as malicious that such a stern rebuke was necessary, or that it was through the influence of the new *lotu* that the spirits were consequently portrayed as evil and malicious and therefore had to be rebuked.

Shore has rightly pointed out that "causality is linguistically suggested in Samoan by the morpheme *fa'a* which, appended to a verb, implies that the action is caused by

an external agent."¹⁸⁹ The concept of causality in relation to the verb 'being sick' [*ma'i*] forms [*fa'a ma'i*] which means a disease or an epidemic. The term implies the condition as being caused or produced from outside the person and by an outside agent. Shore indicates that in relation to sickness, the Samoan notion of causation requires neither spatial nor temporal proximity of an agent to the object or effects. As a result, a sickness may spring from one or more evil deeds committed in the distant past, or from a curse that had been pronounced a great distance from its intended victim.¹⁹⁰

Samoans generally see human relationships as important in matters affecting physical health and general well-being. Macpherson points to the close connection between health and illness to the culture and social relationships of Samoan people.¹⁹¹ Obedience and submissiveness to the will and authority of the family deities personified within its chiefs and *matai* system was very important in maintaining the well-being of the community. The traditional ethos demanded individuals to maintain strictly what was believed to be the acceptable way of life, and failure would lead to punishment by the authority. Albert Wendt's novel *Pouliuli* presents a true portrayal of the realities of Samoan existence when a 67 year old chief attempts to renounce the *fa'a-Samoa* [the Samoan way of life]. The old man was strongly advised by one of his friends that "the individual freedom you have discovered and now want to maintain is contrary to the very basis of our way of life."¹⁹² Physical punishment in order to maintain social order is a basic characteristic of the Samoan ethos.¹⁹³ The *matai* punishes members of the family and village for violation of community rules. Likewise, many would conceive punishment from deities and *aitu* in the form of sickness and physical misfortune if they fail to maintain the social norms of the society and the religious ethos of the community.

Sickness therefore was understood as more complex than identifying it simply as a physical problem. It may come as a form of punishment, an indication of a breakdown of relationships, either between family members themselves, or between family members and their own family spirits and deities. Sickness was believed to be an indication of an *aitu's* displeasure. In cases of illness, the normal response of family members was to review their past behaviour and actions in order to identify any breach of conduct. Turner wrote,

As the Samoans supposed diseases to be occasioned by the wrath of some particular deity, their principal desire in any difficult case was not for medicine, but to ascertain the cause of the calamity. The help of the village priest or *taulaitu* is sought. In this search for the cause, each member of the family confessed his crimes, or any curse invoked to another family member, must be revoked.¹⁹⁴

It was important to identify the *aitu* or person offended and the offense committed for the right execution of an appropriate intervention. The correct response may lead to the removal of a deity's displeasure and the victim was freed to resume life again. In such understanding of illness, the focus was on the symptoms, not in order to diagnose what was physically wrong but to identify who was offended and what offense had been committed. Turner mentioned that the sick bed often formed a confessional, before which long concealed and almost revolting crimes were disclosed.¹⁹⁵

The unburied dead occasioned great concern among family members. Those lost at sea or at tribal warfare were often believed to be responsible for some of the illness that members of the family suffered from. Their *aitu* were considered not to have rested from inflicting family members until proper burial rituals were done.¹⁹⁶ Turner mentioned of beliefs about the spirits of the dead who had the power to return and caused sickness and death to family members. These spirits

frequently returned and took up abode in the various parts of the body, causing pain and suffering to victims. It was important for the family members to ensure good relationship with dead relatives to avoid any infliction from them.¹⁹⁷ A few years ago, the *Afamasaga* family of *Fasito'otai* failed to rebury the remains of its chiefs who had been moved from original burial grounds to give way to the construction of a new school. This was considered an act of discourtesy to the family dead. Within a short period of time, three consecutive family *matai* have fallen ill and died immediately and prematurely. This has caused a lot of concern within the extended family that led to the immediate ritual of *liutofaga* [the ceremonial reburial of the dead]. A similar incident is mentioned by Ineke M. Lazar in his research carried out among the Samoan migrant community in Los Angeles, California. He recorded an account of a woman's sickness in 1976 which she believed was caused by her failure to perform properly the ritual of *liutofaga* for her father and grandfather.¹⁹⁸ Such beliefs are still very much alive and significant within the Samoan community today.

The traditional understanding of sickness as caused by the anger of a deity remained very much in force even within Christian Samoa today. The *Atua* of the new *lotu* has become the deity to be feared. Violation of Christian values and moral codes of behaviour may lead to punishment in the form of sickness inflicted by the *Atua*. Freeman has rightly pointed out that

while the Samoan Christians talk frequently of the love of God, they also view him as a god who may become 'full of anger for sinful people,' and will strike down in infirmity or death those who have broken his commandments.¹⁹⁹

Christian values and morality have become incorporated into the framework of causality and remedy of illness. The *faiifeau* [minister] in the village becomes the new mediator like the traditional healer between the sick and the *Atua*. People

would often seek the help of ministers in cases where they thought the illness has been caused by the moral failure of either the victim or of the parents, or any other family member. Thus one may find in the Christian community the expansion of the old paradigm of causality and remedy which includes the belief in the *Atua* and Christian values and morals. The inclusion of the *Atua* did not mean the abandoning of the *aitu* and other traditional divine beings from their world-view. However, it meant that the old framework has been expanded to accommodate further additions to the spirit-world. The traditional *aitu* has also included the new values, morals, and places of worship within the framework of values that they sanction. People believe that family deities are not only protective of traditional values but also of the Christian morals, since the *lotu* is already an integral part of their cultural identity. A violation of the Christian value-system could bring sickness and punishment from a family *aitu*.

Another common cause of sickness among the Samoans came through the violation of taboos. The Samoan society like many Polynesian societies has a complex system of taboos. These taboos were sanctioned by traditional deities, and to violate them meant retribution from family deities and *aitu*. The taboo system was popular in Polynesia during the contact period, in fact the term taboo is a Polynesian word said to have been used first in 1784 by Captain James Cook in his description of his voyages round the world. Captain Cook referred to a number of severe restrictions observed by the people of Tonga, Tahiti, and other islands. In Tahiti, a consecrated person offered for sacrifice was called *tataa-taboo*, and in Tonga, it was reported that the word was used for things not to be touched.²⁰⁰

The word taboo has now become a part of the general vocabulary of the English

language, and the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines it as a system or an act of setting apart a person or object as accursed or sacred. It also means 'ban or prohibition.' Taboo carries the meaning of something forbidden by tradition or social usage. Joseph Hong suggests that the distinction between 'sacred' and 'unclean' did not exist in the primitive beginnings of taboo and that the original meaning could well be only 'prohibition.'²⁰¹ This may well be true considering that these early Polynesian communities saw little or no division between the sacred and the secular as both spheres co-existed closely within their view of the world. In the application of various taboos in Samoa, the sense of prohibition was significant, however, these prohibitions were understood to have been sanctioned by family deities and spirits. Usually, a taboo was believed to be enforced by supernatural sanctions so that anyone who had violated a taboo automatically suffered a physical consequence or misfortune. Taboo may also be enforced by social sanctions, and severe punishments were inflicted upon those who violated these taboos.

Restrictions based upon fear of divine punishments played an important part in Polynesian taboo system.²⁰² The institution of taboo was closely associated with the concept of *mana*. It provided a form of ritual prohibition which safeguarded individuals and the community generally from the potency of *mana*.²⁰³ In Samoa, taboo provided guidelines for behaviour and individual responsibilities to certain aspects of Samoan life. It protected individuals from overstepping the boundaries that might lead to punishment from society or from deities and spirits. For example, the taboo of chiefs protected individuals from coming into contact with a chief who was believed to possess the *mana* of family deities. The taboos associated with trees, places, birds, and reptiles, deterred people from destroying trees and places and from killing and eating some special birds and reptiles which

people believed to have the *mana* of family *atua*. Restrictions in relation to *faleaitu* [spirit-houses] protected the wrong people from entering these places and inciting the displeasure of the spirits. All these taboos were thought to have been sanctioned by the supernatural and to violate them might lead to sickness and physical suffering. Both Krämer and Williamson indicated that a taboo ordained by a family meant that the object tabooed was brought under the protection of the family *aitu*, and this act helped safeguard the object from unnecessary tampering by outside people. A taboo played upon the fear and respect people have of their deities. To abuse it meant the violation of the *mana* of the deity which sanctioned it.²⁰⁴

There were many taboos observed by the pre-Christian community which helped protect and safeguard certain people and properties in the community. Turner and Brown bore witness to the complexity of the taboo system practised by the Samoans when missionaries first arrived.²⁰⁵ For example, various taboos were associated with important chiefs [*ali'i*] in the villages; taboos which safeguarded women and children from the influence of *aitu* and evil spirits; taboos which protected certain properties, birds, animals, and reptiles; taboos associated with various life activities like birth, initiation, marriage, sexual functions, deaths and burials. These various acts of prohibitions carried certain forms of punishments when violated. Because they were believed to have been sanctioned by deities, people expected punishment if they violated them.

Despite the advances of scientific and medical practice in Samoa, and the widespread acceptance of European ideas concerning illness, many have not abandoned a teleological style of thought in which they sought not only to understand how a disease occurs in the body, but why it occurs in this particular

person rather than in that one, why accidents happens to one person and not to the other. Such way of viewing sickness continues to influence people's concept of causality and remedy of illness.

ii. *Ma'i Aitu*

Ma'i aitu literally means 'spirit sickness'. The term *ma'i aitu* could mean sickness or a bodily affliction which may be caused by an *aitu* or spirit, but it can also be used specifically to refer to a case of possession by an evil spirit. Lazar interprets *ma'i aitu* to mean 'ghost sickness' as in demon possession which is often caused by the intervention of supernatural entities from a variety of sources.²⁰⁶ It seems that the second meaning is much more popular in Samoa today, even though, the first meaning, that is of a sickness caused by a supernatural spirit which may also include possession, would be more comprehensive of the term itself.

Brown has earlier pointed out that many of the indigenous diseases and illness were regarded as being caused by the *aitu* who had power to possess individuals causing physical malady to the person concerned.²⁰⁷ Sickness and physical affliction caused by the *aitu* can be understood in two different categories. The first involves the possession of the person by the spirit causing various forms of pain and discomfort, and the second implies that the sick person is not necessarily possessed by the spirit, but that the sickness or physical disability is attributed it.

a. *Ma'i aitu* as possession

In the first category, the *aitu* is said to have taken control of the person so that he/she may no longer has control of oneself. John Williams recorded an earlier

case of *aitu* possession in his *Journal* of 1832. He wrote,

Various symptoms are associated with such phenomenon. A feeling of coldness and emptiness as the *aitu* takes over control of the victim. Often the victim had a feeling of his head getting large. The eyes often bulge, accompanying by acts of spitting and grimacing.²⁰⁸

Many such cases are mentioned in recent literature. The form remains similar to those recorded earlier which shows the continuation of such paradigm today. Goodman indicates a common belief that when an *aitu* enters the body, it does so through the armpit. It remains there in the lower abdomen or in the back of the neck. Lazar describes the following symptoms of possession.

The symptomatology of *ma'i aitu* follows a prescribed cultural pattern. Without the obvious warning, a woman displays stereotyped shaking and convulsive movements. At the onset, she may also exhibit a violent behaviour, including spitting, kicking, biting and screaming. In such cases, several people [up to four adult males] are needed to hold the woman down. As the attack continues, the eyes dilate, accompanied by frequent bouts of vomiting. Behaviour is consistent and predictable.²⁰⁹

Lazar's description confirms my experience of a similar case a few years ago. It involved a young woman who was overcome by such experience following a long period of confinement in her home during an early period of pregnancy. The convulsive movements, the dramatic upsurge of strength, the change of voice imitating that of the *aitu* concerned, the constant reference to the offense and failure of the victim to fulfil certain responsibilities and rules, and finally, the eventual calming down to normality after hours of intensive agitation, all these were thought of as characteristic of traditional possession.

Ma'i aitu commanded the great concern of families. Many victims were violent and aggressive, often beside themselves so that it was difficult to physically control them. Patients often spoke in different voices and tones supposedly the voice of the *aitu*. The spirit often revealed the cause of possession which in many cases involved the failure of the individual or families to fulfil certain responsibilities to

the dead or to other family members. A public apology and a pledge to fulfil their duties often led to the spirit leaving and the person returned to normality.

Aitu possessions were not normally brought to the attention of medical doctors. They were and still are treated as *ma'i Samoa* and therefore, they are under the care of healers [who are normally heads of families] and pastors. Sometimes, special healers were designated as responsible for particular *aitu* possession - these will be mainly the *aitu* which are recognised much more nationally than the local ones. In dealing with possession, folk medicine and *fōfō Samoa* [massaging the body with coconut oil] were normally used in the hope of prompting the spirit to leave. Various leaves were gathered and prepared either for oral medication and anointing or for rubbing the body of the one possessed. Goodman recorded the treatment of possession by a healer.

The name of the plants I used are *matalafi*, *fuefue sina*, and *onoono*. [Milner:1966 lists *matalafi* as 'genus *Phychotria*', *fuefue sina* as 'Liane, the moonflower creeper'] I used 40 leaves on each kind. I put the leaves together and chopped them on a piece of wood, then added the chopped leaves to water. I made the patient to drink some and put some in the ear holes and nose holes. Then I sprayed the body with it, and I rubbed the body with a piece of old *lavalava* - material. When this medicine is used, the patient shakes and goes into convulsions, which shows that the *aitu* is angry. Other kinds of plants are used for treating *aitu*, including *avaava aitu*, *aloalotai* and *aloalovao*. There are also *nonutogi*, *a'atasi*, *akeake*, *mamala*, *papata*, *aute Samoa* [Samoan hibiscus], *lauti*, *mautofu*.²¹⁰

The medicine that the *taulaitu* prepared from the plants is called the *vai aitu* [the spirit medicine]. The composition [although it was almost common knowledge], was regarded as a well-kept secret by the healer.²¹¹ Some *aitu* were despised by family members because of the nature of their former existence and their threats were not taken seriously. In dealing with despised *aitu*, the family may decide that no conciliatory gesture was necessary, or that such a deed has already been made. In these circumstances, a decision will be made to have some form of retaliation against the spirit. The *aitu* was warned that its remains will be

destroyed if it continued to harass family members. Goodman records *aitu* being punished by "pouring hot water into their graves."²¹²

Similar techniques were used in other Polynesian societies in exorcising demons. In the Marquesas, a traditional healer would "stroke the afflicted part of the body, gradually drawing or forcing out the demon, which was finally caught and destroyed, as it emerged whistling."²¹³ In Tonga, massaging was one of the traditional modes of exorcism.²¹⁴ The use of fire and heat was commonly accepted as having destructive effects upon evil spirits. In the Society Islands, one method of exorcising evil spirits was by a heated stone wrapped in cloth. This heated stone was then thrust to the side of the body which the healer thought harboured the spirit. The same principle is shown in some of the healing rites of the Marquesans whereby fire was made either over or under the sick person.²¹⁵ Sometimes, strong smelling leaves and plants were used to ward off demons from their victims.²¹⁶

On the other hand, healers often showed great respect of *aitu*. The *aitu* were addressed in terms of respect such as *lau susuga* or *lau afioga*, ascriptions which may only apply to family deities and *matai*.²¹⁷ The ascription *Lau Afio* is used only in reference to the Christian God. The sense of respect of *aitu* is understandable since they were originally known as family deities and ancestral spirits. The possession of a family member comes as a warning that some responsibility had been neglected. Samoans believed that this was one of the ways ancestors communicated with them. *Aitu* possession came as a normal way messages were passed to family members from their ancestors. These messages may come as warnings if certain duties were not fulfilled, or sometimes, a preference was voiced on some significant family matter, especially in relation to the

appointment of a new *matai* of the family.

In dealing with *aitu* possession, the healer first tried to establish the identity of the spirit responsible and the motive behind it. It was only after establishing the identity and the cause that the healer was able to successfully effect an intervention. Possessions by significant *aitu* such as *Telesā* and *Sauma'iafe* often occurred as punishments for the violation of traditional rules and customs of the community. Such possessions often needed immediate reconciliation through the rite of *ifoga* [traditional apology]. The practice of *ifoga* was and still is considered an humiliating experience which symbolises an act of deep remorse and shame.

In Samoa today, the role of the healer is sometimes expected of the pastor. Cases of *aitu* possession are reported to the pastors in the villages. Because *aitu* is condemned in the church therefore many pastors would identify *aitu* possession as an evil intrusion of malicious spirits into the life of a person. *Ma'i aitu* is considered within the *lotu* as having no positive function apart from being the work of evil and malicious beings. The role of the pastor is to expel the spirit in the name of Jesus. Unlike traditional healers who addressed *aitu* in terms of respect, pleading with them to leave, the pastor is expected to rebuke and to command *aitu* to leave. The pattern by which ministers conducted exorcisms followed closely that of Jesus in the gospels. The technique of expelling *aitu* was the result of a parallel between Samoan *aitu* and evil spirits and demons in the gospels which did not fully take account of the significant differences between the two cultures.

In traditional Samoa as indeed of Polynesia, spiritual mediumship was an institution of great significance, and constituted the main avenue of communication with the spirit-world. Possession by the deities was an integral part of all major rituals, but

beyond this, the medium concerned himself with the whole range of Samoan life.²¹⁸ John Williams in his *Journal* [1832] gave an account of deity-possession as it occurred in ancient Samoa.

The first symptoms of a person being under the influence of the gods is a violent muscular agitation...the inspired person shaken most dreadfully and becomes frantic. Whatever he says or does while in this state is looked upon not as the act of man but of the god.²¹⁹

It was believed that the gods often spoke to people through their mediums the *taulaitu*, and for many Samoans, there could be no more palpable and explicit revelation of a god than this, and it was given immediate and absolute belief. *Aitu* possession served a dual function in early Samoan society. It was a form of punishment on those who violated traditional norms and moral values of community, as well as a means of communication between the divine and humans. Through possession, the *aitu* passed on messages to family members. On the other hand, spirit possession may occur only as a form of mediumship between spirits and people and the *taulaitu* would act as the mouthpiece of the *aitu*.

b. *Ma'i aitu* as spirit inflicted illness

The second group of *ma'i aitu* did not involve direct possession; however, physical symptoms and illness were often attributed to a supernatural cause. This concept of understanding sickness was popular in early Samoa. The nature of the remedy used suggested a supernatural cause. Moyle mentioned a few of these afflictions which were remedied by a form of exorcistic incantation, although the spirit itself was not necessarily present. Some of these include *mo'omo'o*, [severe head pains], *fe'e* [octopus], *to'omaunu* [hiccoughs], *osofā* [stomach pains], and *laoa* [choking] naming a few.

Mo'omo'o

Both Turner and Krämer stated that the word *mo'omo'o* refers to a disease of the lungs which Turner identified as 'consumption' and Krämer called it 'phthisis'. Crawford indicated that both Turner and Krämer had misunderstood this sickness, however, he supported the diagnosis of Moyle which pointed to *mo'omo'o* as a type of severe headache.²²⁰ It is more likely that Turner and Krämer were mistaken by the very close pronunciation of *mo'omo'o* to *māmā* which means lungs. The sickness *mo'omo'o* has nothing to do with any form of sickness of the lungs today. It is *māmā pala* which is widely known as an infection of the lungs.

Symptoms of *mo'omo'o* involved extreme head pains, sometimes to the extent of causing blindness. The disease was generally preceded by unsettled weather and it would last for about a month and passes off as fine weather and steady tradewinds set in. In many cases, it was fatal to old people and to those who have been previously weakened by pulmonary disease.²²¹ Moyle pointed out that the sickness was believed to have appeared first during the *A'ana* War of 1830, just as the LMS missionaries, John Williams and Charles Barff and their party of Polynesian teachers first arrived at Sapapali'i.²²² Because of its coincidence with the arrival of missionaries, many Samoans would attribute the sickness to the white man and his new *lotu*.

Moyle mentioned many different kinds of *mo'omo'o* which affected various parts of the body; such as *mo'omo'o va o ivi* [aching of the joints and limbs], *mo'omo'o vanevane* [gouging *mo'omo'o* which causes severe headaches], *mo'omo'o ta le itū* [pains that affects the side above the waistline], *mo'omo'o oso* [sudden attacks of head pains], *mo'omo'o vivili* [drilling pains on the side].²²³ Natural causes have

been suggested such as excessive exposure to the sun and the effect of constant bending over, however, the influence of the supernatural was never dismissed as a possible cause of *mo'omo'o*. Moyle pointed out that many Samoans believed that the sickness was caused by evil spirits as a result of breaking a taboo.²²⁴

The treatment indicated the supernatural framework within which the traditional healers classified *mo'omo'o*. The use of incantations indicated that the concern was not organic but spiritual. The spirit causing the problem must be removed before any physical remedy was possible. One of the incantations recorded by Moyle goes like this.

Mo'omo'o e, Mo'omo'o e,
O le'ā ou velosia atu oe; [I will spear you]

Mo'omo'o, Mo'omo'o e,
Jump into the *ti* [a Polynesian plant]
Jump into the *vi* [a tree]
Stand on top of the housepost
Run into the forest
Escape into some far off place
I will spear you.²²⁵

The traditional healer performed gestures of trying to spear the victim as he chanted the incantation. The healer built a fire and pretended to jab the forehead of the patient with the hot charcoal. It was expected that there should be immediate recovery if the sickness was really *mo'omo'o*. Crawford pointed out that the earliest account of *mo'omo'o* appeared in the *Journal* of an early missionary, Henry Nisbet in 1843. The treatment was conducted by a local healer or *fōfō Samoa* which indicated the nature of the sickness as of supernatural origin.²²⁶

Fe'e or octopus sickness

Like *mo'omo'o*, *fe'e* was an affliction of the head. The headache was believed to

have come and gone with the rising and falling of the tide. *Fe'e* was attributed to one of the mythical deity who was also associated with the underworld, *sā le fe'e*. It was easy for Samoans to attribute the origin of *fe'e* to a supernatural origin. Moyle pointed out that *fe'e* was cured by no other technique than exorcism. He recorded a few incantations associated with *fe'e* sickness which implied a plea to the *fe'e* spirit to leave.

Fe'e, jump into the cave
Jump onto the rock; stand there, stand there,
Fe'e, jump onto the reef
Jump into the ocean; stand there, stand there,
Fe'e, jump into the cave; stand there, stand there,

While the words 'stand there, stand there' are said, the healer jabs at the patient's head, and then at himself.²²⁷ Another incantation mentioned by Moyle also bore the same idea of pleading with the *fe'e* spirit to leave.

Fe'e, flee over there
Fe'e, flee to the west
Fe'e, flee to the sea
Fe'e, flee to the ocean

The incantations used by various healers all reflected the familiar desire and longing for the spirit of the *fe'e* to leave its victim. It was significant that in order to cure the sickness, the spirit causing it must ultimately be removed.

To'omaunu - hiccoughs

Even simple cases of hiccoughs were assumed to be closely associated with the supernatural. This may well be the result of its close connection with death since the word *to'omaunu* is used also to refer to the final gasp of a dying person.

Moyle writes,

The *to'omaunu* is not a common ailment, but when it does occur, it is considered serious enough in one village at least to merit treatment by exorcism.²²⁸

In the course of the treatment, no medicine was used, however, the healer recited an incantation and fanned the patient's face. This was repeated until the hiccoughs stopped. Moyle pointed out that the incantation was addressed more to the patient than to the spirit causing the hiccough, and the directives in the text were meant for the patient to follow. It was the patient who must begin the treatment by the physical act of holding the breath, however, the treatment itself was sanctioned by the reference in the last line to a supernatural action.

*To'omaunu, to'omaunu, close your mouth, close your nose,
You were breathing through your nostrils;
Now give your breath to the spirits.*

Osofā - stomach pains

Today, stomach pains can be caused by anything ranging from what one eats or drinks to the various tensions, worries and anxieties one encounters in work and family life. However in early Samoa, stomach sickness like all other physical ailments, was attributed to the work of an evil spirit. Different kinds of *osofā* were suggested such as *osofā punimoa* [stomach pains which causes the difficulty of breathing], *osofā tu'itū* [stomach disorder which causes side pains], *osofā tulitā* [stomach pains that causes stomach disorder]. Moyle records incantations associated with the remedy of *osofā*.

*Osofā punimoa, osofā punimoa,
Flee, I'm about to punch you
Osofā tu'itū, osofā tu'itū,
Flee, I'm about to punch you
Osofā tulitā, osofā tulitā
Flee, I'm about to punch you.²²⁹*

The incantation for *osofā* treated stomach pains as being caused by some supernatural force, and thus the evil force was threatened to flee from the patient's body.

Laoa - choking

Choking from fish bones was not an infrequent occurrence in a village setting where the staple diet came from the sea. Although the inconvenience of a lodged fish bone in the throat was an obvious consequence of careless eating, yet, the incantation and rituals associated with the treatment of *laoa* again pointed to a supernatural form of healing. Moyle clearly sums this up when he wrote,

Although the situation of concern is not considered of supernatural origin, the treatment if it is to be successful must be carried out along with divine participation.²³⁰

In the course of the treatment, the patient was seated on a sleeping mat facing the sea. Then the healer waved a fan in front of the patient's face as the incantation was recited. The incantation called for the names of the spirits such as *Afu*, *Afo*, *Tafo* and *Asafo* to help effect the healing process. The chant was repeated three times after which, the patient was given water to drink. Sometimes, a gentle massage of the painful area of the neck was done first before the fanning and the recitation of the incantation. My own experience of the healing ritual which is still very much used today, shows that the incantation and the fanning are done both at the beginning and at the end of the ritual. The massaging comes in between and the drinking of water is always at the end.

The concept of *ma'i Samoa* and its remedy is considered indivisible within traditional Samoan mentality. The diagnosis and the cure become one and the same thing. The diagnosis of an illness proceeds simultaneously with the variety of remedies, and it is only when a cure is effected that the illness is positively identified. Thus the treatment helps diagnose the cause of the illness. Both the natural and the supernatural elements operate simultaneously within the sickness

condition of a patient, that what seems a perfectly natural cause for an illness is considered to be supernaturally or spiritually oriented. Thus, what seems to be an obvious natural cause for *laoa* is in fact classified as *ma'i Samoa*, and thus the diagnosis and the remedy is believed to be within the realm of divine influence.

Even minor ailments such as *puga* [the swelling of the groin], *ila* [mongolian tache], and *sila'ilagi* [carbuncle], were again treated not as natural illness and infection caused by some physiological deficiency, but rather as the outcome of the positive presence of an active though unseen force. The supernatural entities named in the incantations were not inventions of the healers, but rather spirits assumed and believed to have existed already.

The significance of traditional beliefs concerning supernatural spirits behind the causality and remedy of *ma'i Samoa* was not readily discarded despite the impact of modern medicine. *Ma'i Samoa* and indigenous healing operate very much within the framework of the reality of the spirit-world and divine beings which were understood to be inseparable from the physical realm. The physical conditions of people manifest spiritual reality. Therefore any sickness, infection and physical disability, indicates failure to maintain both physical and spiritual harmony with the divine. This is indeed a more holistic approach to matters that affect one's health and well-being. It springs out of an attempt to understand life and the world as a unity of spiritual and physical realities. Traditional concepts may seem outmoded in the world where medical science has practically every answer to problems that affect people's health and well-being; however, the reality of holistic and lasting healing, points beyond the confinement of remedies that are indeed strictly physical and organic. Even though anyone finds a physical cure from medical science, the fact that they may receive a spiritual healing as well had an added dimension to healing and to wholeness.

4. Traditional healing motifs and biblical illustrations

It is important to note that the traditional understanding of the causality of illness and misfortune has undoubtedly been re-enforced by similar biblical illustrations and motifs which were available to the Samoans much earlier through the translation of the Bible. Turner mentioned of a few examples which affirmed some of the traditional Samoan concepts of illness and causality. He wrote of some of the healing beliefs of the Samoans which may have been affirmed and re-enforced by their reading of the Bible. For example, reference to sickness as a consequence of sin is implied in some biblical texts [Num 5:21ff], and it would help confirm early beliefs that ulcerous sores, dropsy, and inflammation of the abdomen were consequences of special judgements of the gods for concealed thieving, adultery, and other crimes. The failure to conform to the traditional norms and moral values of the society provided another possible cause for sickness, and such motif may also be affirmed by some of the illnesses mentioned in the gospels. The paralysed men in Mark 2:1-12 and John 5, as well as the blind man in John 9, all imply the motif of sin and moral failure as a possible cause of affliction.

Curses could bring physical misfortune to those involved. Stair mentioned the traditional practice of finding out whether the sick person had been cursed and if so, the one responsible was entreated to remove the curse that the person may recover.²³¹ Similar motifs can be found in the Old Testament [Num 5:21-23; Jud 17:2] where a curse from Yahweh or from an aggrieved party could lead to severe illness, physical misfortune and even death.

The practice of *liutofaga* was an acceptable practice among the Israelites. Jacob

was embalmed when he died and later transferred to Canaan for proper burial [Gen 50:1-14]. In Jeremiah 8:1-2, there is a reference to some form of punishment of the nation because of their evil ways. This punishment involved the desecration of the remains of their dead princes, priests, and prophets. Instead of reburial, their bones were to be scattered, an indication of the extent of their demise. In Samoa, the failure to fulfil certain responsibilities to the dead of which one is *liutofaga*, may lead to serious sickness, *aitu* possession and physical misfortune to a family member. The rite of *liutofaga* has significant implications to the welfare of family members and therefore has to be fulfilled where necessary. The Congregational Christian Church of Samoa discourages the practice as symbolic of the worship of the dead and of family ancestors. Ministers were and still are advised against taking part in any ritual or worship associated with *liutofaga*. However, this has little effect as many would still have strong allegiance to the dead. Furthermore, the ritual was not condemned in Scripture. The Jewish patriarchs needed to be reburied in their home land, and there was evidence of Jewish reburials which predated AD 44.

In Samoa, diseases that affected important members of the society such as paramount chiefs [*ali'i*] and heads of families [*matai*], had been the cause of concern for family and village people. The traditional belief indicated that the affliction of significant members of the community was supposed to be occasioned by the anger of a deity. It may also be caused by a curse invoked by a family member. Hence, the family would be anxious and members will be going round various healers pleading to find out the cause of the illness. Such understanding of the causality and remedy of sickness in relation to *ali'i* and *matai*, Turner indicated that people found scriptural illustrations to support it. Their early access to the Bible had helped reaffirm some of their traditional motifs in illness. The

plague that came to Pharaoh as a result of taking Abraham's wife Sarai as his mistress [Gen 12:17] falls into such framework.²³² The traditional practice of family members and friends enquiring about the cause and remedy of an illness through the help of healers, and the giving of *meaalofa* [gifts] to those they have consulted also find a scriptural parallel in 2Kings 1:2.

A man with an unclean spirit [Mk 5:2] falls within the Samoan diagnosis of epilepsy and insanity, illnesses which are believed to be caused by evil spirits. The evil spirits in the gospels are said to have roamed through deserted and waterless places [Mt 12:43], seeking places of rest after they had been expelled. Similar beliefs prevailed in Samoa where the spirits were supposed to roam the bush and people who went far inland to work would scatter food as peace offering to them. Sometimes, they said short prayers for their protection in the bush.²³³

The concept of traditional taboos which are related to people and places is no foreign idea in the Bible. The paramount chiefs were considered sacred since they were believed to be direct descendants of *Tagaloa*. Thus their residences were isolated from the rest of the community and they were held with great respect and dignity. Turner points to the belief that ~~the approach of anyone~~ without purifications may result in swellings of the body and even death. Purification involved sprinkling with clean water.²³⁴ Christian taboos became significant with the advent of the *lotu*. The church building is known as *falesā* [taboo house], the Holy Spirit as *Agaga Sā* [taboo spirit], and Sunday is referred to as *Aso Sā* [taboo day]. The idea of the holy and set apart for God that no ordinary person could enter or touch for fear of being physically afflicted or punished is found in the Bible. The Ark of Covenant had brought instant deaths to the unworthy who approached it. The priesthood were the only ones designated to enter certain parts of the Temple

and to perform special religious functions. Anyone who violated such taboo expected to suffer punishment from God. The same may also be said of the words of the institution of the Lord's Supper [1Cor1:23ff]. The reference to many who are weak and ill as a result of unworthy participation points to the same framework of understanding sickness. The words of the institution of the Lord's Supper in worship services today still gives strong emphasis to Paul's warning to those participating unworthily.

These biblical illustrations and parallel healing motifs may have helped to reaffirm some of the traditional concepts of causality of illness and their prospective remedies.

E. CONCLUSION

Certain features may be highlighted concerning the life and beliefs of the Samoan people before and after its contact with the West. These characteristics are important in identifying how the society has developed and changed since its contact with Christianity and the West. The Samoan concept of sickness and healing was very much influenced by the way society understands life, the world, and the various forces, physical or spiritual that operate in it. The new *lotu* introduced beliefs which either changed or expanded some of the traditional concepts, and this has significant impact upon people's understanding of matters which relate to their health and well-being.

i. The Samoans see the Christian *Atua* in terms of their own family deities and spirits. Like the traditional spirits, the *Atua* has the *mana* not only to inflict sickness and physical punishment upon offenders but also the power to heal. The

mana of the *Atua* is seen as pervading the whole of life and existence. The *mana* is not confined to the spiritual realm only but one which is seen and active in the daily affairs of the people. People have a very strong sense of divine presence and their common life is constantly referred to God. Prayers are offered to secure success in the various aspects of life ranging from planting and fishing to include also prayers for health and well-being.

ii. Christianity was accepted as a communal act with little personal decision involved, and it was natural for the people to look to communal regulations rather than to personal conviction as the way to maintain Christian life. Emphasis is placed on individuals as parts of the community and not simply as individuals. The Christian religion is seen as a communal act of faith where one is held accountable to God within the framework of the community and family. Blessings come not only as a result of individual merit but as a consequence of the response of the whole family and community to God. Misfortunes of individuals are often understood as inflictions upon the family and therefore, the act of appeasement is seen as a communal responsibility. Private prayers and meditation are not as widely practised as the emphasis on corporate worship^{which} takes priority.

iii. The Samoans have a materialistic approach to religion. The external expression of the faith is a significant mark of Samoan Christianity. The apparent lack of division between the material and spiritual presents a kind of faith whereby the material and physical expression of religion is understood to convey the depth of spirituality. The Western division between material and spiritual realms is influenced by the view of matter as inherently evil. The close integration of the natural and the supernatural, the profane and the sacred in traditional view, has a strong impact upon Samoan understanding of Christianity. Many would see the

presence and influence of the divine within the many life activities and experiences of people as real and natural. The impressive church buildings, the strict observance of their system of disciplines, the maintaining of the many Christian taboos, the regular and compulsory daily family prayer time in the villages, the open and public generous offering to the work of the church and the upkeep of the *faiife'au* etc., all convey the marks of genuine Christian spiritual life.

iv. The concept of taboo which protects traditional customs, properties and people was closely associated with the *mana* of the traditional spirits. These taboos were strictly kept for fear of inciting the anger of the *aitu*. In a similar way, many of the church rules and properties have the same *tapu* which protects them from violation and misuse. The *Atua* is understood as a loving and merciful God, but at the same time an angry deity who punishes those who sin and violate *tapu*.

v. The Samoan brand of Christianity is a very legalistic one with a great emphasis on discipline. Forman writes,

Nothing about the Pacific island churches has been so noticeable as their systems of discipline. .. There was evidently much in the island situation itself that accentuated the disciplinary side of Christianity.²³⁵

Like traditional religion with its emphasis on right behaviour and correct rites and rituals, the form of Christianity in Samoa promotes a strong sense of right discipline and the right response in order to maintain good relationship with the spirits. A culture which puts family and community over individual interests sees the maintaining of relationships as significant. These relationships are highly regulated that maintaining them assures the individual of its place and well-being within the community.

vi. The concept of the spirit-mediums who act as intermediaries between the spirits

and people finds parallels in the creation of an elite order of *faiife'au* who perform similar functions as traditional priests. John Garrett writes,

The LMS introduced a key figure into the picture - the *faiife'au*, pastor, surrounded by his council of influential lay deacons. The pastors took the place of the priests and prophets of ancient Samoan religion as mediators with the unseen world. They were given good houses, inferior only to those of the highest chiefs in each village. They were honoured as men of God...²³⁶

The *faiife'au* has a very high status which is similar to that of an *ali'i* or paramount chief of the village. His properties like those of the village *ali'i* are protected by the *tapu*.

vii. Many Samoans continue to honor their spirit-world despite the impact of the Christian world-view. They see their spirits continually functioning as guardians of the social and cultural norms of their changed society. Not all *aitu* are classified as evil and malicious in the nature of demons and evil spirits of the New Testament, but there are good *aitu* and respectable members of the family whose activities are seen as punishments for the failure to obey and maintain certain moral and social norms of family life. Sometimes, the activities of *aitu* are interpreted as the means by which the good spirits convey messages or warnings concerning certain family responsibilities which need to be fulfilled.

viii. The adoption of Christianity has led to the old traditional religion and its divine deities and spirits becoming demonised. Christianity with its uncompromising monotheistic stand provides little room for the existence of traditional gods and spirits within its hierarchy. Instead of a more complementary and accommodating understanding of the divine and the ordinary in one whole, the system became dualised. It is God against the traditional spirits and deities. Sickness comes through the work of malicious *aitu*.

ix. The idea of Satan is adopted within the Samoan world-view. Satan or the Devil becomes the evil force, the trickster that corrupts people. However, instead of identifying Satan with an outside personality which invades and corrupts humanity from an outside realm, it is identified as a force within people which is responsible for evil in them. The concept of evil therefore, is understood within the context of human nature, human behaviour and human relationships. The family and the community are therefore the seats of evil activity and corruption. Bradd Shore points out that

Evil dispositions of actors are recognised in Samoan thought as inherent while, in accordance with negative ethics of constraint, virtue is commonly seen as the result of containment of these evil dispositions. Evil erupts or grows [*tupu* means 'to grow' and 'to happen']; it springs up [*oso*], and thus manifests itself in behaviour.²³⁷

Evil is not an outside force, but something inherent in human nature which occasionally manifests itself in human relationships within the family and society generally.

x. The traditional understanding of the world presents a very holistic approach to life, and this view remains significant among many Samoans. The more Western approach which dualised existence in terms of physical and spiritual, good and evil, gods and demons is also acknowledged. Both ways of understanding life co-exist, and people's reasonings operate between one or the other in relation to the various activities that confront them. This may be seen in how people conceive illness and physical misfortunes. Both concepts of *ma'i Samoa* and *ma'i Papalagi* remain, and people would often resort to one or the other or both simultaneously, in their search for a satisfying diagnosis, remedy, and solution of the problem.

xi. There is an integral relationship between religious practices and the general welfare of individuals and the community in Samoa. This close unity between

religion and life, spiritual and material, is a feature of Samoan Christianity today. Christianity is a material and tangible faith as well as spiritual. The benefits and curses of religion are also understood in physical and material form. Health and well-being of individuals and the community are seen as integral parts of their spiritual life.

Endnotes:

1. B. Shore, *Sala'ilua: A Samoan Mystery*, [New York:Columbia University Press, 1982], 3.
2. M. Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa*, [New York:William Morrow, [1928/1961].
3. J. Williams, *A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, [London:1837], 479; G.H. Scholefield, *The Pacific: its past and future*, [London:John Murray, 1919], 148.
4. J. Williams, *Missionary Enterprises*, 479; J.D. Freeman, *Margaret Mead and Samoa: The Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth*, [Harvard:Harvard University Press, 1983], 113.
5. J.W. Davidson, *Samoa mo Samoa*, [Melbourne:Oxford University Press, 1967], 46-48.
6. J. Williams, *Missionary Enterprises*, 461.
7. The primary meaning of *lotu* is 'system of worship'. It can also mean denomination; e.g. *lotu Metotisi* means the Methodist denomination, and *lotu Taiti* the Tahitian denomination, implying the Congregational denomination which first came to Samoa from Tahiti where the LMS first established its headquarters in 1797. *Lotu* can also mean a worship service. *Lotu* in Samoa specifically means Christianity. This is also true of other Pacific islands like Tonga and Fiji, where the terminology *lotu* specifically refers to Christianity. In the context of my thesis, *lotu* is Christianity.
8. J.D. Freeman, *Margaret Mead and Samoa*, 114.
9. R.P. Gilson, *Samoa 1830-1900, the politics of a multi-cultural community*, [Melbourne:Oxford University Press, 1970], 432.
10. J. Williams, *SSJ* 1832, Oct 22,23; cp. C. Wilkes, *Narratives of the US Exploring Expeditions*, [Philadelphia:Lea & Blanchard, 1845], II.78-79; V.28. Malietoa remained a polygamist until his death in 1841.
11. R. Crawford, *Lotu and Fa'a Samoa*, PhD Thesis, [Otago University, New Zealand, 1972], 107f, 122.
12. J. Garrett, *To Live Among the Stars*, [Geneva/Fiji:WCC and Institute of Pacific Studies, 1982], 86.
13. R. Firth, *Rank and Religion in Tikopia:a study in Polynesian paganism and conversion to Christianity*, [London:Allen & Unwin, 1970], 313; J.D. Freeman, *Margaret Mead and Samoa*, 174ff.
14. H. Hale, *US Exploring Expeditions during the years 1838-1842*, [Philadelphia:1846]; see J.D. Freeman, *Margaret Mead and Samoa*, 176.
15. J.B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, [London:Religious Tract Society, 1897], 210.

16. J. Fraser, "Folk-Songs and Myths from Samoa: *O le Solo o le Vā* or Song or Poem about Strife," *JPS* VI [1897], 19.
17. P. Munz, "The purity of historical method," *NZJH* 5:1 [1971], 1ff.
18. J.W. Davidson, "History:art or game? A comment on the purity of the historical method," *NZJH* 5:2 [1971], 117.
19. *Ibid.*
20. J.M. Davidson, *Samoa mo Samoa*, 441, fn 1.
21. P. Bellwood, *The Polynesians*, [London:Thames and Hudson, 1978, 23; For a general survey of Polynesian physical anthropology see W.W. Howells, *The Pacific Islanders*, [New York:Scriber's Sons, 1973].
22. P. Bellwood, *The Polynesians*, 20f.
23. *Ibid.*, 26ff; For a general survey of Austronesian languages see Pawley, A.K. "Polynesian languages:a subgrouping based on shared innovations in morphology," *JPS* 75 [1966], 37-62; idem. "Austronesian Languages," *Encyclopedia of Britannica, Macropedia* 2:484-494.
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25. J. Williams, *Missionary Enterprises*, 540ff.
26. R.P. Gilson, *Samoa 1830-1900*, 73.
27. T. Powell, *SSL*:3 Nov 1845; J.W. Davidson, *Samoa mo Samoa*, 64-68.
28. C. Barff and J. Williams, *SSJ*:1830, Aug.24.
29. R.M. Watson, *History of Samoa*, [New Zealand:Whitcombe & Tombs, 1918], 17.
30. L.D. Holmes, "Cults, Cargo and Christianity: Samoan Response to Western Religion," *Miss* 8[4], [1980], 471ff.
31. R.P. Gilson, *Samoa 1830-1900*, 73.
32. J. Williams, *Missioanary Enterprises*, 541.
33. M. Mead, *Social Organization of Manu'a*, [2nd ed.; Honolulu:Bp Museum Press, 1930], 84,86; idem. "The Samoans," *Cooperation and competition among primitive peoples*, ed. by M. Mead [New York:1937], 304.
34. Cp. J.D. Freeman, *Margaret Mead and Samoa*, 338, fn.1.
35. *Ibid.*, 180f.

36. J. Williams, *SSJ*:1832; Buzacott, *SSL*:1836; R.M. Watson, *History of Samoa*, 29; F.M. Keesing, *Modern Samoa*, 399; R.P. Gilson, *Samoa 1830-1900*; J.D. Freeman, *Margaret Mead and Samoa*, 174ff.
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45. W.W. Gill, *Gems from the coral islands*, II [London:Paternoster Row, 1871], 14; E.S.C. Handy, *Polynesian Religion*, Bp Mus Bul. 34 [Honolulu: 1927], 115ff.
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52. J.B. Stair, "Jottings on the mythology and spirit-lore of old Samoa," *JPS* V [1896], 34ff; idem. *Old Samoa*, 212ff.
53. E.S.C. Handy, *Polynesian Religion*, 11ff; Mead, M. *Social Organization of Manu'a*, 149-151.
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56. E.S.C. Handy, *The Native Culture of the Marquesas*, [B.P. Bishop Museum Bul 9 [1923], 327.
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60. J. Fraser, "The Samoan Ccreation Story," 168.
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66. A. Krämer, *Samoan Inseln*, I [Stuttgart:1901-2], 22ff, 104-7.
67. J.D. Freeman, *Margaret Mead and Samoa*, 18f.
68. J.B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, 212; R. Crawford, *Lotu and Fa'a Samoa*, 62 fn 168.
69. A. Krämer, *Samoan Inseln* II.195, n.3.
70. J. Fraser, "Folk-Songs and Myths from Samoa," lines 90-94; & 108-109.
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CHAPTER TWO

WORLD-VIEWS

A. DUALISM: THE WORLD-VIEW OF JESUS AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

B. THE WORLD-VIEWS OF TRADITIONAL AND CHRISTIAN SAMOA

Introduction

In this chapter, I need to compare and contrast the world-view of the New Testament with that of Samoa in relation to the nature of evil spirits and demons which are responsible for the causality of sickness and physical misfortune to people. The New Testament world-view may be seen as dualistic whereas the Samoan tends to be more complementary in their views of the spirit-forces, however, both give significant emphasis to the influence of these entities in matters relating to people's health and well-being.

The healing miracles of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels show that a large number of illness and physical maladies that people suffer from in the first century AD are often attributed to the work and influence of evil spirits and demons. Böcher conceives of all diseases as attributed to demons and all healing as originally exorcistic.¹ However, this is an extreme view as some scholars would rightly point out that the gospels do not attribute all illness to demons and evil spirits.² In fact, there are cases of sickness which may be ascribed to other causes. Some illness are believed to have been caused by sin and moral failure [Mk 2:2-11; Jn

5:2-18; Jn 9:1-3], while others may suggest natural causes [Mk 3:1-5; 5:22-24a; 35-43]. In cases of illness which are not attributed to demons, the form of healing is not exorcism. However, Jesus would sometime heal with a touch or a word of command which he may have uttered from a distance [Mk 5:41; Mt 8:13; Jn 4:50ff].

The central place of Satan in the gospels can hardly be questioned.³ In the synoptic traditions, Jesus is portrayed as in constant conflict with Satan and his evil forces. In the context of healing, many cases of sickness, disability and demon possession are attributed to the influence of evil spirits.⁴ The existence and reality of these forces against God provide a significant chapter in Jesus' struggle to establish the kingdom of God in the lives of people during his ministry. According to J.B. Russell,

Generations of socially oriented theologians dismissed the devil and demons as superstitious relics of little importance to the Christian message. On the contrary, the New Testament writers had a sharp sense of the immediacy of evil. The devil is not a peripheral concept that can easily be discarded without doing violence to the essence of Christianity. He stands at the centre of the New Testament teaching that the kingdom of God is at war with, and is now at least, defeating, the kingdom of the devil.⁵

To dismiss the reality of these forces as mythological would be a grave injustice, and it constitutes a failure to adequately consider what Kee notes as "the life world of the recorder of events".⁶ Demons and evil spirits were a reality of the time and therefore, they would constitute a vital role in problem-solving and other forms of remedial actions in relation to sickness and affliction.

In the Synoptic Gospels, Satan [Σατανᾶ]⁷ is referred to as the devil [διάβολος],⁸ as Beelzebul [Βεελζεβοὺλ],⁹ as the prince of the demons [τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων],¹⁰ and as the evil one [ὁ πονηρὸς].¹¹ Apart from the non-Markan version of the temptation of Jesus and the Beelzebul controversy in Mark, reference

to Satan or his other titles is rather sporadic in the synoptic traditions.¹² In his ministry, Jesus is portrayed as in constant conflict with Satan and demons.¹³ The devil is often presented to be at the root of the problem. Apart from his many acts of exorcism, Jesus also healed a disability which Luke ascribed to the work of Satan [Lk 13:10-17].

The development of demonology in the latter period of the Old Testament is often attributed to Iranian influence.¹⁴ The conquest of Mesopotamia in 539 BC by Cyrus certainly exposed the Jewish exiles to Iranian culture.¹⁵ The idea that demons are responsible for all moral and physical evil has penetrated deeply into Jewish religious thought after the exile, and it has significant impact on Jewish apocalyptic literature. It was during this period that the concept of dualism had shown significant influence in the religious thought of the Jews. The belief in the existence of two opposing cosmic forces helps to explain the origin of evil spirits and demons. In Jewish apocalypics and Qumran, there is evidence of opposing forces which resemble those of Iranian religious thought.¹⁶ Persian dualism is basic to the understanding of the world and of the nature of forces at work during the ministry of Jesus. T.W. Manson rightly points out that

The clearest evidence of Persian influence on Jewish theology is, apart from the general similarity of the two systems, the use of the name *Asmodaeus* for the chief of demons [Tobit iii.8]. This name is borrowed directly from the Persian *Aeshma Daeva*, the demon of violence and wrath in the later *Avesta*.¹⁷

James Barr suggests that the Persian religious influence upon late Old Testament literature and post-biblical Judaism is to some extent being over-stressed. Despite Barr's reluctance to fully commit the origin of much of the Jewish apocalyptic themes to Iranian religion, however, he was willing to acknowledge that

although the inner connections and causations of a source religion are

neglected in an exercise of comparison and influence between religions, it is intelligible that Jews might find stimulus in an element or pattern of Iranian religion, such as its dualism, its idea of resurrection, or its picture of the dethroned power penetrating back into the cosmos, even if they did not take over or even understand the inner bonds of cause and meaning that held these same things together within Iranian religion.¹⁸

Others also emphasize that older Semitic traditions may lie behind some of these motifs.¹⁹

In the light of the dualism of the New Testament, attention is given to the Samoan world-view and the nature of supernatural forces and spirits present. How would the Samoans conceive of these spiritual forces in the gospels? Do they represent a similar category of divine beings as one finds in the traditional Samoan spirit-world? Although the existence of traditional spirits and deities may at face value suggest parallels to those which Jesus confronted in his healing ministry, however, it would be premature at this stage to assume that these forces are identical in their nature, character and inclination with the spirit-world of Samoa. However, to conceive both worlds of sickness and healing within a framework which is supernatural rather than organic, is indeed an important common ground from which one may start to understand both systems. Emphasis is given to the various developments and changes that occurred within the traditional spirit-world through the impact of the West and of Christianity.

I propose that first century understanding of illness and misfortune which gives emphasis to spirits and demons lies deeply in the way people conceive of their world and the various spiritual forces present. This understanding of the causality of sickness reflects a similar view in early Samoa which continues to have relevance within the framework of sickness and healing in Samoa today. The New Testament framework of sickness and remedy is relevant and intelligible within traditional and

Christian Samoa, and it would be easier for Samoans to relate to the healing ministry of Jesus directly than by interpreting it through the framework of modern and Western Christianity. Margaret Barker rightly points out the importance of trying to appreciate the world-view of Christians in the non-Western world in an attempt to recapture the reality and significance of the ministry of Jesus to the sick and to those possessed by demons and evil spirits.²⁰

A. DUALISM

1. Introduction

The concept of spirit-forces behind sickness, possessions and physical disabilities in the Synoptic Gospels may be described as dualistic. They are identified as evil and unclean, and whose origin and polarised nature stand in decisive contrast to Jesus. Dualism normally implies a set of opposites. This set of opposites can be understood as the antithesis of two exclusive categories; for example, two spirits, two worlds, two ages, one standing in decisive contrast to the other, or in the case of ethical dualism, it implies two antithetical ethical characteristics such as light and darkness, good and evil, virtues and vices. Charlesworth identifies various forms of dualism such as psychological dualism of two contrast inclinations in a person, physical dualism of matter against spirit, metaphysical dualism of two absolutes represented by the concept of God on the one hand and Satan on the other, cosmic dualism of two opposing celestial spirits or beings, and eschatological dualism of two periods, the present and the future.²¹ These sets of opposites are antithetical, and they often represent polarised forms of existence and characteristics of contrast. However at the same time, they could be viewed as complementary, both together representing a more complete form of reality. Although one may

contrast the another, yet both would give a more complete understanding of the world and the realities involved. Despite the polarities of two worlds and the contrasting powers and forces within apocalyptic dualism, yet apocalyptic tradition sees at the same time the potential unity within this contrast. The upper and lower worlds, future and present are not essentially separate, but complementary. In fact, one can only be fully understood in the light of the other.²²

Dualism suggests the existence of two independent principles whose nature and activity reveal contrasting characteristics. The principle of dualism no doubt has emerged as an attempt to explain the stark reality of a world which is seemingly dominated by the presence of dualistic forces of whose influence upon humanity often lead to contrasting and polarised forms of existence. Such reality can be experienced in daily life and universally within a wide variety of cultures throughout history.

2. Old Testament

In comparing New Testament dualism with the Samoan world-view in relation to spirits and supernatural forces that influence human welfare, one can begin by looking at the Old Testament understanding of such entities. The Old Testament portrays significant information on Jewish understanding of sickness and healing and the various forces involved which undoubtedly influenced Jewish thinking during the ministry of Jesus.

The Old Testament acknowledges the influence of contrasting forces such as evil spirits and angels in the lives and activities of people. In the creation story, there is division in God's creation which may be understood as dualistic. The creation is

portrayed in a series of contrasting forms, such as, out of darkness and chaos God brings light and order, God creates heaven and earth, blessed conditions before the Fall and human fate after. The contrast is in some way complementary, although darkness and light help to bring out the reality of two different forms of life which characterize human existence. Although in the creation story God did not create darkness,²³ however, darkness was already a force in creation from the beginning just as much as light, and the contrast is a reality within the created. The presence of these dualistic forces in creation could be identified in the lives of men and women throughout the ages. To live in the light may mean a life of righteous attitudes and moral deeds, and of darkness, immoral and impious living. In the event of the Fall, the negative force behind the act is symbolised by the serpent which incites the first act of disobedience. There is no reference to the origin of the evil figure in creation, however, since the Fall, the existence of evil is widely accepted as a universal phenomenon.

It is a problem to explain the origin and continued presence of evil forces in the context of the belief in the one and sovereign Yahweh. The other cultures surrounding Israel may have a way out of this difficulty by ascribing the source of evil to one member of its pantheon. However, this is not possible for Israel with its uncompromising belief in the one and sovereign Yahweh. God must be responsible not only for good but also for evil. Isaiah records the words of the Lord to Cyrus whom he refers to as God's anointed.

I am the Lord, and there is no other. I form light, and create darkness, I make weal and create woe, I am the Lord who do all these things [45:5-7].²⁴

The words of Deutero-Isaiah go beyond the creation story of Genesis, and here, the writer includes darkness and evil within God's creativity. The pairing of the opposites such as light and darkness, weal and woe, good and evil, sickness and

health, tends to express the totality in creation and the conviction that God alone is responsible. He created good and evil forces. The duality of spirits from the one sovereign Yahweh differs from the Persian dualism which advocates the existence of two separate divinities.²⁵ Forsyth points out that the uncompromising sovereignty of the one God in Jewish faith has undoubtedly led to this most radical ascription of both forces to God.²⁶ The need to preserve the unity of Yahweh has made it necessary to portray God as ultimately responsible for all evil and misfortune in the world [1Sam 18:10f; 2Sam 24:15ff; 2Chron 18:18-22]. Lindstrom disagrees with this assumption. In his analysis of the Old Testament texts that tend to

- [i] identify Yahweh with hostile forces
- [ii] ascribe demons and evil forces to God's doings and influences
- [iii] ascribe the origin of evil in human life to Yahweh
- [iv] claim God as the author of all evil in national life

he comes to the conclusion that none of these assertions can be claimed from the Old Testament.²⁷

In Genesis, there is a reference to the fall of the sons of God through their association with the daughters of men [6:1-4]. In their contact with earthly women, they have produced children of iniquity. The fall of the angels has become a significant motif in later Jewish writings in their attempt to explain the presence and universality of evil in the world.²⁸ The activities of fallen angels have accounted for increased wickedness in people. The mythology of fallen angels reflects the failure of the sons of God to control their own passion and evil inclinations. They are said to have taught men and women the art of "magical medicine, incantations, the cutting of roots as well as knowledge about plants" [1En 7:1]. All wicked and violent deeds are said to have been incited by fallen angels such as *Azazel* who tempts men and women to adultery and corrupt conduct [1En

8:1ff].

In Job, Satan is referred to as one of God's sons who acts as the accuser of men and women before God [Job 1:6-12]. In some of the apocalyptic references, Satan who is associated in the heavenly court as the accuser and who acts only at God's command, is developed into that of an independent being and an adversary of God. Satan is not considered a counterpart equal to God but a fallen angel who leads demons and evil spirits against humanity and God. In Mark 3:24, Satan rules over a kingdom and he has a host of evil spirits and demons under his command. They are portrayed as a menace to people, assailing men and women with sicknesses and physical disabilities [Mk 5:1-13].²⁹

The existence of evil forces in the Old Testament which influence the physical and moral lives of people can be ascribed to the evil serpent, to fallen angels and to Satan. The presence of these forces is not ascribed to a different god, however, they all operate within the framework of the belief in the sovereignty of Yahweh who is the creator of all things. In the Old Testament, the origin of things is generally attributed to the one and only God, and this implies that Yahweh is responsible for the existence of both physical and moral evil in the world.³⁰ This theology of theodicy, controversial though it may be, yet serves to maintain the monotheism and the sovereignty of Yahweh.³¹ Hence, the question of evil becomes very significant in the post-exilic period and especially in Jewish apocalyptic literature. This may be due to foreign influence upon Jewish religious thought.

Despite strong assumptions concerning the impact of foreign religious systems upon Jewish thinking, yet it would be wrong to assume that dualistic ideas concerning evil spirits and supernatural beings had never existed in early Jewish culture.

Gaster rightly points out that the idea of demons and evil spirits goes back to the Old Testament period.³² He argues that demons and evil spirits did exist in early Hebrew cosmology. He acknowledges that

the Hebrew equivalent of demon [*daimon*] in the original sense is simply *El* or *Elohim*, commonly rendered god.³³

In 2Samuel 1:19, there is a reference to sickness which is described as a "seizure by a *daimon*". Saul is possessed by an evil "spirit of a *daimon*" [1Sam 16:15-16,23]. The notion of *daimon* as a deity is also mentioned by ancient writers such as Homer, and such *daimons* are not necessarily bad nor evil, however, they may be identified as good spirits. Gaster points to these two expressions which

usually exist side by side in the primitive mind as alternative expressions of the same thing. In the Old Testament .. a certain fusion of the two concepts has already been effected, the spirit being always regarded as itself emanating from a *daimon*.³⁴

The development from *daimon* meaning deity to the kind of evil and malicious demon that we find in the ministry of Jesus is undoubtedly a consequence of a long process which involves not only Near Eastern religious influence but also those of the Persians and the Greeks.

The presence of dualistic forces in the world-view of first century Christianity is significantly highlighted in Jewish apocalypics. Apocalypticism is the most significant theological movement in Judaism during the Hellenistic period and it is also to play a decisive role in the formation of Christian thought. The beginning of apocalypics has predated the Hellenistic period. Its origin is closely related to a fundamental change in the theological thought of Israel which has taken place during the time of the exile and of later Jewish contact with Greek and Hellenistic cultures.³⁵ It is important therefore to understand these foreign influences on Jewish thought, especially within the framework of how far they had permeated and

influenced the healing motifs of first century AD.

3. Greek and Hellenistic Influences

The impact of Greek and Oriental ideas on later Jewish thought is not to be dismissed lightly. As it was later developed with fervour in the apocalyptic tradition, the dualism of forces such as God and Belial, light and darkness, spirit of truth and spirit of wickedness, may be ascribed to earlier influences upon Jewish religious thought. An extended discussion of Greek materials and especially Plutarch on the nature of intermediary beings such as *daemons*³⁶ is very important for two reasons. First, it helps in our search to understand the nature of these entities in the first century AD and second, it serves as a good comparison with the Samoan understanding of traditional deities and supernatural spirits. The classical Greek understanding of *daemons* is seen to be much closer to the Samoan concept of *atua* [deity] and *aitu* [spirit] rather than the evil spirit or demon which is popular in gospel usage. The discussion on later Platonism shows that Plutarch understands *daemons* as a necessary order of beings between man and God. They are significant in understanding evil spirits and demons in the gospels, and would also provide a good comparison with Samoan spirits and deities. Were the *daemons* of Plutarch serving the gap between God and man, or were they put there simply in order to account for the source of evil in the world where God must not be involved with evil?

The dualism of good and evil forces in the first century AD has close affinity with Plato's teaching about good and evil souls. Plato who died about 348/7 BC defines ψυχή as "the motion able to move itself" - "self movement" [τὴν δυναμένην αὐτὴν κινεῖν κίνησιν].³⁷ If it is the soul that is prior to the body and is the

cause of all motion, then surely the 'soul' is

the cause of things good and bad, fair and foul, just and unjust, and all the opposites, if we are to assume it to be the cause of all things.³⁸

The existence of more than one soul is implied in the dialogue which follows between the *Athenian* and *Clinias* of Crete.

Ath. One soul, is it, or several? I will answer for you -'several'. Anyhow, let us assume not less than two - the beneficent soul and that which is capable of effecting results of the opposite kind [..τῆς τε εὐεργέτιδος καὶ τῆς τάναντία δυναμένης ἐξεργάζεσθαι].

Clin. You are perfectly right.³⁹

Plato refers to *daemons* as intermediate beings which are able to communicate with human beings on behalf of the gods. They are like the demi-gods which exist between men and gods. He writes,

kings and rulers are not men - more like demi-gods, noble and divine who belong to the category of *daemons*.⁴⁰

Plato speaks very highly of *daemons* as divine beings who are next in the hierarchy after the gods and before men and heroes.

... next after these gods the wise man will offer worship to the *daemons*, and after the *daemons* to the heroes.⁴¹

He acknowledges that there are divine beings worthy of respect as that given to the gods.

And let the apportionment be made with this intention.. inasmuch as it, being a goddess.. and should observe the same attitude also to local gods and *daemons*.⁴²

These beings deserve prayers and praises as those given to the gods.

... it will be most proper to sing praise to the gods, coupled with prayers; and after the gods will come the prayers combined with praise to *daemons* and heroes, as is befitting to each.⁴³

Platonism further develops the demonology of Plato. Xenocrates [396-315/4 BC] was a pupil of Plato and a great believer in *daemons* which he refers to as

those denizens of the middle air of whom Plato speaks in the *Symposium*, and retailed much lore about them.⁴⁴

Although Xenocrates shares his master's respect of *daemons*, yet he sees that there is a division of *daemons*. There are both good and evil demons.⁴⁵ From Plato's concept of a good and an evil soul, Xenocrates draws his own conclusion that these two souls are responsible for the actions of good and evil demons.⁴⁶ *Daemons*, though immortal and more powerful than men, they do not possess the divine pure and unmixed, but they know of pleasure and suffering, and they are even stirred by emotions. They possess divine power but have the feelings of mortals.⁴⁷ Plutarch, our main source for Xenocrates' theory of *daemons* agrees. In his essay *On the Obsolescence of Oracles* [416 C-D], he points to Xenocrates' view of *daemons* as sharing characteristics with both men and gods; with the gods, immortality; and with men, subjection to passion. *Daemons* are lesser than the gods but superior than men.⁴⁸

In his development of demonology, Xenocrates indicates that evil demons are the ones that haunt the earth. This points to the development of *daemons* from respectable deities to evil ones. The new status of *daemons* resembles the evil spirits which account for sickness and possession in the gospels. The popularity of evil and malicious spirits and demons in the gospels is a reality of first century Judaeo-Christian tradition; however, good spirits and helpful angels although rare, are also present. Koester points to "the concept of the dual world soul and demonology as ultimately derived from the ideas of Xenocrates."⁴⁹ This is not quite true since the concept of dualistic world souls seems to have come much earlier from Plato himself. However, Xenocrates certainly developed the demonology of Plato which became popular in the writings of Middle Platonists such as Plutarch and Philo.

A platonising stoicism has become the basis of philosophical and religious reflection at the close of the Hellenistic period. Philo presents God as the basic power or principle which permeates the universe. This basic principle is immutable and eternal. Philo's cosmology portrays two worlds; one which is transitory and changing and the other of ideas which is the proto-type of the visible world. The world of ideas is understood to be permanent since it was created by God who is himself eternal and unchanging.

Philo believes in the existence of demons. He sees that between man and God, and subordinate to the Logos, are a group of intermediate beings. Besides the planetary gods, there is a host of pure souls which may be termed as *daemons* or angels.⁵⁰ The use of the term *αἱ ἄλλαι ψυχαί*,⁵¹ must have been taken by Philo to refer to 'demons' as distinguished from 'gods'.⁵² He strongly defended the reality of the intermediary beings from those who were sceptical about their existence. Wolfson wrote that Philo,

conscious, however, of the view of Aristotle and some Stoics that demons do not exist, he warns his readers, with regard to what he says about demons and angels, "and let no one suppose that what is here said is a myth".⁵³

Philo indicates that angels and *daemons* "hover in the air",⁵⁴ they are made "in the air", and "exist on high nigh to the ethereal region itself".⁵⁵ *Daemons*, angels, and souls are only different terms for the same class of divine beings. They may vary in their natures however, Philo recognised the existence of evil angels and *daemons*.⁵⁶ The existence of good and evil spirits in Philo's system may recall the dualistic powers of Plato, one beneficent and the other capable of effecting the opposite,⁵⁷ or it may imply the influence of *Ahura-Mazda* and *Ahriman*. From *Questions on Exodus* i.23, it appears that evil *daemons* and angels have been created by God to do his work of punishment, and like the "helpers of *Opif.*, to

insulate him from the imputation of being the cause of evil."⁵⁸ Philo's exposition of Genesis 1:26 reflects this tendency of insulating God from any direct responsibility of evil.⁵⁹

Plutarch [120/5-46/8 BC] is a Platonist although he also assimilates many things from the Stoics and the Aristotelians. Dillon writes,

In Plutarch's metaphysics, we seem to have as many as five entities: a pair of opposites, God [*Monadic Intellect*] and an evil principle [*Indefinite Dyad*], represented for Plutarch by the Persian pair *Ahura-Mazda* and *Ahriman*,⁶⁰ as well as by the soul of *Osiris* and *Seth-Typhon*; then the immanent Logos, represented by the Body of *Osiris*, and the World Soul-cum-Matter, *Isis*; and finally, their offspring, the sensible cosmos, *Horus*.⁶¹

Like Plato, Plutarch believes in the existence of two world souls in the realm between god and matter, one higher which is good and a lower soul which is evil.

He writes,

Evil in the universe must have a cause, and this cause cannot be god who is entirely good, or matter which is inert and without quality, but must be soul, which is the cause and principle of motion.⁶²

The soul is not god's work entirely, but that with a portion of evil inherent in her⁶³

Plutarch's cosmology reveals that the evil soul dominates the realm below the moon which is subject to change and instability. The entire realm between God and people is believed to be occupied by *daemons*, and some of them are seen to possess divine power, while others share the vacillating world of sense and perception. These *daemons* exist in a form of a hierarchy between man and god.

It seems that Plutarch is presenting a world-view that is widely accepted during the first century AD where demons and evil spirits rule and influence the world.⁶⁴ It is to this world that Christianity has its roots.⁶⁵ The Synoptic Gospels give a clear picture of the two worlds which impinge upon each other, the physical and spiritual. In the first century AD, people are aware of both realities that influence

daily life and activities. The world-view of the gospels reflects the existence of the supernatural within the physical world. The activities of God and the devil are seen in the lives and deeds of men and women. The evil forces have a kingdom of their own with Satan as the leader. Demons and evil spirits are responsible for evil, and the kingdom of God stands in direct contrast to them.

Plutarch finds that the more supreme God has become, the more he would be in need of intermediary beings to mediate. The vast gap between the supreme deity and the material world needs to be bridged through intermediary beings. *Daemons* are seen as a necessary order in the world-view of the time and their existence makes complete the gap between god and people. The *daemons* are held accountable for the many things which people suffer from without claiming responsibility on God. Plutarch points out that *daemons* are subject to passion and to evil inclination, and therefore, they could be held accountable for activities of diverse tendencies in the world.⁶⁶

Dillon acknowledges the evil *daemons* in Plutarch's system as

perhaps not primarily evil ones as one finds in the Zoroastrian and gnostic systems. Evil *daemons* in Plutarch's system are those fallen from a good state and may be again promoted to its original state.⁶⁷

However, it is only in *Isis and Osiris* that Plutarch seems to be in a dualistic frame of mind.⁶⁸ It is possible that Plutarch uses the Persian dualism to explain the existence of beings like *Typhon*, the *Giants* and *Titan* as primevally evil beings.

Plutarch speaks of *daemons* employed by the gods as avengers [τιμωροί] of arrogant and grievous cases of injustices.⁶⁹ These *daemons* were originally good, however, their activities against people are seen as punishments upon the wicked.

The idea of guardian *daemons* is also present in Plutarch's demonology. The favoured few are provided guardian *daemons*.⁷⁰ They are mainly the noble souls who have earned their release from the cycle of rebirth. Plutarch claims that each individual has two guardian *daemons*, one good and one evil. He agrees with Empedocles who "affirms, two Fates, as it were, or Spirits, receive in their care each one of us at birth and consecrate us".⁷¹

The existence of *daemons* in Greek and Hellenistic thought is compatible with first century Jewish world-view. The natures may vary, however, they reflect a similar category of divine beings which inhabit the world and influence the lives of men and women of the time. Some of these spiritual beings are responsible for evil in the world. Although they may not be all bad, yet, some were understood to be at the root of all moral and physical evil. This is also true of demons and evil spirits in the gospels. They are presented as the cause of sickness and moral deprivation and therefore are in constant conflict with Jesus and the claims of God's kingdom.

It is important to note that the original meaning of δαίμων does not indicate the sense of evil spirits as we find in the modern use of the term. However, it represents an order of beings like deities and demi-gods who act as intermediary beings between gods and people. The distinction is slightly blurred in the gospels where demons are presented as consistent evil and malicious beings. The terms δαιμόνιον and δαίμων in classical Greek could mean a 'god' or a 'deity'. It could also mean a "spirit which is either good or bad", or a "being inferior to god but superior to human beings".⁷² The latter meaning of δαίμων and δαιμόνιον is prominent in the New Testament period. Apart from a few neutral references to demons [Mt 11:18; Lk 7:33; Jn 8:48,52; 10:20; Acts 17:18], the rest describe

them as malignant and evil entities. They cause sickness and incite physical violence⁷³ that sometimes healing is described as the driving out of demons.⁷⁴

Demons and evil spirits are accountable for moral evil. The fact that they adamantly oppose Jesus and the kingdom of God implies much more than simply physical opposition. They are presented as enemies of God and all that the kingdom of God stands for in the hearts of men and women. It is important to note that the term ἀκάθαρτος which describes the nature of the spirits as 'unclean' may have both the cultic and the moral sense. The cultic meaning indicates "that which may be brought into contact with divinity", and morally it may have the sense of being 'unclean', 'impure' and 'vicious'.⁷⁵ It also implies the notion that as the "ceremonial meaning fades, the moral sense becomes predominant".⁷⁶ Mark's portrayal of demons implies a strong element of ethical dualism. The Markan presentation of evil represents a cosmic force totally separate and contrary to God and his kingdom. This understanding of evil may be identified with the apocalyptic tradition which ascribes both physical and moral evil to the work of a cosmic force which is evil by nature and inclination from the beginning. As viewed from the standpoint of apocalyptic and dualistic Judaism, it is Satan who rules the present world and not God. Jesus' ministry therefore is to try and win back the world from Satan. Satan's realm is characterized by sickness, diseases and sin, and Jesus' reign is to try and eliminate these conditions, pointing people to a realm which is superior than that of Satan and his forces.

4. Persian Dualism

The most significant dualistic influence upon Jewish thinking is believed to have come through the influence of Persian religious thought. Persian dualism is derived

from the teaching of the prophet Zoroaster.⁷⁷ Zoroaster in his teaching had proclaimed

Ahura Mazda to be the one uncreated God, existing eternally, and creator of all else that is good, including all other beneficent divinities.⁷⁸

By the prophet's own harsh experience, he is convinced that wisdom, justice and goodness, are separated by nature from wickedness and cruelty. In a vision, he saw an adversary co-existing with *Ahura Mazda*, the creator of all that is good. The adversary and hostile spirit, *Angra Mainyu* is responsible for all evil. These two spirits are hostile to each other, and the world which has been created by *Ahura Mazda* becomes the battleground until finally, the creator god of goodness wins and destroys all evil in the universe. These two contrasting spirits are referred to in *Yasna* 30.3-5.

Truly, there are two primal Spirits, twins, renowned to be in conflict. In thought and word and act they are two, the good and the bad. .. And when these two spirits first encountered, they created life and not life, and that at the end the worst existence shall be for the followers of falsehood, but the best dwelling for those who possess righteousness.⁷⁹

Something like the Zoroastrian understanding of the two forces that co-habit in the world and of whose influences explain the existence of good and evil, finds a willing home in Jewish apocalypics. The conflict of the two forces is reminiscent of the struggle in apocalyptic literature between the forces of God and those of Satan or Belial. This contrast or antithesis between the forces of light and those of darkness is present in apocalyptic writings and the struggle would eventually end in the destruction of evil by the forces of God.⁸⁰

A new interpretation of Zoroastrianism in the fourth century BC in the form of Zurvanism produces a form of dualism which is different from that held in orthodox circles.⁸¹ Zurvanism is considered a Zoroastrian heresy.⁸² Based upon a

new exegesis of *Yasna* 30:3, Zurvanism betrays Zoroaster's fundamental doctrine that good and evil are utterly separate and distinct by origin and nature. However, Zurvanism's basic doctrine points to Zurvan [Time] as the father of both *Ahura Mazda* and *Angra Mainyu*.⁸³ Zurvan is the one supreme God who created both *Ahura Mazda* [*Ohrmazd*], the deity of goodness, omniscience and light, and *Angra Mainyu* [*Ahriman*], the one who is slow in knowledge, whose will is to smite, and he lives in darkness, endless darkness. These two deities have contrasting nature, and their activities stand in contradiction to each other although they both share a common origin. This dualism provides one explanation for the existence of good and evil, light and darkness in the world.

The dualism of Zurvanism which ascribes the origin of two forces to the one deity is not an absolute dualism. It is similar to the Old Testament dualism where both the good and evil spirits come from the one God. It is different from the original Zoroastrian principle of two independent deities, one good and one evil. These two forms of dualism, one absolute and the other monistic are present in the apocalyptic tradition, and both have arisen out of an attempt to explain the origin and nature of evil in the world. Koester rightly points out that quite a number of scholars would opt for an Iranian background of the origin of post-exilic biblical and apocalyptic dualistic thought.⁸⁴ Lohse who also holds the same view indicates that the concept of two spirits in conflict with each other has no prototype in the Old Testament or in Jewish tradition attached to it. He writes,

The dualistic doctrine of the battle between the Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Evil must have developed as a result of the adoption of Iranian views.⁸⁵

However, there is strong contention against foreign influence on later Jewish and early Christian thought on the subject of dualism. The view claims the influence

of semitic background on later Jewish literature which consequently made inroads to Christian thought. They would treat with distrust not only Greek and Roman perspectives, but more so, Persian influences upon later Jewish and New Testament ideas and concepts. They would point out that later Jewish and apocalyptic ideas about the duality of spirits and supernatural forces would go back to ancient semitic mythologies behind the Old Testament. This viewpoint is advocated by scholars such as Collins, Hanson, Bařr, and Gaster. Collins writes,

For the apocalyptists however, the most significant action takes place between heavenly mythological beings, in the conflict of God and Belial, Christ and the anti-Christ, angels and demons, sons of light and sons of darkness. In this respect apocalyptic shares the world-view of the ancient cosmic mythologies.⁸⁶

Collins acknowledges some glimpses in the Old Testament of a tradition of a battle between the angelic beings in heaven [Is 14:12ff; cp. Is 24], which resembles the cosmic struggle between the forces of light and those of darkness in apocalyptic literature. He points out that

for a portrayal of battles between divine beings we must go all the way back to the cosmic myths of ancient Canaan and Mesopotamia.⁸⁷

In his review of Margaret Barker's book *The Older Testament*, Collins agrees with Barker that "ancient Israel had a fuller mythology than Deuteronomic theology suggests, and some elements of it survived in the late non-canonical [and some canonical] literature."⁸⁸

Gaster, in his article on demons in the *IDB* points to earlier references in the Old Testament to demons and spirits which influence people either for good or evil. He refers to an inspired person in the Old Testament as one possessed by a δαίμων. The terms *El and Elohim* are equivalent to δαίμων in its original sense of deity [Deut 33:1; 1Sam 2:27; 9:6; 1Kgs 13:1; 17:18; 2Kgs 4:7; Ps 90:1]. He indicates that spirits and demons exist side by side in the primitive mind as alternative expressions of the same thing.⁸⁹ However, a δαίμων can also be an

evil spirit such as the one sent by Yahweh to inflict Saul [1Sam 16:15-16,23]. Gaster's view of the nature of demons and spirits in the Old Testament closely resembles the original understanding of δαίμων in early Greek literature where they are presented as deities and spirits alongside the major ones.⁹⁰ Gaster presents a case that a belief in a multiplicity of evil beings goes back a long way in semitic mythology. He points to references in the Old Testament about demons as evil beings [LXX: Deut 32:17; Ps 106:37; Lev. 17:7; 2Chron 11:15; μάταια which is translated *satyrs*] and objects of pagan worship which can be traced to ancient Near Eastern sources.⁹¹ Despite Gaster's assumption of the existence of evil beings and harmful demons in ancient mythologies behind the Old Testament, however, he still endorses the influence of Iranian dualistic principles in later Jewish thought. He writes,

the principle effect of this was to turn *daimons* into devils - i.e. to transform them from anonymous gods into distinctive forces of evil, whose function was not only to inflict misfortune and disaster but also deliberately to seduce mankind from an ordered and profitable mode of life.⁹²

Despite negative reactions against Persian and other foreign influences upon Jewish and subsequently Christian thought, it would be highly unlikely that Jewish religious thinking during the post-exilic and inter-testamental period can be fully sheltered from the impact of other religious ideas and thoughts, foreign though they may be. Perhaps Baer's suggestion that religious ideas have made inroads to Judaism and Christianity through Greek and Hellenistic influences is credible, especially in the light of the fact that the Greeks were more curious and open minded about Persian culture and religion than the Jews. He writes,

the Greeks, and not the Persians, may have been the missionaries who made the Iranian religious world known to non-Iranians, including the Jews. .. The hellenized Zoroaster tradition disseminated these ideas very widely, and the Greek speaking Judaism of Alexandria apparently knew of them.⁹³

Perhaps it would be more realistic to assume that Iranian dualistic principles may

have reinforced and developed earlier ideas and concepts about the duality of divine beings and spirits which are already present in the Old Testament. In fact, it will be difficult to dismiss completely any influence of ancient semitic mythologies in the development of Jewish religious thinking during the post-exilic and apocalyptic era.

5. Apocalyptic Literature

The apocalyptic view of spirit-forces responsible for moral and physical evil is significant in understanding similar entities in the gospels. The dualism of spirits and ages found in the apocalyptic tradition provides an immediate framework within which evil spirits and demons in the gospels^{may} be related and understood. The polarization which is characteristic of the world-view of apocalyptic Judaism resembles that of the gospels in relation to the nature of supernatural entities responsible for sickness and physical misfortune which people suffer from.

The term 'apocalyptic' refers specifically to literature that contain eschatological beliefs, especially with reference to the existence of a dualism of forces and ages which dominated eschatological thinking in the post-exilic and inter-testamental period. Christopher Rowland points out that the definition of apocalyptic should not be confined or restricted to eschatological beliefs, but should attempt "to do justice to the various elements in the literature".⁹⁴ These various elements are listed by James Dunn in his book, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* in two categories, literary and theological characteristics. Under literary characteristics are pseudonymity, the survey of history, and its esoteric character; and the theological includes the two ages, pessimism and hope, eschatological climax, imminence of the end, supernatural and cosmic dimensions, and divine and

sovereign control.⁹⁵ In the light of these characteristics, Rowland argues that "any attempt to use the term 'apocalyptic' as synonymous for eschatology must be rejected". He defines 'apocalyptic' as "the direct revelation of decisive/heavenly mysteries [whether present or future] by means particularly of visions".⁹⁶ In his definition, Rowland claims that eschatology is not an essential element of apocalypticism but "the theme of direct communication of the heavenly mysteries in all their diversity".⁹⁷

A.Y. Collins strongly criticises Rowland's general definition because he feels that it does not distinguish apocalypticism from other forms of revelatory literature. He points out that

although Rowland is quite right in criticising those interpretations of apocalypticism which do not take seriously enough its vertical dimensions, he errs on the opposite side by not taking its horizontal dimensions adequately into account.⁹⁸

R.E. Brown also finds Rowland's definition "no less arbitrary than some of those he rejects".⁹⁹ With due respect to Rowland's inclusive treatment of apocalyptic literature, the eschatological elements in these writings do stand out quite significantly, that an undermining or compromising of their significance in apocalypticism, may deprive the literature of its fundamental eschatological focus and tone.

The apocalyptic world-view presents a world which is inhabited by two opposing powers and kingdoms, God and Satan. The dualism of forces and their associates co-exist side by side in the present age. Under God, are his heavenly hosts, the elect of God, and the good spirits; and under Satan are his angels, who are the evil forces of Belial, the demons and evil spirits. The two powers oppose each other and they are engaged constantly in a struggle to defeat one another. The

forces of Satan are responsible for both physical and moral ills that affect human life.

The apocalyptic writers also point to a dualism of ages. The present is dominated by the conflict between the forces of good and those of evil, however, the future will bring about the end of evil and the establishment of God's kingdom.¹⁰⁰ In the present, evil powers rule, however, this will soon come to an end when the forces of God will become victorious, and they will usher forth the new age. Therefore apart from a dualism of powers we find also a dualism of ages. The present is the time of pessimism dominated by the rule of evil powers and forces, and the eschatological future will become the time of salvation and of God's eternal rule. Apocalyptic literature sees the present age as moving towards a close in the very near future when God and all his forces will rule supreme.

Some of the writings of Qumran are apocalyptic throughout and their theological outlines may be classified as strictly dualistic. In the Community Rule [*IQS* iii], the writer speaks of the origin of two contrasting spirits, truth and falsehood. This dualism is not a dualism of material and immaterial worlds, but a dualism of powers which rule the earthly and the heavenly realms. On the one side, we have the forces of God represented by light and the spirit of truth, and on the other we have Belial or Satan, the spirit of perversity and all the forces of darkness [*IQS* iii.13].¹⁰¹ Irreconcilable enmity exists between the two and the difference is understood to go back to their primordial past.

The War Scroll [*IQM* xiii] points to the existence of an entire host of divine beings, of angels and evil spirits.¹⁰² These divine beings are not mediators between God and the world, but powers at work in the heavenly and earthly

realms. The angels are divided into two hostile forces. The prince of light Michael, leads his host of angels against the angel of darkness Belial, known also as the angel of enmity Mastema and his hosts. Belial is the enemy of God and a tempter of the human race. His angels are the fallen angels of Genesis 6 and they are known as the spirit of wickedness or the spirit of error. These evil angels incite people toward sin and inspire evil deeds among those who belong to the realm of Belial [*IQS* iii-iv]. Sometimes, Belial and his angels appear also as angels of punishment.

And the visitation of all who walks in this spirit [of darkness] shall be a multitude of plagues by the avenging wrath of the fury of God [*IQS* iv].

In the dualism of Qumran, a person is given either the spirit of truth or that of perversity.

Until now the spirits of truth and falsehood struggle in the hearts of men and they walk in both wisdom and folly [*IQS* iv].

Although these spirits are understood as mythological cosmic powers locked into battle with one another, however, they also appear as instruments of individualised piety where they are seen as either helpful forces or seductive powers and inclinations within the human heart.¹⁰³ They are responsible for the duality of inclinations in people, and since they are different, their characteristics contrast each other. The spirit of truth has dominion over the sons of righteousness and of darkness over the sons of perversity. Ethical attributes are expected from the sons of light and truth, and consequently, they will find their reward in continuous life.

And as for the visitation of all who walk in this spirit [truth], it shall be healing, great peace in a long life, and fruitfulness, together with every everlasting blessing [*IQS* iv:2-8].

However, those who are guided by the spirit of perversity, their lot is torment and destruction [*IQS* iv.9-14].

The Community Rule therefore presents a dualism of spirits which is responsible

either for the moral and the immoral activities of individuals. The spirit of light represents a list of righteous and moral deeds which contrasts the evil ways of the spirit of darkness. The division of light and darkness into two ethical concepts may well reflect the division of light and darkness in creation [Gen 1:3-5].

In the Qumran document, the writer attempts a solution of the problem of evil by attributing the two ways to the work and influence of the two spirits. However, this dualism falls short of being an absolute one, since the writer, for fear of compromising the monotheistic and sovereign character of God, stops short of attributing the origin of the perverse spirit to another deity. However, it is God who "created all things" [*IQS* iii.15f], and "established all things" [*IQS* iii.25], and "ordained all things" [*IQS* iii.15f]. This means that if it is God who alone created all things, then it is to God that the existence of evil be ascribed [*IQS* iii.24]. The origin of evil is none other than the work of the spirit of perversity [Belial], the angel of darkness [*IQS* i.18,24, ii.5,9].¹⁰⁴ But this perverse spirit must have been initially created by the one and all powerful God.

It seems therefore that the dualism of *IQS* iii-iv remains deeply rooted in the monotheism of the Old Testament. Its striking similarity with the dualism developed in Iran suggests influence. Zurvanism advocates a dualism whereby two contrasting forces of light and darkness have emerged from the one god of time and destiny, Zurvan.¹⁰⁵ Both are cosmic dualisms which centre around two warring spirits. Both also reveal strong ethical dimensions in relation to the two contrasting natures of the spirits. Their affinities undoubtedly suggest close influences of one with the other.¹⁰⁶

In early Judaism, the story of the Fall and disobedience in Genesis 2-3 has become

a significant motif in trying to explain the origin and presence of evil forces in the world. Margaret Barker has rightly pointed out that the Genesis story of Eden has become the model of disobedience upon which human disaster is traced.¹⁰⁷ Sanders echoes the same note when he indicates that Judaism sees "disobedience and obedience, punishment and rewards, as the natural result of God's election of Israel".¹⁰⁸ There are interesting parallels between the Genesis story and other similar incidences in the Old Testament such as Isaiah 14:12ff and Ezekiel 28:1-10. In Isaiah, reference is made to the fate of the star, the king of Babylon who set himself too high and made himself like Elyon. He ascended above the heights, but he was brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the pit. Ezekiel 28 deals with a similar fate of a prince, a fallen god who through sheer pride and haughtiness, set himself up above as a god. As a model of such disobedience, Ezekiel 28:11-19 again deals with the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden. It seems that Ezekiel provides a link between Genesis 2-3 and Isaiah 14. The immoral and sinful inclination of individuals and their acts of disobedience and pride may find parallel in the Fall of Genesis 2-3. In Syriac Baruch 23:4 and 4Ezra 4:30, sin and evil that people experience in the past and present is attributed to the Fall of humanity. Because of the Fall, Satan and all his hosts of demons and evil spirits are able to exercise power and influence in the present age [Bar 54:15].

It is difficult to dismiss the theological assumption that physical evil that affects humanity is due to the Fall. Thompson rightly points out that in the Old Testament, the event of the Fall is never a popular motif to describe the sinful and suffering conditions of individuals.¹⁰⁹ Physical ills implies not only physical suffering and misfortune in general, but also the state of death.¹¹⁰ With the exception of Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, the position of Genesis 2-3 is virtually

ignored in the rest of the Old Testament. It is only in later Jewish and apocalyptic literature that the Genesis motif becomes more prominent.

Thompson rightly points out that the first Jewish source which clearly links death with primal sin is Ecclesiasticus 25:24. However, in other sections of the book, the writer indicates that death is the natural end for all people [14:17; 17:1-2; 40:11].¹¹¹ Later Jewish apocalypses support the same motif of death as related to primal sin.¹¹² Not only that death is attributed to primal sin, but other physical evils and misfortunes as well.¹¹³

Another explanation of the origin of physical evil may be drawn from the incident of the fall of the Watchers. The story of the Watchers is featured prominently both in Jubilees and 1Enoch. In Jubilees 4:15, the knowledge the Watchers impart is to result in judgement and uprightness on earth. In 1Enoch, the Watchers' story seems to be a genuine attempt by the writer to explain the origin of evil [6-16; 86:1ff; 106:13ff]. Reference is made to sin committed between the Watchers and the daughters of men. The angels indulged themselves with mortal women and thus committed sin with them. The knowledge that the Watchers had given is equated with sin [10:6ff]. In the Similitudes of Enoch 64:1-2, the revelation of the secrets to human beings by the Watchers has led the children astray to commit sin.¹¹⁴

In an attempt to explain the presence of both physical and moral evil in the world, the writers of 1Enoch, Jubilees and the Similitudes of Enoch had resorted to the motif of the fallen angels. The emphasis is not on individual human responsibility, but on the corrupt and evil knowledge of the Watchers which people acquired. This knowledge is responsible for physical ills and moral depravation that people experience. The secrets that they reveal bring nothing but sin and

corruption to humanity.

Perhaps the most significant explanation of the origin and influence of physical and moral ills in the first century AD came through the influence of the religious and ethical dualism of the Persians. Zoroastrianism and its later development in the form of Zurvanism, with both their cosmic dualism of light versus darkness, good versus evil, and the creator deities *Ahura Mazda* in contrast to *Ahriman*, present a constant struggle that is reminiscent of Jesus' conflict with the forces of evil that affect not only the spiritual lives but also the physical welfare of his contemporaries. Jesus' healing ministry shows a consistent determination to provide a more holistic form of healing ministry which accommodates not only a spiritual emancipation of the sick person from the bondage of evil, sin and guilt, but also provides the physical cure of the body as well. In the healing miracles, Jesus attempts in each case to address the root of the problem, whether it is sin or guilt, demons and evil spirits, Satan, Beelzebul or the Devil, or any other causes, his cures provide the answers to both the spiritual and physical welfare of the victims. Jesus' healing activities are no mere physical remedies but wholesome healing in the sense that the forces, personal or spiritual, natural or supernatural behind sickness and disability are first defeated and cast out, before any form of healing may be possible. These forces are in decisive contrast with Jesus and the claims of the kingdom of God which he proclaims. They are the enemies of God, and as such, they are responsible for influencing men and women toward sin and evil, as well as inflicting them with sickness and physical misfortune.

6. Satan

Although I have given a broad view on Judaism and its understanding of evil as

well as the different motifs and forces behind physical suffering and moral depravation, it is important to give special attention to Satan because of its special place in the conflict between Jesus and the forces of evil in the Synoptic Gospels. Satan and his forces present a stiff opposition to the healing ministry of Jesus, and a considerable number of illness and possession is attributed to the activities of his spirit-forces.

One way of explaining the origin of physical and moral evil in the world comes from the idea of a personal adversary of God, though not necessarily of an equal status and power with God. This personality is referred to as Satan who is also known as *Belial* [the worthless one], or *Mastema* [hostility].¹¹⁵ It is rightly pointed out by Forsyth, Hiers and Thompson, that the concept of Satan in the Old Testament is largely a post-exilic development.¹¹⁶ It is suggested that arising out of Israel's deplorable situation during the exile, there is a tendency to adopt elements of dualistic solutions to the problem of evil, and to place responsibility for evil on a supernatural adversary of Yahweh. In the prologue of Job, Satan appears together with the sons of God. He is God's adversary and humanity's tempter, but he has limited power and control over people. Psalms 82 speaks of God's sons who misbehaved in Yahweh's court and were punished as fallen gods who walked about in darkness. In some of the post-exilic references [Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7; Zech 3:1-2; 1Chron 21:1], the name Satan refers specifically to a supernatural and malevolent personality who is responsible for the misfortunes that people suffer from. In the LXX, the term Satan in these passages is translated ὁ διάβολος which implies Satan as a proper noun, a divine being of adverse nature to God, though he is still a creature of God and under God's rule and guidance.¹¹⁷ In 2Chronicles 18:18-22, there is a reference to an evil and lying spirit which operates under God's direction. The existence of evil spirits under God's command and

with whom he can employ to entice evil among human beings, is implied in these references.

In the Synoptic Gospels, Satan is portrayed in terms of a real being who contradicts God's work.¹¹⁸ That first century Christians took Satan and demons seriously is generally agreed by many scholars.¹¹⁹ He was the chief adversary in the ministry of Jesus. He acted on its own and independently of God, but he was not identified as of the same status as God. His influence and activities and those of his forces [demons and evil spirits], provided an opposing realm to that of God. In the first century AD, Satan's identity stands out clearly as God's adversary whose influence had brought calamity, physical and moral ills on people.

The identity of Satan as an independent force and power against which Jesus is at war seems more likely to be a later post-exilic development. This characteristic of Satan is fully developed in the inter-testamental literature. Forsyth implies the same view when he writes,

The personality of Satan in the Old Testament never appears as the name of the Adversary in the Combat Myth. The link of Satan with the Adversary that the forces of good and light are at war with, only developed in the apocalyptic texts and in the New Testament.¹²⁰

Hiers also follows the same understanding when he suggests that in the pre-exilic period, Satan has not yet appeared in the Israelite and Jewish world. The only appearance of Satan as a personality in the canonical Old Testament is in the post-exilic writings, such as the prologue of Job, Zechariah 3:1f, and 1Chronicles 21:1.¹²¹ Hiers points out that in two of these references, Satan appears as a member of the heavenly court, a subordinate being whose sphere of influence is only dictated by God. Satan is no independent being, but one whom God has allowed to be a tempter and an accuser [Job 1:6-12; Zech 3:1-3]. Satan in

Zechariah is rebuked by the Lord's angel because he has gone too far in his role as accuser.¹²² Thus Satan as a divine being in the post-exilic period is portrayed as a subordinate character who only acts upon God's impulse. This is quite unlike the character of Satan in apocalypics and the Synoptic Gospels where he is portrayed as a cosmic force and an independent adversary of God, who, with his hordes of evil spirits and demons present a realm and a force contrary to that of Jesus and the kingdom of God.

It seems that Forsyth is right when he points out that the development of Satan from that of a subordinate being in God's heavenly court, the one who only acts on divine permission, to a divine being who is independent from God is portrayed in 1Chronicles 21:1-17.¹²³ Here, one finds a new and an interesting development of Satan emerging as an attempt to dissociate evil from God, an attempt which is fully developed in apocalyptic literature. It seems that it is in the apocalyptic movement that the figure of Satan finally emerges from a subordinate being in God's heavenly court to become in the words of Forsyth,

a fully fledged rebellious angel, an independent adversary and a cosmic force entirely separate from God, who is now at loose in the world.¹²⁴

Some Jewish writers would still find it difficult to compromise the sovereignty of God with the idea of an independent being and an adversary of God in the form of Satan. In order to maintain a more monotheistic solution to the problem of evil, writers such as the author of Ecclesiasticus would see the adversary as no other than man himself in his own ungodly way. He writes, "when the ungodly man curses his adversary, he curses his own soul" [Ecclus 2:17]. The adversary of God is here identified as a personalised evil inclination in human beings which sometime overcomes them in their struggle with the good forces. Several early

Palestinian sources have shown the dominant roles played by the demonic forces in the world. They are identified in various ways such as Satan, the devil, *Mastema*, *Beliar/Belial*, the evil inclination or the *Yetzer ha-ra* within each individual person. This force or being is considered an enemy of God, however, it seems that the Old Testament as well as some of the apocalyptic writers are reluctant to identify it as a separate and independent divine being outside the jurisdiction of God. They are happy to identify it as God's creation, although, the consequence of its evil activities may not necessarily have come directly from God.

The writer of Jubilees speaks of a world permeated by evil spirits led by Satan or *Mastema* [10:5]. These evil spirits are portrayed as the sons of the original Watchers who lead people astray. The spirits are responsible for physical ills which people suffer from and sins that they commit [11:4f]. However, despite their power and influence over humanity, they are still under the rule and authority of God. The writer points to God who bound them and allowing only a tenth of the evil spirits under Satan's control [10:9-12]. Jubilees attributes demonic activities to *Mastema* [48:2, 9-15].

In the Similitudes of Enoch, Satan is portrayed with a threefold function.

- i. one who tempts man to sin [69:4-6].
- ii. the accuser of those who have fallen [40:7].
- iii. he serves as the carrier of divine punishment [53:3].

In earlier parts of 1Enoch, *Azazel* is referred to as the leader of the satans who introduces forbidden knowledge to human beings [8:1; 10:4, 8; 54:5-6]. *Azazel* is to be bound in darkness so he can no longer lead people astray [10:4], and then in the end he is to be judged [10:12; 55:4]. It is specifically stated that all sin is to be ascribed to *Azazel* [10:8]. Therefore 1Enoch portrays evil personalities such as *Azazel* as responsible for sin. Despite the part played by *Azazel* in inciting

people towards sin, the writer still maintains the standpoint that each person is not only responsible but accountable for his own sin [98:4-5].

The Community Rule identifies Satan or *Belial* as the contrary force in the cosmic dualism which it advocates as the origin of physical and moral evil. This cosmic dualism presents Satan as the angel of darkness who has dominion over the sons of righteousness.¹²⁵ In the document, the two spirits are present in the universe, the spirit of truth which originates from the habitation of light and the spirit of perversity which emerges from the spring of darkness. These two contrasting spirits are held accountable for ethical and moral living on the one hand, and moral callousness on the other [iv.2- 8; iv.9-14]. Characteristic of this cosmic dualism is the constant battle that is waged between them.¹²⁶ The predominant motif is the contrast that exists between the two forces. The battle is fought between the spirit of truth and that of perversity, light and righteousness over against darkness and sin. The ways of light are identified with a list of righteous attitudes and moral deeds, and that of darkness with perverse personality.

In the document, God creates the angel of darkness and the spirit of evil [*Belial*], and therefore, the just and the unjust. The world comes under the influence of *Belial* who tries to overcome the children of light [*IQS* iii.24]. The spirits of punishment are also under *Belial's* command, and they inflict and chastise anyone in the attempt to overthrow the sons of light [*IQS* iv.12]. Against the spirit of darkness, the prince of light protects the children of light [*IQH* i.31f; ii.25,28; iv.31-40; vi.9f; vii.18; ix.12f; x.17; cp. *IQS* i.21f]. The struggle between these forces represents the reality in the world, however, this battle will eventually come to an end when *Belial* and all his forces are defeated and consequently brought under God's final judgement.

The solution of the problem of evil in the Qumran is however, transparent, because the writer has not advocated an absolute dualism but has subjugated evil spirits to one God who "created all things" [iii.15b] and "established all things" [iii.15f].

Charlesworth sums it up when he writes,

The writer's monotheistic faith and concomitant belief in God's supreme sovereignty causes him unconsciously to attribute the causes of all things, even evil to God.¹²⁷

7. Synoptic Gospels

i. Introduction

The dualism discussed here is directly related to the nature of the spiritual forces which are responsible for sickness, physical affliction and demon possession in the gospels. These spiritual forces are referred to in the Synoptic Gospels as unclean spirits [τὰ πνεύματα τὰ ἀκάθαρτα], evil spirits [καὶ πνευμάτων πονηρῶν], demons [δαίμονια], Satan, the devil and Beelzebul. They are presented in the synoptic traditions as in constant opposition to Jesus in his healing ministry. They are identified as negative entities, and they provide a realm which contrasts with the values, nature, and activities of God's kingdom which Jesus brings forth.

ii. Dualistic world-view

One of the characteristic features of Jewish apocalypticism is its dualistic world-view, where evil powers have taken control of the world from its creator, and these evil forces have maintained their control through their leader Satan and his demonic forces.¹²⁸ The control of the world by evil forces is seen as temporary, and God

in the end will finally defeat them and vindicate the cause of the righteous. The present world is believed to be under the control of foreign powers, but in the age to come, God will defeat them and establish his kingdom. This apocalyptic view of the world implies not only the existence of dualistic forces, good against evil, but also a dualism of ages, the present over against the future. There is also an implication of two kingdoms, the kingdom of God and that of Satan. The reference to the self-contradiction of a divided kingdom [Lk 11:17], points to the existence of these two rules. The dualism of forces is represented by the duality of kingdoms. In the ministry of Jesus, the rule of God comes into conflict with Satan. Apocalyptic eschatology speaks of the present world as under the rule of Satan, however in the future, God's kingdom will be established. The dualism of two rules and two kingdoms, one in the present and the other in the age to come is now seen to exist side by side in the ministry of Jesus. The kingdom of God is present in Jesus, and the conflict between the two kingdoms is already a reality.¹²⁹ This dualistic world-view continued within the New Testament period, and is clearly portrayed in the way the synoptic writers present the ministry of Jesus as in constant conflict with unclean spirits, demons and Satan. Kee rightly points out that the characteristics of the apocalyptic world-view are apparent throughout the common materials in Luke and Matthew.¹³⁰

iii. Dualism of spirits

Although the topic of exorcism is an embarrassing one for a liberal Christian today, it is nevertheless a central and significant concern of synoptic writers. Exorcisms represent the most common conflict Jesus had with any opposing force in his ministry. In the Synoptic Gospels, exorcisms are presented as dualistic cosmic struggles between the forces of evil such as demons, evil/unclean spirits, Satan and

the devil on the one hand, and Jesus and the kingdom of God on the other. The exorcisms present the contrast which exists between two antagonistic forces. Jesus' confrontation with demons and unclean spirits [Mk 1:23; 5:2; 7:25], and with a dumb spirit [Mk 9:17]; reflects the opposing roles in the cosmic struggle.

One of the chief tasks of Jesus as Mark, Matthew and Luke tell it, is his struggle against unclean spirits and evil demons. The battle between Jesus and evil spirits is vividly presented in some of the exorcisms recorded in the gospels. Theissen rightly sees exorcism "in the context of the universal struggle between the rule of God and the rule of Satan".¹³¹ Similarly, Forsyth points to exorcism stories as the most frequent form that the combat tradition takes in the Synoptic Gospels.¹³² The seriousness of the conflict indicates the contrasting nature of the unclean spirits over against Jesus. In the synoptic exorcisms, the struggle between Jesus and unclean spirits is presented in the form of a battle with both sides employing the tactics of attack and defence. The person possessed becomes the battlefield for this encounter. Theissen refers to the struggle between these forces as the clear indication that exorcisms must be seen in the context of a cosmic conflict between supernatural, extra-human forces.¹³³ The antagonism that exists between the two sides suggests the polarity of their natures, and the contrast of their purposes and intentions. They represent two polarised forces who are indeed enemies, and both are out to defeat one another. As Theissen rightly puts it, the exorcisms of Jesus operate in a very pronounced "dualistic and conflictual" framework.¹³⁴

The frequent use of the terminology of conflict ἐπιτίμων in expelling demons and evil spirits reflects the nature of the struggle against them. Though the Greek verb ἐπιτίμων often means merely 'rebuke' or 'reproach' [Lk 9:55; 17:3; 18:15]; its use with reference to demons and evil spirits is more technical. The word comes from

the semitic word *gā'ar* [shout at, exorcise] which translates ἐπιτίμων in the LXX [Zech 3:2 of Satan; Pss 68:31 of beasts; 106:9 of the Red Sea].¹³⁵ Forsyth argues that *gā'ar* comes from the background of conflict and war. He refers to the semitic root which occurs in two of the Ugaritic texts that speak of the victory of Baal from Yamm-Nahar [Sea-River], and such texts provide the background of Psalm 104:7 where God's rebuke sent the enemy to flight. It is compared to the 'battle cry' of Achilles at *Iliad* 18.217.¹³⁶ The use of ἐπιτίμων represents the divine conflict between Jesus and the hostile powers within the framework of exorcism. The two opposing forces indicate the dualism of two spirits, the good one represented by Jesus whom Luke refers to as the bearer of God's spirit [Lk 4:14, 18], and the evil one in the form of unclean spirits and demons. Thus Jesus' 'war cry' in the form of ἐπιτίμων represents a real conflict and battle between two contrasting forces. This synoptic framework of the ministry of Jesus may be seen as a continuation of the conflict of dualistic forces in apocalyptic Judaism and of the struggle between the forces of light and those of darkness in the Persian dualism. The exorcisms are presented in a dualistic framework whereby Jesus represents the good spirit battling against the forces of evil represented by Satan and his army of unclean spirits and demons.

Deissmann rightly points out that the use of a divine name in the magical formulae is not infrequent in the magical papyri.¹³⁷ The divine name is believed to have magical power and sometimes, these names are left "untranslated in the adjurations if the power of the incantation is not to be lost".¹³⁸ The acknowledgement by the demons and unclean spirits of Jesus' name in the synoptic traditions is an aggressive tactic to bring Jesus under their control. However, Jesus' emphatic command of rebuke [ἐπιτιμών] which is used in the synoptic traditions to expel demons, confirms his control over evil forces. It is an order by which demons are

defeated and overcome.¹³⁹ Jesus' ministry of expelling demons reflects the dualistic nature of the struggle between Jesus and the demons.

Mark describes the encounter of Jesus with Satan in what Robinson calls 'cosmic language'.¹⁴⁰ Robinson points out that 'cosmic language' though it deals with events of transcendent dispositions, yet it is far from being merely a vehicle of portraying mythical activities. The encounter between Jesus and the forces of evil was set within a real historical setting. The demons which Jesus encounters are never disembodied, but are always in possession of human beings whom they inhabit and inflict with sickness and disability. The scenes of Jesus' exorcisms are often in public places with people around witnessing [Mk 1:23,39; 1:32-34; 3:7-12; 9:14-27], and the exorcisms are often accompanied by preaching [Mk 1:39; 3:14f; 5:19f], or healing [Mk 1:32-34; 3:1-11; 6:13]. The cosmic struggle between Jesus and evil forces therefore, is not simply a spiritual encounter of transcendent and mythical forces, but a real and historical conflict which has significant influence and implication on both the physical and spiritual welfare of individuals.

The Beelzebul controversy [Mk 3:22-27; Mt 12:22-30; Lk 11:14-23] is a good example of this cosmic struggle between good and evil forces. It portrays one instance where the dualistic framework is vividly presented in the synoptic tradition. The analogy of the divided house and the divided kingdom in the Beelzebul controversy points to the dualism of forces which operates in Jesus' exorcisms. Here, the contrast between the two antagonistic forces stands out clearly. Jesus, who is accused of being possessed by Beelzebul in whose power he is able to perform exorcisms, responds that such claim is untenable. Satan and his forces can only be defeated and expelled by a force which is not only more powerful, but one which is contrary to it. The forces of evil torment and enslave humanity

whom Jesus liberates. The activities and moral inclination of Satan and his forces on the one hand and Jesus on the other, are portrayed in the gospels as contradictory, and therefore they can never be the same.

The contrast of two opposing spirits in the Qumran is re-echoed in the Beelzebul controversy. Brown points to this contrast which is brought into sharp focus by the issue concerning the identity of the spirit by which Jesus performs the miracle.¹⁴¹ It seems that the issue is not exorcism but the source of power by which the exorcism is accomplished. The underlying thought is that, if the source of power is considered evil, then the exorcist must be evil [Mk 3:22; Mt 12:24; Lk 11:15, 18-19]. This seems to be the crunch of the accusation against Jesus. The contrast of the power by which Jesus operates over against that of Beelzebul, may reflect the polarity that exists between the Holy Spirit and evil spirits. In Luke, the emphasis upon Jesus as possessing God's spirit is vividly presented, thus intensifying the difference between evil spirits and Jesus. The descent of the spirit upon Jesus at baptism [3:21-22], the presence of the Holy Spirit which led him in the wilderness [4:1], the struggle and victory over temptations by Satan [4:2ff], the bestowing of the Lord's spirit upon him in the words of Isaiah [Lk 4:18ff cp. Is 42:1,7], all these highlight the contrast of the spirits involved, thus emphasizing the intensity of their conflict.¹⁴² In Mark 1:24, the evil spirit recognises Jesus as the Holy One of God. It seems that Mark is presenting a juxtaposition of two spirits, the unclean spirit of the possessed and the Holy Spirit in Jesus. It is Jesus who is endowed by the spirit of God that the unclean spirit is driven out and the man made clean.¹⁴³

The association of Jesus' power with that of the leader of demons, Beelzebul [Mk 3:22; Lk 11:15; Mt 12:24], implies not two but just one power operating. In

Mark 3:23b and Matthew 12:26, Beelzebul is identified with Satan as well as demons and evil spirits. Luke does not refer to this verse although he tends to assume it [11:18]. Luke 11:20 refers to God as the source behind the power in Jesus and it raises the question of the relationship of Jesus' exorcisms with the advent of the kingdom of God. The controversy points clearly to two different powers operating in Jesus' exorcism. If by the power of God, Jesus is able to defeat and expel Satan and evil spirits, then the two forces and the two powers involved are incompatible. The evil spirits have their own leader and head who is Satan, and the authority and power comes not from God but from their own realm and kingdom. Jesus has defeated this evil power and helped to establish the kingdom of God. Through exorcisms, Jesus already had restricted the rule and influence of Satan over humanity.

Individual exorcisms in the Synoptic Gospels must be seen not as isolated instances in the ministry of Jesus, but as integral parts of the whole conflict between good and evil, God versus Satan. Forsyth points to two episodes in the gospels which significantly portray demons as a force under Satan; the Beelzebul controversy and the mission of the 70 [Luke only 10:1-20].¹⁴⁴ The conflict with evil spirits is basically between the two main characters, Jesus versus Satan. In the controversy, the link between evil spirits and the prince of demons [Satan] is implied [Mk 3:23; Mt 12:26]. The assumption is that demons and evil spirits are allies and servants of Satan and thus, their expulsion is indeed an act against their leader, Satan. The demons are closely associated with the devil.¹⁴⁵ The same also may be said about the mission of the 70 in Luke. On their return, the disciples reported that the demons were subject to them in Jesus' name. Jesus' response was to relate the acts of exorcism with the downfall of Satan [10:18]. Every act of exorcism is seen as an integral part of the downfall of the devil. The conflict between dualistic

forces is enacted in every isolated exorcism and every healing incident in the name and power of God.

Satan presents a very fierce opposition to the ministry of Jesus so that his defeat represents a significant aspect of Jesus' message and ministry. Garrett points out that one can hardly over-estimate Satan's importance in the history of salvation as presented by Luke.¹⁴⁶ This confrontation between Satan and Jesus is vividly presented in Jesus' temptation in the wilderness, in the various exorcisms, the Beelzebul controversy, the fall of Satan in the ministry of the 70, and finally in the death and resurrection of Jesus. The whole gospel story is set within this framework of conflict between two contrasting and polarised forces. In the temptation story, Jesus is presented by Luke as in the power of the Holy Spirit [4:14, cp. 4:18], so that the confrontation in the wilderness may be seen as a conflict between the Holy Spirit and the evil spirit [Satan]. Satan is presented by Luke as the 'ruler of this world' [4:6b] who has the authority over the kingdom of the world [4:6a]. Satan is said to have been given the authority over the inhabited world, οἰκουμένης [4:5]. [Some of these motifs may also be pre-Lukan as the parallel passage in Matthew indicates.] Where did Satan get his authority? Luke 4:6 [ὅτι ἐμοὶ παραδέδοται] suggests that the authority was delivered to Satan presumably by God. This implies the secondary status of Satan as under the control of God [cp. Job 1:11-12; 2:5-6; and Zech 3:1]. Satan was a member of God's heavenly court and his authority is God-given. However, apart from this reference, Satan is more an opponent of God, acting independently and having a kingdom of his own with his own group of evil spirits and demons. This new status of Satan is accepted by Luke and other synoptists. He is referred to as the 'ruler of the demons' [Lk 11:15,18] who has a kingdom of his own [11:21-22]. Satan has some authority over humanity, and his group of demons and unclean

spirits have the power to possess and inflict people. Luke presents Satan as a real personality who stands against Jesus and his kingdom. He is the chief of a vast number of spiritual beings which are in decisive contrast to Jesus and his kingdom. Over against this ruler and his forces, Jesus is presented as Satan's archrival. When Jesus exorcises and heals, he is plundering the kingdom of Satan. When the spirits cry out "Have you come to destroy us?" it indicates that Jesus is defeating Satan and his forces. Fitzmyer points out that the question "reflects the belief that the demonic control of human beings would come to an end before the eschaton or the Day of the Lord, whom God's control would be established over all on behalf of those faithful to him [see *IQM* 1:10-14; 14:10-11]".¹⁴⁷ The dualistic framework of the present and the future is realised in the ministry of Jesus. The demons and evil spirits rule in the present world-order, however their defeat and expulsion belong to the future when God finally establishes his kingdom. In Jesus, what is expected in the future has already begun. The two ages, the two kingdoms and the two contrasting powers co-exist, and they are clearly seen in the conflict between Jesus on one side and Satan with his army of evil spirits and demons on the other.

iv. Unclean spirits and demons

The term πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον represents a common Jewish designation for δαιμόνιον. The two expressions appear synonymously in Mark 3:30 [cp. 3:22; 7:25 cp. 7:26, 29, 30]; with demons commonly used in the context of ἐκβάλλειν.¹⁴⁸ The term πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον is used regularly in Mark to identify spirits which enter human beings. Mills points out that Mark's description of evil forces fits into a total world-view as one side of a cosmic conflict.¹⁴⁹ Therefore any agent controlling them is not just any exorcist and healer but one

empowered by God to effect victory over these forces of destruction. In this cosmic conflict we have on the one side God, his spirit, his angels and his human agents, and on the other we have Satan, his unclean spirits and demons.¹⁵⁰

Where Mark 1:23 speaks of πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον; Luke 4:33 has the unusual combination of πνεῦμα δαιμονίου ἀκάθαρτου which literally means 'a spirit of an unclean demon'. Nolland translates it "a spirit, an unclean demon", a rare ascription to unclean spirits.¹⁵¹ The reference to an unclean demon describes the nature of the demon as an evil entity. This attempt to identify the negative nature of δαιμόνιον would be understandable in the light of the fact that δαιμόνιον as used in classical Greek does not necessarily denote an evil spirit.¹⁵² The term δαιμόνιον can mean deity and Luke uses it in such sense in Acts 17:18. The use of ἀκάθαρτον to describe δαιμόνιον leaves no doubt that what the writer meant here is a negative entity of the same category as πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον. The fact that demons and evil spirits are interchangeable from then on in Luke's gospel explains the existence of this rare phrase [4:35,41; 8:27 cp. 8:29; 9:39 cp. 9:42]. Fitzmyer also points to the cumbersome nature of the phrase which he translates as "under the influence of an unclean spirit". Fitzmyer argues that the genitive expression may be 'appositional' indicating that the spirit is the same as the unclean demon, which means that Luke uses δαιμόνιον in place of the semitic πνεῦμα with πνεῦμα referring to the man's spirit.¹⁵³ Marshall also makes the same point when he points out that Luke is probably clarifying for Greek readers for whom πνεῦμα did not have the sense of 'evil spirits' which it could have in Judaism.¹⁵⁴ Fitzmyer is probably right in assuming δαιμόνιον as a parallel for the semitic πνεῦμα, with ἀκάθαρτον qualifying δαιμόνιον for his Greek readers as a negative entity which afflicts people. Luke's later references to demons need not be qualified with ἀκάθαρτον as it is already understood as an

evil entity of the same nature as πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον.

Fitzmyer writes that the reference to evil spirits and demons does not explicitly suggest any indication of 'moral turpitude'.¹⁵⁵ Danker likewise points out that nowhere in the gospels is a demon-possessed person charged with moral defects, however the emphasis is on the physical condition of the victim.¹⁵⁶ References to the activities of demons and evil spirits are basically related to physical sickness and possession. This may be true, however, the extreme physical aggression and malicious nature of the spirits in those possessed in their relationship to those around as well as to Jesus, suggest moral degradation and lack of concern and love to those afflicted. The terms πονηρὸς and ἀκάθαρτον may both carry strong moral connotation.¹⁵⁷ Although the term 'unclean' does not necessarily mean sinful or evil,¹⁵⁸ yet it seems to do so in this context. The term πονηρὸς may be used to refer to physical affliction and sickness [Mt 6:23; Lk 11:34]; however, when used in reference to people and spirits, it implies an ethical or moral sense [Mt 12:35a; Lk 6:45a]. In Matthew 13:19, πονηρὸς describes the nature of the spirit [the devil] which takes away the word of the kingdom. Demons and evil spirits in the synoptic traditions belong to the realm of Satan, and such realm stands in direct contrast to that of God. The difference between the two realms goes beyond simply differences in their physical activities to include differences in purposes and moral inclinations. The kingdom represents the rule of God in the hearts of men and women, and in the same way, evil powers and spirits could dominate people's lives and moral outlook.

The healing miracles of Jesus may be understood as a continuation of the same struggle against the opposing forces of evil. The conflict with evil is not simply exorcism but also healing. We tend to think of them separately, but in the

gospels, they are integral aspects of one healing process. Barker has rightly pointed out that there is a close relationship between some of the words which indicate physical affliction such as blindness, deafness and dumbness, and the names for the various categories of evil angels and demons.¹⁵⁹ The Jews attribute diseases and physical misfortune to Satan and demons. Jesus's healing ministry opposes these forces which are at the root of both physical and moral evil in the world.

Jesus' struggle with evil spirits and demons was a real one. The dualism between Jesus and Satan conveys a similar conflict in apocalypics between good and evil, light and darkness. The forces are polarized and their activities stand in opposition to each other. Satan is the adversary of God, separate in origin and character from God, though not of the same status. Satan continues to pervade human existence in the present. The dualism of the two ages, one present and the other eschatological, is a significant aspect of apocalyptic tradition. Following therefore from the apocalyptic dualism of the ages, Satan is seen to have power only in the present, however in the eschatological future, God rules supreme and Satan will finally be destroyed. Thus we find in the Synoptic Gospels not only a dualism of cosmic forces but an eschatological dualism of the two periods or ages. The present is characterized by the presence of demons and evil spirits and the future which will bring about their destruction and the final establishment of God's rule.

In Matthew, an understanding of evil as personal failure and disobedience of the law, a concept which probably followed from the Adam-Eve tradition exists alongside the concept of evil cosmic powers. In Jesus' ministry, the conflict with evil is a vital part of his work, whether this evil is caused by personal failure and disobedience to God's laws or by the cosmic forces of Satan and his company.

Thus we find in the ministry of Jesus an existence of forces which operate in decisive contrast to his work and activities. They may represent demons and divine beings which were regarded as deities and demigods in classical Greek, respectable beings which acted as intermediaries between gods and men. These may have been developed later through other foreign influences to become evil and malicious entities such as we find in the gospels. The demons and evil spirits could also be creations of an evil deity as in Persian dualism. Later Zurvanism attributed the existence of evil entities to the one supreme Zurvan who created both the good deity and the evil one. They may also represent the creations of God which had fallen from their original state either through disobedience [Gen 2-3] or through their dealings with the sons and daughters of men as in the fall of the Watchers [Gen 6; 1En 64; Jub 4:15].

Whatever the origin may be, evil spirits and demons have become the sources of moral and physical evil that affect the lives of people during the ministry of Jesus. They are cosmic forces which oppose Jesus and the claims of God and his kingdom. They are presented as independent entities separate from God, and their realm represents an opposing realm to that of God.

8. John

John presents his gospel in a dualistic framework reminiscent of the gnostic system. Gnosticism was popular during the second century AD, however, there is a suggestion of an earlier pre-Christian form of gnosticism which had significant influence upon the content, style, and thought forms of John's gospel.¹⁶⁰ The gnostic view of the world is strictly dualistic, and life is portrayed in a set of

contrasts between life and death, truth and falsehood, light and darkness, salvation and destruction. Light and darkness are cosmic powers which oppose one another, and the divine world of light contrasts and counters the world of darkness and of evil and demonic powers.¹⁶¹ The world is seen as the creation of evil and therefore, the physical world and the human body become the prison which prevents the divine spark in humanity from ascending to the heavenly sphere. Salvation can only be achieved through the saving 'gnosis' which liberates the divine element from its imprisonment.¹⁶² Many scholars would not see the Fourth Gospel as influenced by a developed form of gnosticism, but as engaged in conflict with some incipient tendencies towards gnosticism.

In John, the gnostic concept of the world as the sphere in which the redeemer conducts his act of salvation is present, although the world is not in itself inherently evil. Bultmann points out that John does not advocate a strictly cosmic dualism nor see man dualistically.¹⁶³ The contrast of spirit as good and flesh evil does not exist in John's dualism. Bultmann wrote that

in place of cosmic dualism steps a dualism of decision: life and death are not determined from all time on natural grounds, but depend on the decision of faith and of unbelief.¹⁶⁴

In other words, the world stands against God not by origin but by choice. The world chooses itself to be independent of God. The concept of darkness in John refers to sin and falsehood, and light and darkness represent the qualities of life which one may choose to adopt. The Johannine dualism implies a moral or ethical dualism where lying is equivalent to darkness, and it is characteristic of the devil to oppose truth and light. The devil is identified as a sinner, a murderer and a liar [8:44]. Bultmann points out that

Both in Gnosticism and in Iranian dualism, where the figure of the devil originated, it is taken for granted that the devil is the originator of all murder; [cp. Eth En 8:1; Jub 11:5].¹⁶⁵

The devil is Jesus' real enemy and he contrasts Jesus in purpose, intention and moral inclination. Jesus is identified as truth [14:6] which contrasts the devil as the liar. This dualism of the two spirits, light and darkness, truth and perversion [cp. 1Jn 1:6,10; 2:4; 4:20; 5:10]; is present in the Community Rule where the spirit of truth opposes the spirit of perversion, and those born of truth spring from the fountain of light, but those born of falsehood from a source of darkness [*IQS* iii.17-19].¹⁶⁶ These are not only two contrasting spirits [*IQS* iii.19] but also two ways of life in which people may walk [*IQS* iv.2ff].¹⁶⁷ The emphasis on the ethical aspect of the encounter between the two existing and contrasting spirits in John is not quite as pronounced in the synoptic dualism, although such characteristic is present. The contrast between the devil and Jesus remains in both the Synoptic Gospels and John, however, instead of the devil's activities in John focussing on physical encounters and malicious activities, it was more a moral battle between light and darkness, truth and perversion.

Mazzaferri rightly points out that the Apocalypse of John is "starkly dualistic".¹⁶⁸ One of the main characteristics of apocalyptic literature of which Revelation is one, is its dualism in three main forms - ethical [good against evil], spatial [heaven over earth], and temporal [the present evil age which contrasts the virtuous age to come].¹⁶⁹ The judgement is conceived as the culmination of the age-long conflict with evil - the triumph of God not only over the kingdoms of the world, but also and pre-eminently over the kingdom of the evil spirits. Swete points out that Revelation is comparatively silent as to fallen angels and evil spirits.¹⁷⁰ However, the dragon of 12:3 is identified with the Devil or Satan [12:9] which engaged in cosmic struggle with Michael and his angels [12:7ff]. Like the strong man bound up in the ministry of Jesus, Satan can only be overcome in the new age. This new age lies beyond this present age with its inherent dualism of good and evil, God and Satan.¹⁷¹ Satan himself dethroned and bound, is condemned to the place

of torment with his fallen hosts [Rev 20:10 cp. T.Jud 25; T.Levi 18; Sib Or iii.73; Ass Moses 10; Mt 25:41].¹⁷² In the gospels, the demons are identified with πνεύματα ἀκάθαρτα and this view was probably in the mind of the apocalypticist when he referred to heathen worship as paid to demons [9:20]; and Babylon as the habitation of demons which are also identified with πνεύματος ἀκαθάρτου [18:2].

9. Paul

Paul does not directly mention demons and evil spirits, however there are references to principalities and powers [Col 1:16; 2:15] which may suggest the realm of demons and evil spirits. Paul refers to Christ disarming them [2:15]. However, Carr has convincingly argues that

principalities and powers are angel figures of the heaven of God, not demonic beings or fallen angels. Neither are they hostile to men.¹⁷³

The negative cosmic powers assumed in Colossians are non-existent in Carr's interpretation, and he points out that there is "no mention of a cosmic battle from which Christ emerged victorious to save men from the powers of this world."¹⁷⁴ The same also may be said of Philippians 2:9f where he argues against any struggle between Christ and any cosmic powers of the nature of evil spirits and demons as in the gospels.¹⁷⁵ With the exception of 6:12, references to cosmic powers in Ephesians [αἱ ἀρχαὶ ἐξουσίαι 1:21; 3:10]; like those in Colossians appear as the hosts of God, and therefore, they are identified as morally neutral rather than evil entities. The reference in 1Corinthians 11:10 to the veiling of women because of the angels has been the focus of much debate concerning the interpretation of ἐξουσίαν and the meaning of διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους.¹⁷⁶ An attempt to identify angels here with fallen angels and evil spirits¹⁷⁷ has been strongly contested by Fitzmyer in the light of evidence from Qumran [*IQM* vii:4-6; *IQSa* ii:3-11].¹⁷⁸

It is important to note that ἄγγελοι used with the article, never designates bad or fallen angels in the Pauline writings [cp. 1Cor 13:1; Mt 13:49; 25:31; Lk 16:22; Heb 1:4, 5].

The cosmic powers in Ephesians 6:11-12 seem to be different, and they may be identified as similar to evil spirits and demons in the Synoptic Gospels. Nineham has seen the difference between the powers in Colossians which are morally neutral with those at the end of Ephesians which are essentially evil.¹⁷⁹ The devil [6:11] recalls God's enemy which appears in the form of Belial. The contrast between light and darkness, Belial and Christ [2Cor 6:14 cp. Eph 5:8ff] also points to a dualistic opposition between two hostile camps reminiscent of the Qumran dualism [*IQS* iv.24-25; *IQM* xiii.9-12].¹⁸⁰ The struggle may be more moral than physical, however, the nature of the entities involved are definitely not neutral but evil, and they represent a dualistic framework of spirits that operate in the Synoptic Gospels.

B. THE SAMOAN WORLD-VIEW

1. Introduction

In order to understand the questions related to the causality and remedy of sickness, the nature of physical and spiritual forces which influence the life and welfare of the Samoan people, it is important to view them within the framework of the traditional understanding of the world. The Samoans have their own system of beliefs concerning the origin of things and how they have come about, the nature and character of supernatural forces present which influence not only the physical but also the moral and spiritual welfare of the people. These supernatural forces are seen to be deeply rooted in the myths and folk-lore of the traditional

community. [This is discussed in chapter one] The reality of divine beings in Samoa did not cease with the impact of Western culture and especially of Christianity, however, many of the traditional beliefs continued to survive and adapted themselves within the new environment of Christianity.

2. The traditional world-view

An early Samoan concept of a world populated by deities, spirits and supernatural beings was first reported by John Williams, the pioneer LMS missionary to Samoa in 1830. Those who followed have also written about this aspect of traditional life and how people view their world. Early mission accounts acknowledge the presence of beings such as *atua*, *tupua* and *aitu* which influence the daily lives and activities of the people. Some of these divine beings remain in their world-view although many Samoans have come to understand them differently because of the influence of Christianity. Despite attempts to discourage beliefs in the existence of traditional spirits, many would still acknowledge their reality within their modified view of the world. Moyle writes,

The Samoan does not question the existence of the invisible forces which surround him, and which he often has an opportunity to witness at work; through their continual undisputed presence he develops an attitude of familiarity almost equal to that which shows towards personal acquaintances and natural phenomena.¹⁸¹

Recent literature on Samoa [Kein 1967, Goodman 1971, Lazar 1984, Neich & Neich 1984, McPherson 1987, 1990, etc;] all bear witness to the presence and influence of the *aitu* in the beliefs and affairs of the Samoan people today. The causality of sickness and physical misfortune is often ascribed to the activities of *aitu*, the term which is now used to refer to all traditional spirits and divine beings outside the acceptable spiritual framework of the new *lotu*.

The belief in a world populated by spiritual and supernatural entities closely resembles the world of the New Testament with its popular belief in deities, angels, demons and evil and unclean spirits as well as divine beings like Satan, the devil and Beelzebul. These supernatural beings are integral members of the world-view of first century Judaism. The reality of spirits and supernatural beings portrayed in the Synoptic Gospels has been rejected almost universally in the post-Enlightenment period. Kelsey points out that

Nineteenth-century liberals merely divided the biblical accounts, cutting out the unacceptable parts. Bultmann and followers actively reject them as contamination of myth which must be removed before modern man can understand the gospel. Barth simply does not discuss them; since they do not fall within his view of the world, he does not look at them.¹⁸²

Kelsey suggests reasons like the witch-hunting of the eighteenth century, the positivism of Comte, the growing materialism of our time and the concept of reality which is very much influenced by various discoveries of modern science as responsible for our scepticism in the reality of the spirit-world of the New Testament.¹⁸³ I propose that the integrated view of the world which non-Western Christians continue to uphold may provide new insights into the relevance and significance of Jesus' healing ministry for Christians today. To dismiss the reality of these spiritual forces as unreal and mythical imaginations of the past, may not only deprive the gospels of its own reality, but would undermine the true significance of Jesus' struggle against these spirits and the impact they have on humanity. Kelsey rightly points out that

These demonic forces form such a basic part of the gospel tradition that to ignore the stories, actions and beliefs about them is to leave untouched a whole segment of Jesus' life and practice just because we find this part difficult to harmonise with our particular world-view and its implicit psychological belief.¹⁸⁴

Margaret Barker hints at the importance of trying to appreciate the world-view of Christians in the non-Western world in order to try and recapture the reality and

significance of Jesus' ministry to the sick, and to those possessed by demons and evil spirits. She writes,

We have recently tended to neglect the healing ministry, seeing it best handled by conventional Western medicine; medicine and religion have been separated to their mutual impoverishment. The business of exorcism and demon-possession has been kept even more closely under wraps, despite the fact that Jesus' command to his disciples was to cast out demons and teach. Perhaps the recovery of an ancient and more integrated world-view will help us to recover some of the original insight and impact of Jesus' teaching, and to appreciate what we can learn from new Christians of the Third World, who can relate more directly to this ministry of Jesus. We see the beginnings of reintegration in the trend towards treating the whole person, not just the physical manifestations of illness - a hopeful sign that we are recovering an awareness of the invisible world.¹⁸⁵

This is a significant observation because a more holistic and integrated view of life and of the world presented by some Christians of the non-Western world, tends to provide a closer link with the New Testament world-view, a significant bridge in the understanding of Jesus' ministry of healing and exorcism. Buthelezi, a South African theologian, writes of a similar view of the world, a more holistic understanding of life and of the world from the South African perspective. He notes that this sense is characteristic of traditional African religion, where religion and life are viewed as inseparable, and they would naturally belong together. He writes,

Far from being a department of life, religion was life. There was no separate community of religious people, because everyone who participated in the life of the community automatically participated also in its religion. .. The continuity of fellowship between the living and the dead was analogous to the interplay between the natural and the supernatural worlds. Death would not necessarily cause separation because ancestors would continue to be part of the community.¹⁸⁶

The view of the world as an integrated unity between the natural and the supernatural, a world where deities and spirits are the acceptable components of everyday existence is also shared by the Samoan community. Crawford rightly observes this aspect of traditional life when he points out that "every aspect of

Samoan life has religious significance".¹⁸⁷ The chiefs of various families are understood to have supernatural authority which may be traced back to the supreme *Tagaloa*. Family deities play a significant role in the everyday life of the people. The traditional healer is believed to have divine power to perform acts of healing. The deities and spirits in the form of *aitu* and ancestral spirits are integral parts of the Samoan world-view that communication and intercourse between the two spheres of reality is an acceptable phenomenon. Kamu confirms this characteristic of traditional life when he writes,

Old Samoa provided a religion which recognised the possibility of the interaction between the *aitu* and the living. At the time, the *tua'ā* or ancestors were very much an integral part of the family life. Their advice were often sought and consulted in important matters.¹⁸⁸

In the early contact period, the Samoans were referred to as 'godless' by other Polynesian groups because they were seen to have lacked the elaborate structure and ritual of the *malae* or the *heiau* that we find in other Polynesian societies such as Tahiti, Rarotonga and Hawaii.¹⁸⁹ John Williams also assumed this when he found out that the Samoans had no immediate visible temples nor elements characteristic of their religious heritage.¹⁹⁰ This line of thought has been over-emphasized by some writers who think of Samoans as being less 'religious' than their neighbours.¹⁹¹ However, this is an early misconception as John Williams himself had later referred to "gods many and lords many" which are present in the Samoan religious system.¹⁹² The observation of other early missionaries and ethnologists discredits the early assumption which labels the Samoans as 'godless'.¹⁹³ Crawford rightly sums this up when he writes "religious thought permeated practically every aspect of Samoan life."¹⁹⁴ For an observer, the religious beliefs are difficult to identify as in many primal societies, the sacred and the profane are closely interwoven^{so} that religious thought and practices permeate every aspect of life.

There are no two polarised communities, the secular and the sacred, but one where both the secular and the sacred mix freely.

Traditional belief sees the presence and influence of *aitu* and ancestral spirits in the daily affairs of people. The close integration of the supernatural in the affairs of people provides an orientation to life whereby physical misfortune or illness is regarded as having a spiritual causation. Things do not happen on their own but there must be a spiritual or supernatural explanation. The Samoans have a materialistic approach to spiritual things, and spirits and divine beings are part of their physical environment. Activities of the divine are conveyed in physical and material form. There is no clear division between them as both closely integrated to present the total reality. [This aspect of Samoan world-view is explained more fully in chapter one]

Missionaries frequently expressed disappointment at the Samoan lack of concern with future life.¹⁹⁵ It is obvious that the distinction made by missionaries between present and future does not have the same significance for the Samoans. They show little interest of preparing their souls for the new life in the future. This may be due to the lack of distinction they perceive between the two ages, as both this and the other world, the present and the future, are closely integrated in their view of the world that such distinction may be irrelevant.

The impact of the *lotu* which promotes a polarised and a dualistic view of the world such as the spiritual and the material, the worldly and the heavenly, the present and future, God and Satan, tends to go against the more holistic approach to life and to the world which is characteristic of Samoan world-view. However, the gospels speak of a world of spiritual beings, a vast realm of angels, demons

and spirits which closely integrate with people, conversing, countering, influencing and afflicting them, and this represents an understanding which is similar to Samoan world-view. There is a complementary unity between the natural and the supernatural in New Testament cosmology, and the existence of spiritual and cosmic forces in the affairs of men and women was a reality of the world in which Jesus conducted his healing ministry. The nature of the spirits may vary between the world-view of the gospels and that of Samoa, however, their impact and influence on the welfare of people presents a significant affinity.

Traditional mythology of *Tagaloa* and the origin of things present evidence that objective, physical manifestation is believed to have come from metaphysical beginning by an unbroken evolutionary process. Following from such belief, it would be logical to view Samoan perception of nature as conscious and animate. Living things come from the unity of two *papa* of *Tagaloa*, and they would possess natures both physical and spiritual. Rocks, trees, animals, birds and people are both physical and spiritual entities. This view of the world and nature is not unique to Samoa but one which is popular in Polynesia. Handy rightly points out that

The Polynesian cosmogony depicts a universe which is a psychic dynamism manifesting itself physically: behind and within all natural manifestations is life and psychic force.¹⁹⁶

This is a significant aspect of traditional world-view since it explains why Samoans in the past see life in terms of unity between the natural and supernatural. The spiritual and physical are not polarised spheres of existence, but integral components of life. They are both realities of daily living that a separation of the two would be a gross misunderstanding of their world-view.¹⁹⁷ An early concept of the world contemplates no division or gulf between the natural and the supernatural. What a modern mind may see as ordinary natural activities like planting, building of

houses, fishing expeditions, weaving of fine mats, marriages, the birth of children, healing and remedies, death and funerals, may not necessarily be so with a traditional person, and certain rituals are significant in relation to these activities.

Handy points out that when

a native planted, tended his crops, and harvested, he did so psychically as well as physically, rituals including consecration, purification, prayers, charms, and offerings, accompanying every phase of his physical husbandry.¹⁹⁸

It is important to understand traditional life in Samoa as holistic. The physical and spiritual are closely integrated in the daily affairs of the people. This integrated view makes sense of how people understand physical happening as consequential of spiritual influence. The supernatural is an integral part of life and therefore, a spiritual causality for sickness or physical disability is no unique phenomenon. This integrated view of the world is mentioned by Kamu who points out that in traditional Samoa, "life is not departmentalized".¹⁹⁹ The world is an integral part of life, and the physical and spiritual closely co-exist. Crawford points to the same idea of the divine permeating every aspect of Samoan life.²⁰⁰

Many Samoans believe in the existence of *mana* in objects and people. This *mana* is understood to have come from deities and divine spirits. Handy points out that

the primal *mana* was not merely power or energy, but procreative power, derived from an ultimate source and diffused, transmitted, and manifested throughout the universe. This was the original *mana* which was believed to be continuously passed down through the gods.²⁰¹

The presence of *mana* in objects and people represents the spiritual nature of the world. The *aitu* possess divine power and such power may be diverted to beneficial activities or coerced for destructive ends.²⁰² The infliction of illness and misfortune by *aitu* indicates a negative and malicious use of *mana*. However, an affliction may sometime be seen as disciplinary for violation of certain values,

customs and taboos of the community.

3. The modified world-view

The new *lotu* with its *Atua* is incorporated into the traditional world-view. Crawford suggests that the new *lotu* was accepted as a means of gaining access to *mana* of the new *Atua*. This *mana* was developed and focussed on particular activities instituted by the missionaries.²⁰³ However, as *lotu* develops, *mana* becomes very quickly associated with the Protestant stress on the Bible as the word of God. The Bible is believed to have *mana* of the new *Atua*, and therefore it is often used as a means of warding off evil spirits from people and locality. The Bible is sometimes referred to as *Tusi Sā* which implies its nature as taboo. The taboo system is closely associated with *mana*, and the Bible is seen as possessing the *mana* of the new *Atua*. People possessed by the *aitu* are exorcised by the use of the Bible. A story of how a pastor expels an *aitu* by the *mana* of the Bible is often recited with great enthusiasm by church members to indicate the power of the new *lotu* over traditional spirits.

The Bible was widely used in the villages as a means of inciting fear among those who violate community rules and commit immoral acts. The traditional practice of *tautoga* whereby people swear by the name of a traditional deity was a common practice adopted by the village council of chiefs to identify and to punish those who committed a breach of the village code of laws. Since Christianity, the Bible is used for *tautoga*, and out of fear of the new *Atua*, many have confessed their guilt ^{rather} than incite his anger. An act of false swearing may lead to punishment in the form of sickness, physical affliction and death. The *fai'au* [pastor] is seen to be the bearer of the *mana* of the *Atua* and consequently, he has significant

status and power in the community. People seek refuge in the pastor's house when in danger of violence from an enemy. It is common knowledge that it would be unwise to violate a taboo related to the new *lotu*. Like traditional healers who possess the *mana* of family *aitu*, the Samoan *faiife'au* is expected to perform similar functions of healing and exorcism. The traditional society has numerous taboos associated with sacred places such as the *malae*, sacred objects, and deities which are manifestations of ancestors and family spirits. These forms of taboo are extended to include Christian places of worship and various objects associated with the worship of *Atua*.

The traditional view accepts the presence of supernatural entities which originated from *Tagaloa*. The *aitu* were lesser divinities which descended from the superior deity. They were said to have been born from the union of *papa-lagi* [heaven] and *papa-fanua* [earth], and therefore they possessed the duality of natures. They were identified as guardian spirits of family members and protectors of family values and tradition. The *aitu* were often responsible for the causality of illness and physical misfortune. Goodman classifies *aitu* under four categories although he rightly indicates that the Samoans do not necessarily make these distinctions.²⁰⁴ Many today would think of *aitu* in terms of the spirits of the dead and this includes ancestral spirits and any other supernatural beings condemned by the *lotu*. The *aitu* continue to be active throughout village life and also in places where Samoans have emigrated such as New Zealand, Australia, Hawaii and the United States of America. Lazar points to the presence of *aitu* beliefs in the migrant community of Samoans in the west coast of the United States of America.²⁰⁵ Neich and Neich refer to similar beliefs among the Samoans in New Zealand which are especially popular among pregnant women.²⁰⁶ The belief in the reality of spirits continues to flourish within Christian Samoa and wherever the Samoans have

made their homes. Goodman notes that such beliefs are much more pronounced in Western Samoa where custom and tradition have greater vitality.²⁰⁷ Many writers confirm the survival of these traditional beliefs today.²⁰⁸ Macpherson acknowledges that such belief is not inconsistent with Christianity where demons of scripture and their leader Satan were early assimilated in thought to the Samoan *aitu*.²⁰⁹ Macpherson's observation though valid, yet the identification of *aitu* with the negative forces of the gospels is erroneous. The result is that the Samoan spirit-world becomes demonised. Traditional spirits are presented as opposing forces to Jesus and the kingdom of God. This may be an unfair parallel since the traditional spirits are not necessarily evil as the new *lotu* presented them. They are not cosmic evil beings from a realm similar to the kingdom of Satan, but respected family spirits. They are neutral entities which function as guardian spirits of both family members and tradition, and their activities may be seen as punishments rather than malicious acts of evil beings.

Plato's understanding of kings and rulers as belonging to the category of *daemons*, a respected order within his world-view is similar to the Samoan understanding of *ali'i* or heads of families. The *ali'i* are known as 'deities or spirits of families' [*o atua po'o aitu o aiga*]. They are a respected social order within the Samoan hierarchy. The *ali'i* are often acknowledged as mediums between deities and families, and as mediums they act as priests and healers of their families. Like the Greek *daemons*, the Samoan *aitu* deserve the prayers and praises of the people. They are an integral part of the Samoan extended family and they function as guardians and protectors of family values and traditions. Their advice is often sought in major family decisions and praises and prayers have been offered to them. Many fear the presence of *aitu* because it indicates a case of violation or transgression. People expect to be disciplined by *aitu* on violation of rules and on

failure to fulfil certain duties and responsibilities in the family. Many would see health and well-being as a result of a good relationship with the spirits but failure may lead to sickness and physical misfortune.

The idea of good and evil demons mentioned in the works of Xenocrates is similar with what one encounters in the first century AD. The popularity of evil spirits and demons in the synoptic traditions is a reality of first century Judaeo-Christian tradition; however, good spirits and helpful demons although rare, are also present. The spirit-world of traditional Samoa has parallel features. The *aitu* and *tupua* represent human spirits of the dead and deified ancestors. The *aitu* is not by nature evil and malicious. It resembles the original *daemon* of antiquity which has the notion of deity or god. The *aitu* is a family spirit and its help is often sought for protection of family members. The Samoans also believe in the existence of malicious and evil *aitu*. These are known as the spirits of the dead who may not have had a good turn in life and therefore, have been rejected by their own family and community. At death they have become evil and malicious *aitu* who roam the countryside and terrorise village people. Such beings are responsible for malicious acts and physical affliction that people suffer from without any real reason or motivation other than their own malicious nature. The changing image of *aitu* from a respectable deity to a malicious demon may have come as a consequence of its association with demons and evil spirits of the New Testament. It is important to note that traditional spirits and deities should not be identified with New Testament demons and unclean spirits since their origin, nature and activities are quite different. The demons of the New Testament are from the realm of Satan and they provide a kingdom which is in decisive contrast to that of God. The variety of supernatural spirits in traditional Samoa belongs to a category of deities which include the family deities [*atua*], deified ancestral spirits [*tupua*]

and spirits of the dead [*aitu*]. The uncompromising and monotheistic claim of Christianity in the one and only God relegates the Samoan spirit-world into a realm of evil spirits and demons. The failure of the *lotu* to accommodate the Samoan spirits within the framework of its respected spirit-system leads to their negation within Christianity.

The idea of guardian *aitu* was popular in traditional society. At birth, every child is supposed to be under the care of some family *aitu*, and the name of the spirit is often invoked for help on various occasions in the life of the child. This concept recalls the good angels and spirits in Judaism as well as the guardian *daemons* of the Greeks.

The church condemns the belief in the existence of *aitu* and ancestral spirits as contrary to the gospel message in the sovereignty of the one and only God. It sees the belief in the reality of *aitu* as a violation of the sovereignty of *Atua* [Ex 20:2-4]. The term god is translated *atua* with a small 'a' a synonym for *aitu* in early Samoa. A graven image is referred to *tupua*, the term for deified family ancestors. The negation of traditional spirits by the *lotu* comes as an inevitable consequence of identifying the traditional spirits with evil and unclean spirits in the gospels. However, this condemnation may only be a token gesture and a lip service, since many Samoans continue to believe in the power of *aitu* and ancestral spirits especially in matters relating to health and physical well-being. The same may also be expected of the new *Atua* who provides blessing and well-being on the one hand, and on the other inflicts sickness and misfortune upon those who disobey and violate his commandments. The survival of the traditional spirits alongside the Christian deity provides the spiritual framework in which Christians operate today. When one is sick and the causality of sickness is seen to be supernatural, the

search for the identity of the spirit is not confined to *aitu* but includes also the possibility of *Atua* inflicting illness and physical pain on a person. Many would acknowledge the *Atua* as supreme within the new spiritual framework, however, traditional spirits may also have their significant place.

4. The demons and evil spirits of the gospels and *aitu*

The *aitu* cannot be fully identified with the δαίμονιον and the δαίμων of the gospels. Neither could they be rightly identified with τὰ πνεύματα τὰ ἀκάθαρτα. The *aitu* represent a respectable order of divine beings, more like the original meaning of δαίμων in early Greek writings. They are deities and spirits of the dead, respected supernatural entities which form an order of intermediary beings between *atua* and the world. They are not like the demons and unclean spirits of Mark's gospel, cosmic entities which are evil and unclean, and which inflict people with sickness and physical handicaps. They may also be responsible for moral corruption in people. The Samoan *aitu* are human spirits, and they function as guardian spirits of family than simply malicious spirits. They may have the tendency to cause harm, however, such tendency is usually prompted by acts of disobedience. They are seen as guardians of social norms and traditional values of the community.

In Samoa today, the term *agaga* meaning human spirit is widely used. Kamu rightly points out that *agaga* may be applied both to the spirits of those alive as well as the dead.²¹⁰ The term *aitu* becomes more and more associated with the evil spirits of the dead [*agaga leaga*]. This is an inevitable result of the negation of traditional spirits and divine beings which the *lotu* sees as a threat to its divine order. Although δαίμονιον and δαίμων are not translated as *aitu* in the Samoan

translation of the Bible but rather *temoni* [from δαίμονιον and δαίμων]] and *agaga leaga* [evil and unclean spirits], however, Christian teaching identifies δαίμονιον and δαίμων with *aitu*. The result is that the exorcisms of Jesus are understood in terms of *aitu* possession, the *aitu* being an evil and cosmic being by origin, nature and inclination. The parallel between demon possession and *ma'i aitu* is not valid one since demon possession is a negative phenomenon in the gospels while *aitu* possession may not necessarily be so in Samoa. [see discussion of *ma'i aitu* in chapter three] The motif of Jesus' struggle against the forces of evil is transposed into the Samoan world-view thus presenting Jesus as defeating and declaring void all family *aitu* and traditional spirits. Many would pay lip service to the teaching of the church that its spirit-world had been defeated and annulled by the impact of the gospel. I propose that no Samoan would genuinely discredit his own spirit-world nor annul in totality his belief in *aitu*. The teaching would not do justice to the nature and function of the spirit-system as it was originally held sacred by the Samoans. The Christian understanding of the world and the Samoan spirit-world continue to exist alongside each other, with people resorting to one or the other in their effort to explain their various activities and life crises.

In Mark 1:23,26; the man with an unclean spirit - ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ is translated *agaga leaga* which literally means 'bad spirits'. The concept of *agaga leaga* does not imply a cosmic being which is primarily evil in origin and nature, but the term implies an evil *aitu* as opposed to a good one. The term *agaga leaga* represents the spirits or the souls of those who died and have not been able to ascent to *pulotu* where good spirits dwell. Instead, they have gone to the underworld and the abode of the dead [*fafā*]. Turner points out that

the spirits [*aitu*] go to this place, but at darkness, they ascend and revisit their former abode retiring at early dawn. These spirits had power to return and cause disease and death in other members of the family.²¹¹

The spirits who are not able to go to *pulotu* are those who had not lived good and moral lives and thus they are punished to the *fafā*. Such spirits include also those who had not received proper burials from families. A Christian reading of the term *agaga leaga* makes no differentiation of traditional spirits, however, they are all identified as evil and malicious entities irrespective of whether they are good or bad. The term also includes the spirits of those who had not lived good Christian lives. In the spiritual framework of *lotu*, all traditional spirits are identified as *agaga leaga* and their presence provides a category of beings in the nature of demons and unclean spirits that we find in the gospels.

In Mark 5:1-13, *agaga leaga* is used interchangeably with *temoni*, [*agaga leaga* 5:2, 8; *temoni* 5:12]. Although 'unclean spirits' and 'demons' are not translated as *aitu*, people classify them in the same category. The fact that demons and unclean spirits are dominant in the spirit-world of the gospels meant that *aitu* which constitute the most popular divine entity in traditional world-view become the inevitable match. The *aitu* belong to the indigenous order of divine beings and this makes them an easy prey and inevitable parallel with demons and malicious spirits of the gospels. However, *aitu* are not evil and neither should they be understood as evil cosmic beings by origin and nature. In fact, there can be good *aitu* as well as bad ones. Even *ali'i* and heads of families are referred to as family *aitu* which imply their status as deities and lords of families and not family demons and evil spirits, thus contradicting the negative label ascribed to them in Samoan Christianity.

It may be unfair to identify too closely the spirit-world of the Samoans with that of Jesus in relation to the nature of the spirits involved. The traditional world-view unlike the gospels' does not identify its spirits as essentially evil, but

like the gospels, the supernatural spirits actively participate in the daily activities of the people. *Aitu* may have duality of natures and they could be either good or malicious spirits, but they are not identical with Satan and evil spirits of the gospels. A strict form of dualism of two contrasting spirit-forces in traditional world-view is absent. The spiritual forces may be understood as benevolent beings. Their punishing role in the form of sickness and physical calamity are seen as not inherent in their nature but consequential of human behaviour and deeds. The spirits have tendencies to do good as well as inflict pain on those who violate traditional norms and moral values of family and community.

However, *aitu* that consistently harass people for no apparent reason are also accommodated within the Samoan world-view. They are seen as spirits of those who did not have beneficial former lives and have become malicious spirits after death. These spirits may be rightly identified with the evil spirits and demons in the gospels, but they constitute only a small minority of the traditional spirits. They are much feared for their activities which are the result of their own evil nature than as punishments for the violation of traditional values. These demons are often got rid of by force using traditional remedies and rituals such as the desecration of their remains by fire or hot water. Such acts guarantee permanent freedom from the activities of such *aitu*. Others may seek the help of a *fai'fe'au*. The pastor is expected to perform an exorcism of an evil *aitu* from a place or from a person. The Roman Catholic priests on some occasions would allow the use of holy water to drive away evil *aitu* from either people or place. With the influence of *lotu*, the concept of evil *aitu* would also include the spirits of those who do not live moral and righteous lives according to Christian principles, and therefore their spirits will not be saved but become evil *aitu*.

5. The concept of Satan

The concept of a divine personality in the nature of Satan or Beelzebul or the devil in the gospels is absent in the Samoan spirit-world. However, there are spiritual beings which are very much feared by people nationwide because of their power to possess and inflict severe sickness and physical disability. These *aitu* are no different from family spirits and spirits of the dead. They are not seen as cosmic evil entities like Satan and the devil. They may terrorise people but their activities may be seen as disciplinary than malicious acts.

The idea of a cosmic evil being develops since Christianity. Satan is translated *Satani*, a loan term from the gospel traditions. The same applies to Beelzebul [*Peelesepulo*] and the devil [*tiapolo*] from δὲ ἄβολος. Satan is interchangeable with both Beelzebul [Mk 3:22-23, 26; Lk 11:18; Mt 12:24,26,27] and the devil [Mt 4:8-11]. Despite the absence of an evil personality in the Samoan world-view, the idea has been incorporated into its spirit system. People often refer to *Satani* as being responsible for inciting evil thought and immoral behaviour in people. *Satani* is conceived as an *aitu*, but one which has nationwide reputation and influence beyond the local and family level. The two *aitu* which may be identified as *Satani* are *Telesā* and *Sauma'iafe*.²¹² Tradition refers to them as young maidens who had been taken away in the past by family *aitu*, and they have become significant *aitu* in the traditional spirit-world. Their identification as Satan is a later development, a consequence of Christian reaction against traditional spirits. Their significant status and reputation above family spirits made them a good match with Satan and the devil. However, this parallel may be misleading, since *Telesā* and *Sauma'iafe* though feared widely in the Samoan community, yet simply function as guardian spirits of traditional values and morals. They are

not enemies of those who respect the norms and customs of the community. Their own families regard them with respect. The only difference from other *aitu* is that their status and influence are more widely acknowledged than the popular local family *aitu*. They do not inflict indiscriminately, but their actions are prompted by the failure of individuals to obey and respect traditional values and taboos of families and community. These values are extended to include Christian morals and principles. Both *aitu* and especially *Telesā*, are members of respectable families in the Samoan society. *Telesā* is from the *Mata'afa* family, one of the three royal lineages in the country, and she would be highly respected in the community. The same may be said of *Sauma'iafe* from the *Pula* family, a respectable *ali'i* of the village of *Sale'imoa*. She also has the respect of the village people as well as the district of *Tuamasaga*. When a person is said to be afflicted or possessed by one of these two *aitu*, the immediate response is to identify where the infringement had incurred, and an act of apology [*ifoga*] is performed to the *ali'i* of the family. The presentation of fine mats to the chief concerned is necessary in order to appease the *aitu* and to ensure that healing is complete and successful. Such occasions are not infrequent in Samoa today.

Evil is seen not as some external cosmic force but inherent within the family and society generally. Society harbours these tendencies, and they are often manifested in the nature and activities of people and family spirits. Evil and malicious beings are no other than spirits of those who either fail to live good and moral lives or of those who have not received proper burial rituals. Evil beings which people regard as 'satan' are no other than people themselves who behave and act like one. Evil is inherent within people and not a cosmic entity outside which invades humanity from its own evil realm. This holistic approach to life tends to see the divine realm of spirits and the physical world of human beings as complementary,

than in a polarized form of existence.

C. CONCLUSION

1. The principle of dualism implicit in the nature of spirit forces in the Synoptic Gospels provides a solution to the origin of evil spirits and demons in the healing ministry of Jesus. The nature of Satan, demons and unclean spirits implies the influence of Persian dualism where two cosmic forces independent and contrary to each other, wage war against one another. A similar principle of dualism in relation to spirit forces is seen also in Jewish apocalypics and Qumran. The Samoan world-view concerning its spirit-system may be seen as complementary rather than contrasting. The *aitu* represent entities of both inclinations. They could either be beneficial or malicious. The contrast is not by origin and nature but a consequence of human activities. They possess the duality of natures, both positive and negative, implicit in traditional creation mythology. The Samoan spirits and deities are similar in many respects to the Greek *daemons*, respectable divine beings which act as intermediaries between the realm of deities and people.

2. The gospels have given us a clear picture of two worlds which impinge upon each other; the physical world of matter and the world of spiritual reality. The world of spiritual reality speaks of the existence of God, his spirit and angels on the one hand, and Satan, demons and evil spirits on the other. The sphere of activities of these supernatural beings is not confined to the spiritual realm but they also influence human life. Human experience of spiritual reality is as equally important as the physical encounter, and such experience and belief could have real impact and influence on people's lives and well-being. Therefore to ignore passages and references to spirits and demons in the gospels strikes at the "validity of the

whole gospel narrative and the authority of the evangelists as well".²¹³ Traditional and Christian Samoan world-views acknowledge the reality of two realms existing not only side by side, but in many ways inseparably in the lives of men and women. The Samoans have a materialistic approach to *lotu*. The spiritual dimension of Christianity is inseparable from its physical aspect. Spiritual well-being is closely integrated with physical condition^{so} that a good relationship with deities is expressed in physical well-being. Physical misfortune is a sign of spiritual weakness. This unity of the spiritual and the material presents an orientation which is similar to both Jesus' and Samoan world-views. The *aitu* function in both realms and the lives of men and women are not separated from spiritual reality. It is within this holistic framework of understanding the world which is common to both Jesus and Samoa, that questions relating to health and well-being be viewed. The causality of sickness and misfortune is an integral component of these two polarised and yet inseparable existences.

3. The presence of dualistic forces that influence the lives of Jesus' contemporaries was real. The unclean spirits and demons were no mere fantasy, nor myths which needed to be interpreted in rational and psychological terms, but real forces in the lives of people which needed to be countered and defeated accordingly before healing and wholeness can be restored to them. Nothing can be more real to the Samoans than their own spirit-world of deities [*atua*], deified ancestors [*tupua*] and spirits of the dead [*aitu*] which are all identified by the popular term *aitu*. The close relationship between people and spirits provides the rationale by which many of the beliefs, activities and practices of the Samoan people in the past and present be understood.

4. The struggle between Jesus and the forces of evil was a conflict of real cosmic

powers and personalities. Satan represents the forces of evil in their struggle to overcome God and his kingdom. In Jesus' healing and acts of exorcism, this confrontation is clearly and dramatically portrayed. The expulsion of evil and unclean spirits and the healing of those who are sick, point to the defeat of Satan and demons by Jesus. The polarization of spirits in the gospels is absent in the Samoan spirit system. The activity of an *aitu* is not necessarily a confrontation of two contrasting powers but a result of individual response to the traditional values and taboos of the community. Any conflict between a person and an *aitu* implies a case of failure or a violation of certain rules and responsibilities. The existence of evil and malicious *aitu* is seen as the consequence of human failure in previous life than of the original nature of the spirit. In Christian Samoa, the concept of evil *aitu* is extended to include the spirits of those who fail to live good and moral Christian lives, and so are seen to be beyond redemption. The concept of *aitu* becomes increasingly identified with the negative spiritual entities that afflict and harm people in the gospels. To acknowledge their influence in the lives of people is considered a betrayal of the faith in the one and all powerful God. This is too quick, as many Christians today would still acknowledge their family *aitu* with respect and these spirits will continue to have a place in their world order.

5. The healing miracles of Jesus represent a continued struggle between the forces of evil and those of God. A contrast of intentions and purposes between Jesus and the evil spirits is displayed in the desire of Jesus to bring healing and wholeness to victims of demonic afflictions. In order to heal the victims of unclean spirits, Jesus exerted his power to expel and to heal. The defeat and expulsion of unclean spirits and demons help to bring holistic healing to the victims. Many Samoans believe in the causality of sickness by *aitu*. Through the

medium of a traditional healer, the sick person would seek means of appeasing the injured spirit in order to obtain forgiveness for the transgression. Sickness is often seen^{more} as a symptom of the failure to maintain a good relationship with the spirit-world than an organic malfunction of the body. An evil *aitu* like a malicious demon of the gospels is exorcised and sometimes its grave and remains desecrated if it continues to harass and cause problems to family members.

6. Satan in the Synoptic Gospels is an adversary of God. He is portrayed as an independent personality whose intentions and activities contrast those of God. He has his own realm and a host of spirits and demons which tempt men and women to sin and inflict sickness and physical pain on them. The activities of Satan were not prompted by God, however, he acted independently as God's opponent. The Samoan world-view lacks the concept of an evil being or personality of the nature and character of Satan and the devil as we find in the Synoptic Gospels. This is due to the fact that in the traditional world-view, there is no concept of an absolute dualism of two contrasting cosmic beings responsible for the two polarities in life, good and evil and light and darkness. Instead, the two forms of existence are seen as complementary, and supernatural beings possess the duality of nature. Because they all descended from the original high god through the union of two *papa*, they are susceptible to two spheres of existences, divine and secular, and two inclinations, good and evil. The gap between the divine and the secular is minimal, and supernatural spirits and human beings enjoy an acceptable and a natural co-existence in the present world. However, despite the absence of a contrasting personality such as Satan in traditional Samoa, the idea of Satan is accepted quite readily within the Samoan Christian world-view. Satan becomes personified in the form of evil personalities, and has become the cause of evil within human beings, that so often one may remark after committing a violent act

that he has been overcome by Satan. Satan is internalised as the evil inclination which incites people to evil activities.

7. There is a tendency in modern Western circles to undermine the relevance and significance of the healing ministry of Jesus in their search for cure and well-being, and to see it best handled by conventional medical models rather than try to understand how religious beliefs can affect healing matters. The differences in understanding the world and all the various forces important in life must be taken into account in the diagnosis and consequent cure of any sick person. It is only when the remedy is set within the framework of the patient's social, religious and moral framework, that holistic healing and genuine well-being may be successfully achieved.

Endnotes

1. O. Böcher, *Christus Exorcista*, [Stuttgart:Kohlhammer, 1972], 70; see also E. Yamauchi, "Magic or Miracles? Diseases, Demons and Exorcisms," *Gospel Perspectives* VI, 127. According to Böcher, with the exception of John 9:1-3 and Galatians 4:13f; "An der Annahme dämonischer Ursache der Krankheiten hält das Neue Testament gleichfalls im allgemeinen fest." O. Böcher, *Christus Exorcista*, 160-1.
2. J.M. Smith, *Jesus the Magician*, [San Francisco:Harper and Row Publishers, 1981], 195; M. J. Borg, *Jesus A New Vision*, [San Francisco:Harpers & Row, 1987], 61-62.
3. M. Kelsey, *Discernment: A Study in Ecstasy and Evil*, [New York:Paulist Press, 1978], 60. Satan is called by one name or another in fifty places in the gospels and Acts.
4. E.g. the man with an unclean spirit, Mk 1:21-28; Lk 4:31-37; the Gedarene/Gerasene demoniac, Mk 5:1-20; Mt 8:28-34; Lk 8:26-29; the Canaanite woman's daughter, Mk 7:24-30; Mt 15:21-28; the epileptic, Mk 9:14-29; Mt 17:14-21; Lk 9:37-43a; the blind and dumb demonic, Mt 9:32-34; 12:22-24; Lk 11:14-26; the deaf and the dumb man, Mk 7:31-37; the fever of Peter's mother in law, Lk 4:38-39; the woman with a bent back, Lk 13:10-13.
5. J.B. Russell, *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity*, [Ithaca:Cornell University Press, 1977], 222 cp. 249; see also R.H. Hiers, "Satan, Demons, and the Kingdom of God," *SJT* 27, [1974], 35-37; J. Kallas, *The Real Satan*, [Minneapolis:Augsburg Publishing, 1975]; M. Kelsey, *Discernment*, 53f; 60f.
6. H.C. Kee, *Miracles in the Early Christian World*, [New Haven:Yale University Press, 1983], 43.
7. "Satan" Mk 1:13; 3:23,26; 4:15; Mt 4:10; 12:26; Lk 10:18; 11:18; 13:16; 22:3,31.
8. "The Devil" Mt 4:1,5,8,11; 13:39; 25:41; Lk 4:2,3,[5],13; 8:12.
9. "Beelzebul" Mk 3:22; Mt 10:25; 12:24,27; Lk 11:15,19.
10. "The prince of demons" Mk 3:22; Mt 9:34; 12:24; Lk 11:15; and sometimes referred to as "the ruler of this world," ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου; Jn 12:31; 14:30; 16:11.
11. "The evil one" Mt 5:37; 6:13; 13:19,38; Lk 11:[4]; Jn 17:15.
12. E.g. the parable of the sower, Mk 4:15; Lk 8:12; the parable of the weeds of the field, Mt 13:39; the woman with the "bent back" Lk 13:16; see also Lk 10:18; 22:3, 31; Mt 25:41.
13. Demons and demon-possession are frequently mentioned in the gospels. The two nouns for demons, δαίμονιον and δαίμων are spoken of 49 times in the gospels. The state of being possessed by a demon or demons, δαιμονίζομαι is

found 13 times in the gospels. e.g. δαίμονιον, δαίμων; Mt 7:22; 8:31; 9:33,34; 10:8; 11:18; 12:24,27,28; 17:18; Mk 1:34,39; 3:15,22; 5:[12]; 6:13; 7:26,29,30; 9:38; 16:9,17; Lk 4:33,35,41; 7:33; 8:2,27,29,30,33,35,38; 9:1,42,49; 10:17; 11:14,15,18,19,20; 13:32; Jn 7:20; 8:48,49,52; 10:20,21; δαιμονίζομαι, Mt 4:24; 8:16,28,33; 9:32; 12:22; 15:22; Mk 1:32; 5:15,16,18; Lk 8:36; Jn 10:21.

14. N. Forsyth, *The Old Enemy: Satan and the Combat Myth*, [Princeton:Princeton University Press, 1987], 108; E. Yamauchi, "Magic or Miracle," 118, fn.223; R.H. Hiers, "Satan", 40; E. Lohse, *The New Testament Environment*, [London:SCM, 1976], 106.

15. G. Vermes *Jesus the Jew*, [London:1973], 61; J. Bright, *A History of Israel*, [Philadelphia:Westminster, 1959], 444; D.S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic*, [Philadelphia:Westminster, 1964], 254-262, 385-387; M. Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism*, II [Leiden:Brill, 1982], 194-195.

16. *IQS* iii.13-iv.26; see R.H. Charlesworth, "A Critical Comparison of the Dualism in *IQS* iii.13-iv.26 and the Dualism contained in the Fourth Gospel," *NTS* 15 [1968-9], 389-418; H. Koester, *History, Culture, and Religion of the Hellenistic Age I*, [Philadelphia:Fortress Press, 1980], 237ff. In the *IQM* document the Essenes see themselves as the elect of God who will play a decisive role in the battle between the sons of light and the sons of darkness at the end of time. The struggle between these two forces represents the Qumranic dualistic world-view with its two opposing powers influencing the physical and moral lives of men and women. According to Fitzmyer, the Qumran dualism is related to Iranian sources, i.e. both dualisms maintain the subordination of the two spirits to the supreme God. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament*, [London:Scholars Press, 1974], 457ff.

17. T.W. Manson, *Teaching of Jesus*, [Cambridge:University Press, 1963], 154.

18. On the question of how much Jewish religious thought had been influenced by the Persian religion, Barr suggests that the question is debatable. He indicated that the Persians appeared as de facto authorities with whom Jews would negotiate on a basis of respect and even friendship, but the actual nature of the religious belief and practice was left aside. The supposition of Iranian influence behind Jewish ideas, like angels, periodization of history, dualism, ritual purity, etc., though entirely conceivable and possible remains intangible and undemonstrable. As for the demon's name *Asmodaeus* in the book of Tobit, Barr had some reservation and suggested a Semitic root *s-m-d* = to destroy, as the probable root. J. Barr, "The Question of Religious Influence: the Case of Zoroastrianism, Judaism, and Christianity," *JAAR* 53 [June, 1985], 201-235.

19. T.H. Gaster, "Demon," *IDB A-D*, [New York:Abingdon Press, 1962], 817ff; J.J. Collins, "Apocalyptic Eschatology as the Transcendence of Death," *CBQ* 36 [Jan 1974], 30.

20. M. Barker, *Lost Prophet: The book of Enoch and its influence on Christianity*, [London:SPCK, 1988], 39.

21. R.H. Charlesworth, "Dualism" 389. Ferguson suggests that ethical dualism comes from Judaism especially Qumran [*IQM*, *IQS*] with cosmic associations from Persian thought; the eschatological or supernatural dualism from Jewish apocalypics and

Qumran; and psychological dualism of body and soul from Platonism. Gnostic dualism is an amalgam of psychological and ethical dualism with a cosmic dualism of matter versus the spirit. Ferguson, *Background of Early Christianity*, [Michigan, Grand Rapids:Eerdmans Publishing Co.,1987], 248.

22. M. Barker, *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity*, [London:SPCK, 1987], 29. Collins suggests that it is a great mistake to read apocalyptic as a dualistic system, nothing could be more completely integrated. J.J. Collins, "Apocalyptic Eschatology," *CBQ* 36, [1974], 21-43. This is taking the point too far, since the dualism of light and darkness, good and evil, God and Belial is clear in the Community Rule [*IQS*]; although at the same time such dualism can also be viewed as complementary.

23. In the creation story of Genesis, there is already darkness and disorder before God brings light and order into existence.

24. Such words imply dualism. Forsyth suggests that these words contain allusion to Cyrus' own Zoroastrian religion in which the opposition of the twin primordial spirits in their efforts to establish life or non-life is regulated by the same supreme power, *Ahura Mazda*. N. Forsyth, *The Old Enemy*, 108. cp. Amos 3:6; and Lamentations 3:38.

25. Zoroastrian dualism speaks of two contrasting primal spirits, *Ahura Mazda* the creator of good and his adversary, *Angra Mainyu* the spirit of evil. These deities are independent of each other, and no common origin is suggested of them.

26. N. Forsyth, *The Old Enemy*, 103.

27. F. Lindstrom, *God and the Origin of Evil: A Contextual Analyses of Alleged Monistic Evidence in the Old Testament*, [Sweden:CWK, Gleerup, 1983], 238-241.

28. Jub 4:15; 5:1-2; Ethiopic [Apocalypse] Enoch or 1En 6:1-6; 7:1; 10:8-9; 86:1ff; 106:14. Evil is not attributed to God but to the fallen angels' wilful corruption of their freedom. Sin and disobedience in the world is due to the original disobedience of angels who misused divine knowledge and brought calamity to the earth. see R.H. Charlesworth, "Dualism," 393; M. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 233.

29. Mk 5:1-20; see also E. Lohse, *The New Testament Environment*, 182; W. Foerster, "διὰ βολοῦς" *TDNT* II.71-81.

30. Lindstrom objects strongly to this interpretation of Yahweh's responsibility with evil.

[i] he rejects the concept of divine pancausality in relation to disaster;

[ii] this rejection does not take place on the basis of any thorough-going dualistic model which is contained in the biblical texts;

[iii] that biblical texts provide no grounds for generalizing either one way or the other about the origin of evil.

F. Lindstrom, *God and the Origin of Evil*, 238ff;

31. Forsyth points out that it is in 1Chronicles 21:1 that the evil force Satan for the first time in the Old Testament is shown to have acted independently of divine

permission, and this heralded the new beginning of the concept of Satan and evil as separate from God which was fully developed later in apocalyptic literature. N. Forsyth, *The Old Enemy*, 120-1.

32. T.H. Gaster, "Demon" 817ff.

33. *Ibid.* The term *daimon* is used in order to distinguish it from 'demon' as in the modern sense of malicious and evil beings.

34. T.H. Gaster, "Demon," 817.

35. Koester, H. *History* I.230.

36. I have used this form to distinguish *daemons* as it was originally used by ancient writers to mean an "anonymous god, a lesser deity alongside major ones" from the modern definition of demon as a devil or malign spirit which was a result of a long development. see T.H. Gaster, "Demon" 817. The New Testament, the apocryphal and pseudepigraphal understanding of demon tends to fall within the modern concept of demons as evil and malicious entities.

37. Plato, *Laws* X.896 A.

38. Plato, *Laws* X.896 D.

39. Plato, *Laws* X.896 E.

40. Plato, *Laws* IV.713 D.

41. Plato, *Laws* IV.717 B.

42. Plato, *Laws* IV.740 A.

43. Plato, *Laws* VII.801 D.

44. W.K.C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy: The Later Plato and Academy*, Vol 5 [Cambridge:Cambridge University Press, 1978], 475.

45. In his essay, *On Isis and Osiris* 360E Plutarch quotes Xenocrates for the opinion that "among *daemons* as among men, there are different degrees of virtue and vice". see also *Def.Or.* 417B.

46. Xenocrates declares a man's soul to be his *daemon* which is what Plato earlier said in *Timaeus* 90 A, when he describes the soul as a "*daemon* given by god to each man." J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, [London:Duckworth, 1977], 32. Armstrong indicates that the idea of an evil 'world soul' is a development of the suggestion made by Plato himself in *Timaeus* and *Laws*. A.H. Armstrong, *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy*, [London:Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1947], 153; H. Koester, *History* I.143.

47. W.K.C. Guthrie, *Greek Philosophy*, 475.

48. J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, 31-2.

49. H. Koester, *History* I.360.
50. J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, 172.
51. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 246 A.
52. H.A. Wolfson, *Philo: Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, Vol 1, [rev., Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1948], 368.
53. Philo, *Gig* 2:6; H.A. Wolfson, *Philo*, 369.
54. Philo, *Gig* 2.6-9. Philo uses a common platonic argument for the existence of *daemons*. They are the proper inhabitants of air, even as there are proper denizens of all the other elements. Philo does not disqualify birds. He accepts them as inhabitants of air, as indeed in *Noah's Work as a Planter* [*Plant*] 12, but he makes it clear that he has in mind invisible souls known as *daemons*. J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, 318.
55. Philo, *Plant* iv.14; *Conf.* 34.174.
56. Philo, *Gig.* iv.16-18; *Somn.* [*On Dreams*] i.134-5; 141-2.
57. Plato, *Laws* 896 Eff.
58. J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, 173.
59. Philo, *Questions on Genesis* 1.26.
 Question: Why, asks Philo, is a plural word used by God here?
 Answer: God does not wish to be personally involved in creating a being which is capable of both virtue and vice, as is Man, since he does not want to be responsible for creating Evil.
 Dillon suggests that "such streak of dualism in Philo is not evident elsewhere in his writings." J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, 172. Philo's concept of two opposing powers in the soul of man seems to have its closest parallels in post-Biblical Jewish literature, for example; T.Ass 1.6; T.Jud 20; also *IQS* 3.13ff; 4.15f.
60. Plutarch, *Isis and Osiris*, 369E.
61. J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, 206.
62. Plutarch, *Moralia* XIII, 1.1015 A-E.
63. Plutarch, *Moralia* XIII, 1.1027 A. NB. A widely held belief among second century platonists like Plutarch and others is that, the cause of evil was an evil soul immanent in matter and having the whole material universe under its domination. See also A.H. Armstrong, *Ancient Philosophy*, 153.
64. Plutarch, *Moralia* XIII, 1.1027; also XIII, 1.A-E; H. Koester, *History*, Vol I, 361; W.K.C. Guthrie, *Greek Philosophy*, 475.
65. E.g. gospels: demons, spirits, also Rom 8:14; cp. Gen 6:1-2; sons of God and saints, Eph 1:1; Phil 1:1; Col 1:2; angelic gatherings, Heb 12:22. M. Barker, *The*

- Lost Prophet*, 41.
66. Plutarch, *On Obsolescence of Oracles*; 944 D.
67. J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, 218.
68. Plutarch, *Isis and Osiris*, 360D-E, [*Moralia* V, 59-60].
69. Plutarch, *Obsolescence of Oracles* 417 A-B. [*Moralia* V]
70. Plutarch, *On the Daemon of Socrates*, 591 D-E
71. Plutarch, *On Tranquility of Mind*, 474 B-C. [*Moralia* VI]
72. See: *Thayers Lexicon* and also Liddell and Scott; T.H. Gaster, "Demons," 817; *BAGD*.
73. Josephus, *War* 7:85; *Antiq* 6:166ff, 211, 214; 8:45ff; Mt 11:18; Lk 7:33; 8:27; Jn 7:20; 8:48f, 52; 10:20.
74. *Antiq* 6.211; Mt 7:22; 9:34; 10:8; Mk 1:34, 39; 16:17; Lk 9:49; 11:14f; 18ff; 13:32.
75. *BAGD*, 29.
76. E.g. Plato, *Laws* IV.716E; *Isis* 6.5; 64.5; *Sir* 51.5.
77. No firm date is known for the prophet Zarathushtra or Zoroaster, however a date between 1400-1200 BC is suggested; see *Textual Sources for the Study of Zoroastrianism*, ed. & trans. by M. Boyce, [Manchester: University Press, 1984], 11, 22. George Parrinder finds Boyce's early dating of the prophet hard to accept. He points out that although it is true that some of the hymns reveal some similarity with the Rig-Veda [c.1300 BC] yet Zoroaster himself is dated much later, about 628-551 BC. *ExpTim* 91 [1979-1980], 59. Zaehner had earlier confirmed this later dating of the prophet when he wrote,
 The traditional date the Zoroastrians assign to their Prophet is 258 years before Alexander the Great. For the Persian or Iranian, the name Alexander can only have meant the sack of Persepolis, the extinction of the Achaemenian Empire, and the death of the last of the king of kings, Darius iii. This occurred in 330 BC and Zoroaster's death would then be 588 BC. Traditionally, Zoroaster was said to have lived 77 years. Therefore the probable date of Zoroaster is 628-551 BC.
- R.H. Zaehner, *The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism*, [London:Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1961], 33.
78. M. Boyce, *Zoroastrians: The Religious Beliefs and Practices*, [London:Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979], 19-20. It has been pointed out that there are six lesser divinities in the Zoroastrian Heptad brought into being by *Ahura Mazda* to help him in his creation. See also *Textual Sources*, ed. & trans. M. Boyce, 12.
79. *Yasna* 30:3-5; *Textual Sources*, ed. & trans. by Mary Boyce, 35; see also M. Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, 20.

80. 1En 58:5f; [Fragment of the Book of Noah] 108:11-15; T.Levi 2:8-3:10; 2Bar [Greek Apocalypse of] 17:4-18:2; 48:50; 49:2f.
81. Some would date the rise of Zurvanism much later than the 4th century BC.
82. *Textual Sources*, ed. & trans. by M. Boyce, 96.
83. Zurvanite heterodoxy however, drew the obvious conclusion from the Gathic text that describes the two spirits as twins, and argued that if they were twins, then they must have had a common father. An almost exact parallel to this solution of the problem of evil is to be found in the *Manual of Discipline*. Some argue that Judaism was deeply influenced by Zoroastrianism during and after the Babylonian captivity. This can scarcely be questioned. The extra-ordinary likeness between the *DSS* text and the Gathic conception of the nature and origin of evil would seem to point to direct borrowing on the Jewish side. Zaehner, *Zoroastrianism*, 52. Others would be a little more cautious in ascribing the influence upon Persian influence. They argued that such distinction was deeply rooted in the Old Testament and therefore did not necessarily originate through the Persian influence; see J. Barr, "Religious Influence," 201-235; T.H. Gaster, "Demon," 817.
84. Koester, H. *History I*, 401.
85. E. Lohse, *The New Testament Environment*, 106; cp. R.H. Hiers, "Satan," 40.
86. J.J. Collins, "Apocalyptic Eschatology," 30.
87. *Ibid.*, 33.
88. J.J. Collins, *Review, The Older Testament*, *TS* 49 [June, 1988], 335-336.
89. T.H. Gaster, "Demon," 817.
90. see *BAGD*, δαίμων, 169.
91. eg. *Lilith* mentioned in Isaiah 34:14 as the "night hag" appears in Mesopotamian texts as *succuba* who tempts men in sexual dreams. *Reshesh* is mentioned in Deut 32:24; Ps 76:3; Songs of Sol 8:6; Hab 3:5; the Hebrew holiness code 76:4; 78:48; as the Canaanite god of plague and pestilence and is attested in the native documents from *Mari, Ugarit* ... from the 1800 to 350 BC. There is also reference to the "midday demon" [LXX δαιμόνιον μεσήμβρινον - Ps 91:6 "the destruction that wastes at noonday," and the "vampire" Prov 30:15; "the faery arrow" Job 6:4; Ps 91:5; [cp. *Iliad* 1.43-52 where *Apollo* inflicted plagues by shooting his darts]; "terror in the night" Ps 91:5; "catastrophe" Hab 3:5; etc..see: T.H. Gaster, "Demon," 819ff.
92. T.H. Gaster, "Demons," 821.
93. J. Baar, "Religious Influence," 219.
94. C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity*, [London:SPCK, 1982], 70.

95. J.D.G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament*, [London:SCM Press, 1977], 310-316.
96. C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, 71.
97. *Ibid.*, 14.
98. A.Y. Collin, *Review:The Open Heaven*, *JBL* 103 [1984], 466.
99. R.E. Brown, *Review :The Open Heaven*, *ThSt* 44 [1983], 312.
100. Fergusson, *Early Christianity*, 379.
101. *IQS* i.1; the doctrine of the two spirits; *IQS* iii.13-iv.25; see G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 3rd ed., [Harmondsworth:Penguin, 1987], 64-7.
102. See also: *IQS* iii-iv; *4Qpr Nab*; Curses of Satan and his lot, *4Q* 280-2.
103. *IQH* vi: Vermes, *DSS*, 182; *IQH* vii: *DSS*, 184; *IQH* xi: *DSS*, 196; *IQH* xiv: *DSS*, 201;
104. Cp. with 1En vi.1-6; vii.1; x.8-9 and Jub v.1-2; evil is not attributed to God but to the fallen angels' wilful corruption of their freedom. In the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, sin and evil originate from Adam's rejection of God's will. In the Mishnah [*m Ber* 9:5], evil is said to have been caused by the *yesser-ha-ra* or the evil inclination in man. In the T.Asher 1:6-9 and 4Ezra viii.56-60, sin and the evil inclinations are ascribed to the responsibility of human beings. While in the apocalyptic and rabbinical texts the origin of evil is attributed to either the angels' free will, to Adam's responsibility, or to each individual's own responsibility by their failure to control their evil inclination by means of their good inclination, there is in the Community Rule [*IQS* iii.13-iv.26] no similar recourse, for it is clearly stated that God created the spirit of darkness. That is, the spirit is evil from the moment of creation; it did not fall from an original state of purity. R.H. Charlesworth, "Dualism," 394.
105. Cp. M. Black who traced the background of *IQS* dualism to Apocalyptic writings. M. Black, *The Scrolls and Christian Origins: studies in the Jewish background of the New Testament*, [London:Nelson & Sons Ltd., 1961], 134.
106. See D. Winston, "The Iranian Component in the Bible, Apocrypha, and the Qumran," *History of Religions* V [1966], 186-216.
107. M. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 233.
108. E.P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, [London:SCM, 1977], 107ff.
109. A.L. Thompson, *Responsibility for Evil in the Theodicy of ivEzra*, SBL Dissertation Series 29, [Missouri:Montana, Scholars Press, 1977], 8.
110. Gen 2:17; 3:19; see A.L. Thompson, *Responsibility for Evil*, 8; Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis*, [London:SCM, 1972], 95.
111. A.L. Thompson, *Responsibility for Evil*, 8; R.H. Charles acknowledges the

contradiction, see *APOT* II.450n.

112. T.Moses 14:2; Life of Adam and Eve: *Vita* 44:2-4; 2En [Slavonic Apocalypse] 30:16f; 2Bar 23:4; ivEzra 3:7; cp. Wis of Sol 2:24; Ps Philo 13:8; Ber R. on Genesis 3:7.

113. *Vita* 3:1-2; 44:1-5; T.Moses 10:2; 32:2; cp. also Philo: *Quest Gen* 1:14; [Gen 2:15;] Ecclus 25:24; see A.L. Thompson, *Responsibility for Evil*, 11.

114. 1En [Enochian Fragment] 65:6; NB. The Similitudes of Enoch could be dated as late as 100 AD or even later.

115. Jub 48:1-19 describes the conflict between God's agent Moses and his Adversary *Mastema*.

116. R.H. Hiers, "Satan," 39; N. Forsyth, *The Old Enemy*, 122; A.L. Thompson, *Responsibility for Evil*, 38.

117. A.L. Thompson, *Responsibility for Evil*, 39.

118. E.g. In Jesus' temptation, Satan is presented as God's adversary and tempter who tried to entice Jesus to act contrary to his call and vocation. Jesus' command to Peter at Caesarea Philippi is an emphatic denial and rebuke of Satan's intention and temptation. In the Beelzebul's controversy as well as the many sicknesses and physical disabilities which Jesus dealt with, Satan and his army of evil spirits and demons are presented by the evangelists as responsible for them.

119. For example, in a personal aside, Russell confesses that "all reservations considered, however, I do believe in the existence of a personification and principle of evil, call it what you will." J.B. Russell, *The Devil*, 266. Others who hold similar views concerning the reality of an evil being in the form of Satan or the devil includes also Yamauchi and Melinsky. E. Yamauchi, "Magic or Miracle" 125; M.A.H. Melinsky, *Healing Miracles*, [London:A.R.Mowbray & Co.Ltd, 1968], 29. See also J.M. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark*, [London:SCM, 1957], 33-38; H. Kee, "The Terminology of Mark's Exorcism Stories," *NTS* 14 [1968], 232-246. On the contrary, Bultmann suggests that Jesus did not really take Satan and the demons seriously. He indicates that "if it is true that to Jesus the world can be called bad only in so far as men are bad, that is, are of evil will, then it is clear how little the figure Satan really meant to him." R. Bultmann, *Jesus and the Word*, [New York:Nicolson & Watson, 1968], 27f; 56; idem. *Jesus Christ and Mythology*, [London:SCM, 1960], 13-15. Cp. also with Bornkamm who demythologises or psychologises the demons away. G. Bornkamm, *Jesus of Nazareth*, [London:Harpers & Row, 1960], 60, 63. It would be more realistic to think of Jesus and his contemporaries as taking more seriously the reality of Satan and evil forces than to dismiss them as some form of pseudo-reality which one can demythologise or explain away psychologically. The world-view of first century AD Judaism accommodated such forces as part of its framework of reality and undoubtedly, Jesus and his contemporaries were full participants of that reality.

120. N. Forsyth, *The Old Enemy*, 107.

121. R.H. Hiers, "Satan," 39.

122. N. Forsyth, *The Old Enemy*, 115.
123. Forsyth suggests that "here and only here in the whole of the canonical Old Testament do we find a reference to an independent spiritual force named Satan minus the definite article and minus any identificaton with the heavenly court." Forsyth identifies the difference in the same story in 2Samuel 24:1ff where Yahweh is portrayed as the cause both of David's sin and of his punishment. *The Old Enemy*, 118.
124. *Ibid.*, 122; see also 1Pet 5:8.
125. *IQS* i:18,24; ii:5,19; iii.18b-iv.1; see R.H. Charlesworth, "Dualism," 390, 393.
126. Perhaps this is an influence of the combat myth of Persian religious systems; cp. *IQS* iii-iv; *IQM* 1ff.
127. *IQS* iii.24; R.H. Charlesworth, "Dualism," 393.
128. H.C. Kee, *Miracles*, 146.
129. G. Theissen, *Miracle Stories of the Early Christian Tradition*, [Edinburgh:T&T Clark, 1983], 279.
130. H.C. Kee, *Miracles*, 156.
131. G. Theissen, *Miracles Stories*, 90-1.
132. N. Forsyth, *The Old Enemy*, 285.
133. G. Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, 89.
134. *Ibid.*, 279.
135. J.A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke i-ix*, [New York:Doubleday & Co.Inc., 1981], 546.
136. H.C. Kee, "Terminology," 232-246; N. Forsyth, *The Old Enemy*, 285ff.
137. Cp. *PGM* III.570; IV.870ff; XXXVI.189f; "I adjure by the great name of *Ablathana*." see also G.A. Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, [Edinburgh:T&T Clark, 1901], 281.
138. G.A. Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, 282.
139. H.C. Kee, "Terminology," 242; J.M. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark*, 36; D.E. Nineham, *The Gospel of Mark*, [Harmondsworth:Penguin, 1968], 75.
140. J.M. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark*, 33. The term "cosmic language" refers to specific allusions by Mark to the cosmic forces which transcend historical immanence and yet participate in the history Mark records.
141. R.E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John i-xii*, [New York:Doubleday &

Company, Inc. 1966], 302.

142. S. Garrett, *The Demise of the Devil: Magic and the Demonic in Luke's Writings*, [Minneapolis:Fortress Press, 1989], 37f; M.E. Mills, *Human Agents of Cosmic Power in Hellenistic Judaism and the Synoptic Tradition*, [Sheffield:Sheffield Academic Press, 1990], 102; C. Brown, *Miracles and the Critical Mind*, [Grand Rapids:W B Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1984], 302.

143. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, [Michigan:Grand Rapids, W B Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1978], 193; C. Brown, *Miracles*, 303; J.M. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark*, 35-38; cp. R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, [Dallas, Texas:Word Books Publisher, 1989], 56.

144. N. Forsyth, *The Old Enemy*, 294.

145. Cp. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke i-ix*, 545.

146. S. Garrett, *The Demise of the Devil*, 37.

147. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke i-ix*, 545.

148. R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 56.

149. M.E. Mills, *Human Agents*, 103.

150. *Ibid.*, 103-4.

151. J. Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20*, [Dallas, Texas:Word Books Publisher, 1989], 206.

152. *BAGD*, 144

153. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke i-ix*, 545.

154. H. Marshall, *Luke*, 192.

155. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke i-ix*, 545.

156. F.W. Danker, *Jesus and the New Age: A Commentary on St Luke's Gospel*, [Philadelphia:Fortress Press, 1988], 111.

157. *BAGD*

158. E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, [Philadelphia:Fortress, 1985], 182-3, 385 fn 14.

159. M. Barker, *Lost Prophet*, 41.

160. R.E. Brown, *John*, liv; R. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, [Philadelphia:The Westminster Press, 1971], 7.

161. C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St John*, [2nd ed.; London:SPCK, 1978], 157; H. Conzelmann, "σκότος" *TDNT* VII, 443.

162. R. Bultmann, *John*, 8; R.E. Brown *John*, liv; C.K. Barrett, *St John*, 38.
163. R. Bultmann, *John*, 9.
164. *Ibid.*
165. *Ibid.*, 320.
166. K. Grayston, *The Gospel of John*, [Philadelphia:Trinity Press International, 1990], 8.
167. R.E. Brown, *John*, 365.
168. F.D. Mazzaferri, *The Genre of the Book of Revelation from Source-Critical Perspective*, [New York:Walter de Gruyter, 1989], 182ff, 250.
169. F.D. Mazzaferri, *Revelation*, 182ff, 189.
170. H.B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St John*, [London:Macmillan & Co/Ltd, 1907], clxix.
171. J. Sweet, *Revelation*, [London:SCM Press, 1990], 290, 296.
172. I.T. Beckwith, *The Apocalypse of John*, [Grand Rapids, Michigan:Baker Book House, 1967], 70f.
173. W. Carr, *Angels and Principalities*, [Cambridge:Cambridge University Press, 1981], 77.
174. *Ibid.*, 84.
175. *Ibid.*, 88-89.
176. J.A. Fitzmyer, "2Cor 6:14-7:1 in the light of the Qumran texts and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," *Paul and Qumran*, ed. by Murphy-O'Connor [1968], 31ff.
177. *Ibid.*, 36 fn 18.
178. *Ibid.*, 41-2]
179. D.E. Nineham, "The case against Pauline Authorship," *Studies in Ephesians*, ed. by F.L. Cross, [London:1956], 29.
180. P. Benoit, P. "Qumran and the New Testament," *Paul and Qumran*, ed. by Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, [London:Geoffrey Chapman, 1968], 20f; J. Gnilka, "2Cor 6:14-7: in the light of the Qumran texts and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," *Paul and Qumran*, 65-66; Murphy-O'Connor, J. "Paul and Qumran," *Paul and Qumran*, 204.
181. R.A. Moyle, "Samoan Medical Incantations," 157.
182. M. Kelsey, *Discernment*, 51-52.

183. *Ibid.*
184. *Ibid.*, 64.
185. M. Barker, *Lost Prophet*, 37-38.
186. M. Buthelezi, *Towards an African Theology in the context of Church, and Society in South Africa. A Dialogue with Manna Buthelezi*, ed. by I.Todt, [1976], 10.
187. R. Crawford, *Lotu and Fa'a Samoa*, 54ff.
188. L. Kamu, "Christianity and Samoan Culture," 50.
189. The *malae* or the *heiau* was a traditional open meeting place for worship and the performance of religious rituals. It would be an equivalent for a temple or a church building today.
190. J. Williams, *Missionary Enterprises*, 540f.
191. M. Mead, *Social Organization of Manu'a*, 84ff; R.P. Gilson, *Samoa 1830-1900*, 73.
- 192 J. Williams, *Missionary Enterprises*, 540-1.
193. G. Turner, *Samoa*, 23-66; J.B. Stair, "Mythology and folk-lore of old Samoa," 6; idem. *Old Samoa*, 211, 228-232; see also Chapter One.
194. R. Crawford, *Lotu and Fa'a Samoa*, 156.
195. Nisbet, *SSL:March* 1844; cp. Stallworthy, *SSL:15 Aug*, 1948.
196. E.S.C. Handy, *Polynesian Religion*, 26.
197. Handy felt that the use of the term 'spiritual' to describe these supernatural beings may not be right, because it tends to have strong ethical connotation which was not present in these early traditions [*Polynesian Religion* 5]. I disagree with Handy's understanding of Polynesian worship as lacking moral aspirations. Traditional Samoan worship sanctioned the values of the community, and these values were indeed for the benefit and welfare of the community. The distinction between what is physical and what is spiritual is irrelevant where a more holistic approach to life is maintained.
198. E.S.C. Handy, *Polynesian Religion*, 6.
199. L. Kamu, "Christianity and Samoan Culture," 143.
200. R. Crawford, *Lotu and Fa'a Samoa*, 54.
201. E.S.C. Handy, *Polynesian Religion*, 27.
202. *Ibid.*, 34.

203. R. Crawford, *Lotu and Fa'a Samoa*, 214.
204. R.A. Goodman, "Aitu Beliefs," 463-479.
205. I.M. Lazar, "*Ma'i Aitu*," 161-181.
- 206.N. Neich, & R. Neich, "Pregnancy, Birth and Infancy," 462; P.J. Kinloch, "Midwives and Midwifery in Western Samoa," *Healing Practices in the South Pacific*, 205f.
207. R.A. Goodman, *Aitu Beliefs*, 463.
208. R. Crawford, *Lotu and Fa'a Samoa*, 261; R.A. Goodman, *Aitu Beliefs* [1971]; H. Kein, *Aitu*, [1972]; I.M. Lazar, *Ma'i Aitu* [1985]; T.F. Lazar, "Indigenous Curing Patterns" [1985]; C. Macpherson, "Samoan Medicine" [1987]; C. & L. Macpherson, *Samoan Medical Belief and Practice* [1990].
209. C. & L. Macpherson, *Samoan Medical Belief and Practice*, 67; R. Crawford, *Lotu and Fa'a Samoa*, 261.
210. L. Kamu, "Christianity and Samoan Culture," 42.
211. G. Turner, *Nineteen Years*, 236.
212. R.A. Goodman, "Aitu Beliefs," 470ff.
213. M. Kelsey, *Discernment*, 53.

CHAPTER THREE

EXORCISMS

A. THE EXORCISMS OF JESUS IN THE GOSPELS

B. *MA'I AITU* [SPIRIT POSSESSION] IN SAMOA

Introduction

This chapter is an attempt to identify more closely points of contact and otherwise between the exorcisms of Jesus and *ma'i aitu* in Samoa. Many of the beliefs and practices in relation to exorcisms in the first century AD, an important aspect of Jesus' healing ministry, have striking parallels though there are also obvious differences to the healing motifs of the Samoan community. The first century Jewish and Hellenistic communities have a number of features in common with Samoa in respect of their world-views. [This is discussed earlier in chapter two]. The idea of possession by a spirit is an alien phenomenon in modern society and it does not quite fit into our present understanding of the world. Spirit possession presupposes the reality of supernatural beings which interact with humans. An attempt to understand exorcisms in the light of modern science and world-view may not adequately portray the significance of exorcisms to those who see sickness and well-being in relation to a world full of deities, spirits and demons. However, to interpret the phenomenon within the thought form and limitation of its own time and environment, we might be able to get a better perspective of its significance in the ministry of Jesus. Borg writes,

Though foreign to our experience and way of thinking in the modern world, the world of spirits and God was, for Jesus and his predecessors and followers in the Jewish-Christian tradition, very real - not simply as an element of belief but of experience.¹

Today we see possession and exorcism as indicating symptoms of mental delusion and social deprivation. Modern society sees possession as a primitive pre-scientific diagnosis of a phenomenon which has psychological and sociological explanations. These motifs are legitimate and represent valid implications of such experiences. However, a world-view which takes for granted the actual existence and influence of spirits, must also have a significant impact upon the physical condition of people. Perhaps both convictions were in part responsible for the phenomenon.

A. EXORCISMS

1. Exorcisms outside the New Testament

The phenomenon of exorcism is not unique to the New Testament, however, we find that in early societies prior to Christianity, exorcism was not unknown. The phenomenon is universal and is as old as humanity, and it continues in many non-Western societies today. By looking more widely at exorcisms in the ancient world, it is possible to see various points of similarities and differences not only with New Testament exorcisms but also with *aitu* possessions in Samoa. The phenomenon of exorcism serves certain functions in a community and these functions and motifs often occur in a number of different societies and cultures.

The Egyptians, in common with many other Near Eastern nations believed that certain sickness and disease may be cured by certain medications pure and simple, but others needed not only drugs but the recital of words of power to effect their

cure. There is a good reason for thinking that some diseases were attributed to the action of evil spirits or demons which had the power of entering into human bodies and vexing them in proportion to their malignant nature and influence. The texts may be scanty, however, there are a few evidences which point to this aspect of early Egyptian beliefs in healing and exorcism.

The earliest record of exorcism is said to have come from Egypt in the 15th century BC. This is the case of an exorcism by a mother of her sick child. The sickness was believed to have been caused by an evil spirit which inhabited the child. The ailment was spoken to and rebuked. It was ordered to flee and escape.² Another early record of an exorcism comes from an *Inscription* dated from the period of Ramses II [1292-1225 BC]. The *Inscription* made reference to a lady possessed by a demon, and an act of exorcism was effected by imparting a "four-fold measure of magical power to the statue of the god *Khonsu*, which was transported to the spot."³

Ancient Babylonians lived in a world populated by demons and spirits whom they could not see, but whose influence at any moment might cause them misfortune, sickness and death. Many of these spirits were actively hostile to people and they waged an incessant warfare against them. Natural protectors of human beings were their own patron gods and goddesses. It is reported by L.W. King that when misfortune or sickness fell upon a person and he or she perceived that the patron deities were offended with them, their first act was to hasten to the temple of their god or goddess and secure the service of a priest who might help them in regaining their favour. An ill-omened word and the eating or drinking of an impure thing, was sufficient to rouse the wrath of some of these supernatural beings.⁴

From Mesopotamia, Thompson has edited and translated numerous incantations from the Babylonian and Assyrian tablets of texts which reflect the popular belief of these ancient civilizations on evil spirits and their influences upon people. Primitive Sumerians recognised three distinct classes of evil spirits all ready to torment the hapless wanderer. The first category includes the disembodied human soul which could find no rest and so wanders up and down the face of the earth. The second are the gruesome spirits which are half human and half demon, and the third are the fiends and devils who are of the same nature as the gods who ride on the noxious winds or bring storms and pestilence to the world. Each of the three kinds is divided up into classes according to the characteristics of the evil spirits which comprise them. The six main ones are *Uttuku Limnu* [evil spirit], *Ali'i Limnu* [evil demon], *Ekkimu Limnu* [evil ghost], *Gallû Limnu* [evil devil], *Ilu Limnu* [evil god] and *Rabish Limnu* [evil fiend].⁵ The causality of various sicknesses such as headaches, fever and other physical pains were attributed to the activities of these evil spirits. Demon possession was a common phenomenon and Thompson has translated numerous incantations which call upon *Marduk* and *Ea*, powerful Assyrian gods to help in the expulsion of evil spirits.⁶ In order to drive out a headache demon, *Marduk* according to the legend came to *Ea* for advice, and he was told to take "water at the confluence of two streams and sprinkle it over the attacked man and perform certain rituals."⁷ In attacking the power of the evil spirits, it was important for the exorcists not to rely solely on their own strengths, however, it was necessary for them to call to their aid some divine authority in order to support them in their combat. Therefore we find in the text that many Assyrian incantations would end with the words,

By Heaven be ye exorcised!
By Earth be ye exorcised!⁸

There are also evidences of fever being exorcised;

- Fever! By Heavens be thou exorcised!
- Fever! By Earth be thou exorcised!
- Fever! By *Ea* mayest thou be exorcised! [vol i. Plate xiii]

as well as many cases of possessions which the Assyrians would have incantations for their expulsion.⁹ On the other hand, the phenomenon of possession and subsequent exorcism was unknown in ancient and classical Greece, however, it can be argued that the seed of the idea was already present in Homer's *Odyssey*¹⁰ where the hateful demon caused wasting sickness, and in *Eumenides* the *Erinyes* were like vampires sucking the blood of men.¹¹

The early records of exorcisms indicate several interesting points which are relevant in New Testament and Samoan exorcisms. The sick child in Egypt shows a case of sickness which coincides with possession, and healing occurs when the evil spirit is expelled. There are instances in the gospels where sickness is attributed to the presence of an evil spirit and the remedy is exorcism [Mt 9:32-34/Lk 11:14-15; Mk 9:17-29]. The evil spirits and demons in ancient Egypt and Babylonia are similar to those in the ministry of Jesus. They were hostile forces which caused sickness and misfortune to people. The idea of appeasing patron deities implies sickness and physical suffering as consequential of violation of moral or ritual rules such as eating or drinking an impure thing.¹² In classical Greek, the *Erinyes* act as avengers against wrongs done to family members [*Il.*9.454, 571; 15.204], and such spirits are not exorcised but appeased. The act of appeasing family *aitu* and ancestral spirits, as well as the Christian *Atua* is a popular motif in dealing with healing and possession in Samoa. The service of a mediator in the form of a family chief or a *faiifeau* is necessary in dealing with them.

In a century before and after Jesus, charismatic healers and exorcists in the form of Jewish 'holy men' similar to Jesus were active in Galilee.¹³ They were seen as

mediators of the spirit of God to people. The two significant figures were Honi and Hanina ben Dosa. These charismatic figures operated in societies where people believed in the reality of a spirit-world which interact with the living. They were mediators between the two worlds, and they possessed the power which enabled them to be healers and exorcists. Borg points out that Jesus was one of them.¹⁴

Tobit presents an early case of demon possession in Jewish literature. He described how an evil demon *Asmodeus* killed the seven successive bridegrooms of Sarah, each on their wedding night [3:7f]. Though some scholars asserted that the text implies that Sarah was possessed by an evil spirit,¹⁵ others have pointed out that the text does not really say this.¹⁶ The demon was frightened off by the horrible smell of burning liver and heart of a fish [8:3].

Josephus mentioned two incidents which showed characteristics of exorcisms [*Antiq* vi.166-168; viii.46-48]. The first one is a paraphrase of 1Samuel 19:9ff where king Saul was possessed by an evil spirit which tormented him, causing 'suffocation and strangling'. The demon left when David played his harp. The second one tells of the story of Eleazar and king Solomon's ring. Josephus points out that Solomon had composed incantations by which illnesses were relieved, and he had also left behind forms of exorcisms by which demons were driven out never to return. He refers to a certain Jew named Eleazar, who exorcised a demon in the presence of king Vespasian by the use of a ring and foul smelling roots said to have been prescribed by king Solomon. He also used the name of Solomon in his incantation to draw out the demon [*Antiq* viii.45ff].¹⁷

Several Qumran texts have been interpreted as providing evidence for a demonic aetiology of sickness and exorcistic methods of healing. In the Apocryphal Psalm,

one would find words which may imply a case of demon possession. The writer wrote,

Let not Satan rule over me nor an unclean spirit, neither let pain nor the evil inclination take possession of my bones.¹⁸

In Genesis Apocryphon xx.28f, one of the Pharaohs had asked Abraham to pray that an evil spirit which was troubling him might be rebuked. Abraham obliged by laying his hands upon Pharaoh's head whereupon the illness was removed and the evil spirit expelled. This is a case where both the mode of healing and that of exorcism are combined and one finds a parallel in the healing of Peter's mother-in-law [Lk 4:38-39]. Although there is no evidence of a rebuke as in Luke, however, the laying on of hands followed by the departure of the 'scourge' implies a case of affliction caused by the presence of an evil spirit. The act of healing is simultaneous with exorcism.

So I prayed [for him].. and I laid my hands on his [head]; and the scourge departed from him.

In the Aramaic prayer of Nabonidus [*4Qpr Nab*], king Nabonidus was afflicted with an evil ulcer for seven years. The plague was cured when an exorcist pardoned his sins. This incident may recall the punishment inflicted upon king Nebuchadnezzar [Dan 4-5], however, the main difference between the two is that Nebuchadnezzar is said to have been cured by God when he recognised God's sovereignty, whereas a Jewish exorcist healed Nabonidus by forgiving his sins. The relationship of morality with sickness is a significant motif not only in first century AD Judaism and the New Testament, but also within Samoa. Later exorcisms such as the one performed by Apollonius in Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius* reveal features and motifs similar to the exorcisms of Jesus. However, a later dating of the work round about 217 AD may suggest Christian influence. The discovery of the *Greek Magical Papyri* [*PGM*] has presented valuable materials of comparison with the exorcisms recorded in the gospels. Smith and Hull made extensive use of

the evidence, however, the uncertainty in their dating would minimise to some extent their value as significant documents in understanding Jesus' acts of exorcism.

2. Exorcisms in the New Testament

An exorcism is the expulsion of demons from persons or places. Theissen rightly points out three characteristics which he thought are specific to the genre of an exorcism story.¹⁹ The first is that the person or victim must be in the power of the demons. Unless there be a possession, there would be no expulsion of the demon. Secondly, there should be a battle between the demon and the exorcist. In the course of this struggle between the two forces, one would try to outplay and defeat the other, and the person possessed becomes the battle-field upon which the two opposing forces conduct their conflict. And thirdly, the activity of the demon is seen to be of a very destructive nature. The New Testament portrays exorcisms specifically of people, and there are no records of any exorcism of places. The damage therefore is mainly confined to people who are possessed. Theissen points out that

there is certainly no lack of references to the extra-human activity of demons, as the destruction of the herd of swine [Mk 5:13], and the saying about the wandering demon [Mt 12:43-45] show, but the purpose of the struggle between Jesus and the demonic forces is exclusively the liberation of the enslaved personality. The threat from demonic forces is seen exclusively in human beings.²⁰

Exorcism is a very prominent aspect of the ministry of Jesus and synoptic writers are unanimous in presenting Jesus as an exorcist. Twelftree rightly argues that evidence demands that we place the origin of at least the core of the Markan exorcism stories as well as the one or two from the non-Markan traditions in the ministry of the historical Jesus.²¹ When one begins by taking the evidence in the

gospels at face value, it is clear that quantitatively, exorcism plays a significant role in Jesus' healing ministry. Four exorcisms appear in Mark although at the same time, there are nine other healing incidents included; [Peter's mother-in-law 1:29-31; leper 1:40-5; paralytic 2:1-12; withered hand 3:1-6; Jairus daughter 5:21-24a, 35-43; flow of blood 5:24b-34; deaf mute 7:31-37; blind man 8:22-26; Bartimaeus 10:46-52]. Hollenbach is right in pointing out that exorcism makes the most dominant and largest single category of healing stories in Mark.²²

The Synoptic Gospels list six exorcisms of Jesus. Four appear in Mark with parallels either in Matthew or Luke or both [e.g. the demoniac in Capernaum Mk 1:21-28/Lk 4:31-37; the Gerasene demoniac Mk 5:1-20/Mt 8:28-34/Lk 8:26-39; the Syrophenician woman's daughter Mk 7:24-30/Mt 15:21-28; and the boy possessed by a spirit Mk 9:14-29/Mt 17:14-21; Lk 9:37-43a]. Two other exorcisms are unrecorded in Mark, however, they are assumed to have come from source 'Q' [e.g. the dumb demoniac Mt 9:32-34/Lk 11:14-15; the blind and dumb demoniac Mt 12:22-24].²³ It is suggested that these two almost identical accounts could be a double narration of the same story.²⁴ The healing of the woman with the spirit of infirmity in Luke 13:10-17 may to some extent be considered an exorcism, however, Wilkinson had convincingly demonstrated that this is more a case of healing than exorcism.²⁵

Apart from the six exorcisms, there are summary references to Jesus' ministry where his main occupation was "to heal many from various diseases, and to drive out evil spirits" [Mk 1:32-34; Mt 8:16; Lk 4:40-41]. In response to the threat of Herod, Jesus defined his mission as "casting out demons and working cures" [Lk 13:32].²⁶ There is a reference to Mary Magdalene "from whom seven demons had gone out" [Lk 8:2]. There are also other references to exorcisms in the gospels

but not directly by Jesus. These include exorcisms performed by his twelve apostles [Mk 6:13/Mt 10:1,8/Lk 9:1], as well as the seventy disciples who are mentioned in Luke as successful exorcists [Lk 10:17]. Even a non-disciple was able to exorcise in the name of Jesus [Mk 9:38-39/Lk 9:49-50].

Apart from the above references which show incidences of actual possession and expulsion of evil spirits, there are two other examples which present characteristics of being exorcisms. The first one is the healing of Peter's mother-in-law where Jesus is reported to have cured her fever by 'rebuking' it.²⁷ It seems that Luke has reworked the Markan version of the healing of Peter's mother-in-law to portray it as an act of exorcism, after all, fever was sometimes regarded in antiquity as being caused by demons.²⁸ The Lukan emphasis on the power of Jesus' word in rebuking the fever differs from the Markan version of Jesus healing by touch [Mk 1:31 cp. Lk 4:39]. It is important to note that in the same chapter in Luke, Jesus similarly rebuked a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon [καὶ ἐπετίμησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων; 4:35]. Another possibility is that since ἐπετίμησεν is not found in the parallels [Mk 1:31/Mt 8:15], it would be probable to assume that Luke had access to another source in addition to Mark. It may be that the other tradition had preserved the term ἐπιτιμών as an important element in viewing Jesus' ministry as the overcoming of the evil power that is evident in sickness and demon possession.²⁹ In addition, Jesus' act of standing 'over her' [καὶ ἐπιστάς ἐπάνω αὐτῆς 4:39] has been suggested as a technique of exorcism that Luke was indicating.³⁰ Theissen disputes the Lukan version as merely having "the superficial features of an exorcism; it is not an exorcism."³¹ He points out that the vital feature of an exorcism which is the departure of the demon is missing.

An exorcism can take place only when a person is not simply impeded in one

function by a demon, but has lost his autonomy to the demon. Where such 'possession' occurs, the demon must leave.³²

Although the Lukan version may not have the basic feature of an exorcism as Theissen sees it, however, the implication of the action and the command of rebuke by Jesus may indirectly point to a case of possession, since fever may be considered a consequence of the work of evil spirits and demons in contemporary Judaism.

The second incident concerns the stilling of the storm in Mark 4:39. The link between the storm and the power of a demon has been suggested [καὶ διεγερθεὶς ἐπετίμησεν τῷ ἀνέμῳ]. Guelich points to the parallels in the language of the stilling of the storm and the exorcism of the demon [Mk 1:25].³³ Kee interprets the stilling of the storm against the background of ancient semitic traditions that identified the sea with the source of power hostile to God. It is from the sea that evil sea monsters such as *Leviathan* would arise to wage war against God and the faithful [Gen.1:21; Job 41:1ff]. In the Canaanite mythology, the evil god is called *Yam* which means the sea. The fact that 'wind' and 'spirit' [Gen 1:9] are interchangeable in both Hebrew and Greek "makes it possible for the tradition to depict Jesus as exorcising power in the realm of the spirits even as his commanding of the wind."³⁴ The use of ἐπιτιμόν as a form of rebuke against the wind may imply the authority of Jesus over all cosmic forces of which the wind, the sea and evil spirits all do belong.

The Synoptic Gospels contain sayings of Jesus that presume his ministry of exorcisms. Both the Markan and non-Markan traditions contain the charge that Jesus cast out demons by Beelzebul or the prince of demons [Mt 12:24/Lk 11:15; Mk 3:22].³⁵ The saying that if Jesus exorcised by the "finger of God" [Lk 11:20]

or by the "spirit of God" [Mt 12:28] the "kingdom of God has come upon you" implies a connection of his exorcisms with the advent of the kingdom of God. The relationship points to a unique significance of Jesus' exorcisms and it reaffirms their rightful place in his ministry.³⁶ Borg points to the historicity of exorcisms when he writes,

Despite the difficulty which miracles pose for the modern mind, on historical grounds it is virtually indisputable that Jesus was a healer and exorcist.³⁷

Borg's conclusion is not unfounded. He refers to widespread attestation of Jesus' exorcisms in earliest sources, the popularity of exorcisms in the time of Jesus, and the fact that the opponents of Jesus did not dispute him as a healer and exorcist except the source of his power, as evidence that Jesus was indeed an exorcist.³⁸ The parable of the strong man [Mk 3:27/Mt 12:29; Lk 11:21-22] may also point to the significance of exorcisms in the ministry of Jesus.³⁹

Outside the Synoptic Gospels, there are few references to demonic possession. There are four instances of 'unclean spirits' in Acts. Two of these are general reference to the ministry of healing and exorcism carried out by the apostles [Acts 5:16; 8:7]. The other two are specific cases of possession. In Acts 16:16-18, a slave girl is seen as possessed by the Pythian god, [πύθων]. The god *Python* in the form of a serpent or dragon which lived at the foot of Mt Parnassus is said to have been slain by the god Apollo.⁴⁰ The term πύθων later came to designate a "*spirit of divination*, then also a ventriloquist who was to have a spirit dwelling in his/her belly."⁴¹ Paul exorcised the spirit and as a result, there was a dramatic change in the nature of the young woman as she had lost her powers as a medium. The second incident, that of a possessed man with the sons of Sceva in Acts 19:11-17, is specifically one of demon possession. The violent nature of the incident is characteristic of the response of evil spirits to an exorcist, and especially

in the case where the sons of Sceva did not have the power nor the authority to expel them.

The only occasion in which 'demons' are mentioned in the Fourth Gospel is in the polemical sections in which Jesus himself is accused of being possessed by a demon because of the things he had been saying [Jn 7:20; 8:48-52; 10:20]. None of the healing incidents in John mentioned the idea of demon possession as a cause of illness. However, an interesting case is presented by Lindars concerning the raising of Lazarus in John 11. By translating ἐνεβριμήσατο τῷ πνεύματι in the sense of ἐπιτιμᾶν to mean rebuke [cp. Mk 1:25 καὶ ἐπετίμησεν αὐτῷ and Mk 1:43 καὶ ἐμβριμησάμενος αὐτῷ], Lindars draws a linguistic parallel between exorcisms and John 11. By further comparing the Lazarus account with an exorcism story in Mark 9:25-29 which indicates certain parallels such as Jesus rebuking the spirit [ἐπετίμησεν τῷ πνεύματι], the spirit coming out [ἐξελθε ἐξ], the boy being like a corpse [ὡσεὶ νεκρός], people acknowledging that he is dead [ὅτι ἀπέθανεν], Jesus lifting the boy up [ἤγειρεν αὐτόν], and the boy arose [καὶ ἠνέστη], Lindars draws the conclusion that the raising of Lazarus retains traces of a tradition of an exorcism story by Jesus.⁴² If Lindars' case stands, then we have in the Fourth Gospel an only example of an exorcism story in the raising of Lazarus.

A significant piece of evidence also for Jesus performing exorcisms in his ministry is to be found in the use of his name by other exorcists. The use of the name Jesus indicates that he must have been an important exorcist [Mk 9:38/Lk 9:49]. However, the question as to whether this reference arose from the early church has been the focus of much debate.⁴³ But even if the saying points to the early Christian community, the mere fact of associating the name Jesus with the power

to expel demons may indicate some connection with the historical Jesus. In first century AD Judaism, the names of important exorcists have been used by lesser ones in their incantations.⁴⁴ Even in later texts, Jesus' name is used in incantations which are for the purpose of exorcisms and healing. This is true of the *PGM* where the name Jesus often appears in the magical spells and incantations.⁴⁵ In rabbinical literature, Jesus' name is censored from being used as a divine name in healing incidences.⁴⁶ The evidence point to Jesus as a significant exorcist whose name was considered powerful enough to frighten away the demons even three or four centuries later.⁴⁷

The above evidence indicate that exorcism was indeed a significant part of Jesus' healing ministry, and the evangelists were doing justice by portraying him as a successful exorcist. In the gospels, the evidence is found in more than one source and in passages which reflect Jesus' teaching about the kingdom rather than later more developed Christology. Jesus' reputation as an exorcist was not confined within his circle of followers, however, his name was even used by those outside his own group. Reference to Jesus in the incantations recorded in the *PGM* as well as evidence within rabbinical literature help corroborate the gospels' story concerning Jesus' exorcisms.

3. Healing and Exorcism

In the gospel traditions, there is an apparent difficulty in distinguishing between healing and exorcism. The problem arises because of the belief that demons were responsible for all possessions, sickness and physical disability. Böcher sees no distinction between exorcism and healing by being very inclusive in what he considered to be demonic.⁴⁸ He propounds the extreme view that "all diseases are

caused by demons and all healings as originally exorcistic."⁴⁹ The result of Böcher's suggestion is that, exorcism and healing can no longer be distinguished.

However, this assumption may just be too extreme in presenting the thought of gospel writers in matters relating to sickness and physical disability. Borg rightly pointed out that the gospels consistently distinguish between exorcisms and healings; not all healings were exorcisms, and not all maladies were caused by evil spirits.⁵⁰ It can be shown that Mark did recognise a clear distinction between exorcisms and other forms of healings.

Mk 1:32 τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας καὶ τοὺς δαιμονιζομένους;

Mk 1:34 Mark maintains the distinction between Jesus' healing [πολλοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας ποικίλαις νόσοις], and his action [δαιμόνια πολλὰ ἐξέβαλεν]. cp. also Mk 3:10-11.

Mk 6:13 καὶ δαιμόνια πολλὰ ἐξέβαλλον, [καὶ] ἤλειπον ἐλαίῳ πολλοὺς ἄρρώστους καὶ ἐθεράπευον.

In listing sickness, Mark may have considered demon possession and exorcism to be sufficiently different from other forms of sickness and healing to mention them separately. The Markan view implies that there may be some illness which can be cured by applying the technique of exorcism, while others call for a different mode of treatment. This means that illness and disease may fall into two categories; those occasioned by demon possession and others which may be ascribed to other causes.⁵¹ Luke, though he does occasionally blur the distinction between exorcism and healing [Lk 4:38-39; 13:10-16; Acts 10:8]; he likewise takes up the Markan position [Mk 3:9-11/Lk 6:17-18; Lk 9:1-2/Mt 10:8]; and continues this distinction [Lk 7:21; 13:32; Acts 5:16; 8:7]; as does Matthew [Mt 4:24; 8:16/Mk 1:32; Mt 10:8/Mk 6:7,13; Lk 9:1-2]. The synoptic traditions therefore draw a distinction between exorcisms and other healing miracles,⁵² and Burkill rightly points out that the distinction indicates a true representation of the evangelists' record of Jesus

The healing ministry of Jesus covers a wide range of ailments, some due to natural and others to supernatural causes. Illness caused by demons and evil spirits can be identified in two categories, though often these distinctions may seem a bit too artificial. These two categories are demon possession and demonological aetiologies. In the case of possession, the demon inhabits its victim. The person no longer has control of himself but the demon. In Mark 1:23-28, the confrontation is between Jesus and the man with an evil spirit. The spirit is portrayed by Mark as having taken control of the man completely. In Mark 5:1-20, the writer ascribes the destructive and violent nature of the Gerasene demoniac to the demons who dwelt in him. When Jesus confronts the demoniac with the question of his identity, the demons answered that they are an army of demons [λεγιῶν ὄνομά μοι, ὅτι πολλοί ἐσμεν, Mk 5:9]. Jesus' command was directed to evil spirits, and it was only through the expulsion of the spirits that the man was able to come to terms with himself. In Mark 9:14-29, the self-destructive and violent nature of the boy is ascribed to the work of an evil spirit which inhabits him, and it was only after Jesus rebuked [ἐπετίμησεν] and expelled the dumb and deaf spirit that the boy recovered.

In the case of demonological aetiology, the sickness or the physical handicap is attributed to the activity of an evil spirit. The victim does not necessarily lose his autonomy, however, he is somewhat impeded in one or more physical functions of the body. For example, the condition of deafness, dumbness, blindness and the bent back, were often associated with the work of evil spirits. In cases of demonic affliction, the emphasis is on healing the victim of the apparent discomfort caused by the evil spirit and this does not necessarily involve the technique of

exorcism. The demon may not be present but the effect of its malicious activity is manifested in certain physical impediments and disabilities.

The two exorcisms from the non-Markan traditions [Mt 9:32-34/Lk 11:14-15; Mt 12:22-24]; and one from Mark [Mk 9:14-29]; all have characteristics of both possession as well as of demonic aetiology. The evil spirit is the cause of the handicap and at the same time, it is portrayed as inhabiting the victims as well. In such cases, exorcism is the technique employed by Jesus both to expel and to heal. A clear case of demonic affliction is Luke 13:10-17 whereby the 'bent' condition of the woman is ascribed to the work of Satan. She is said to have been "under the bondage of Satan for 18 years." The miracle does not suggest a case of exorcism but of healing through the laying on of hands [Lk 13:13].

Theissen points out that with demonic possession, the exorcist deals with the presence of the demon, however with sickness and physical handicaps caused by Satan, demons and evil spirits, the healer is more concerned with the consequence of their actions.⁵⁴ Theissen's distinction may not be quite as straightforward as he seems to make it out to be, since there are also cases of possession where the problem is not simply the presence of the demon that needs to be expelled, but the physical handicap as well, like dumbness, deafness and blindness which also needed to be healed. In the case of the dumb demoniac, Jesus healed the young man using the common technique of exorcism whereby the evil spirit is rebuked and expelled [Mk 9:14-29; Mt 9:32-34; Lk 11:14-15]. However in Matthew 12:22-23, the dumb and blind demoniac is said to have been healed [ἐθεράπευσεν] by Jesus, and consequently, the man was able to see and speak. The Beelzebul controversy [Mt 12:24ff] which follows on from the healing of the dumb and blind demoniac, may also imply that Jesus' healing was effected by an act of exorcism.

The fundamental characteristic of an exorcism story of Jesus is the expulsion of a demon or an evil spirit from the victim. However, no expulsion can be effected unless there be a case of possession. So it is characteristic of an exorcism that a person must be in the power of the demons. All the four exorcisms in Mark speak of possession by unclean spirits [Mk 1:23; 5:2; 7:25; 9:17]. The two non-Markan cases of exorcisms indicate also possessions which resulted in deafness, dumbness and blindness.

4. Confrontation

The confrontation of demons and evil spirits with an exorcist or healer provides a significant aspect of comparison between New Testament and Samoan exorcisms. One may be seen as a conflict and a battle between two opposing forces while the other being more a ritual of reconciliation and an attempt to maintain peace and harmony with the spirit-world. In *aitu* possession, the emphasis is not on countering the spirit-force but appeasing it. The *aitu* and ancestral spirits were seen as avengers of moral and cultural violations within the family and society. When they possessed an individual, the normal procedure was to appease them rather than exorcise. They resemble the ancient Greek *Erinyes*, which act as avengers against the wrongs done to family members, and therefore needed to be appeased. However, the battle between the demons and Jesus is an important feature of exorcisms in the gospels. In Mark, Jesus' encounter with the evil spirits who inhabit their victims portrays a struggle between two unfriendly and opposing forces. Mark's presentation reveals on the one hand the demon's defensive acknowledgement of Jesus' power and authority, and on the other, a shrewd attempt to overpower him. The demons' resistance and their defensive pleas of mercy "not

to be destroyed or tormented" indicate the struggle that was taking place.

καὶ ἀνέκραζεν λέγων· τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηνέ; ἦλθες ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς; [Mk 1:24]

καὶ κράζας φωνῇ μεγάλῃ λέγει· τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου; ὀρκίζω σε τὸν Θεόν, μὴ με βασανίσῃς. [Mk 5:7]

The demons have sensed their powerlessness against Jesus in their struggle to gain control [τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί,...ἦλθες ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς]. Jesus compared his act of exorcism to someone entering a strong man's house and binding him [Mt 12:29; Mk 3:27; Lk 11:21-22]. His exorcisms in the Synoptic Gospels generally point to the initial defeat and binding of Satan and all forces of evil. Fuller points to the significance and uniqueness of Jesus' exorcisms which lie "not in the miracles themselves, but in Jesus' understanding of them."⁵⁵ Luke and Matthew portray Jesus' exorcisms as the sign of the coming of the kingdom of God [Lk 11:20; Mt 12:28].⁵⁶ They initiate the ushering forth of the new era. Twelftree echoes the same conclusion when he points out that Jesus was the first one to make a specific connection between the relatively ordinary events of exorcism and the defeat of Satan, between exorcism and eschatology.⁵⁷

Luke 11:20 and Matthew 12:28 are among the most discussed verses in the gospels and had initiated a variety of interpretations concerning the significance of Jesus' acts of exorcism. The text raises questions concerning the relationship of Jesus' exorcisms to the eschaton. The references imply that the exorcisms of Jesus are the signs of the coming [ἐφθασεν: here already/^{according} to Dodd or has dawned but not yet arrived in Bultmann] of God's kingdom.⁵⁸ Norman Perrin sees exorcisms as "a manifestation of the kingdom of God in the present."⁵⁹ The relationship of the defeat of demons and the powers of evil to the advent of the eschaton may not be an unknown thought in later Judaism as evidence from the Testaments of Moses

and of Levi⁶⁰ is sometimes cited to indicate that in the New Testament era, the Messiah is expected to defeat Satan and his forces through exorcism.⁶¹ However, others would regard such passage as the Testament of Levi 18:12 as Christian, and in the case of the Assumption of Moses 10:1,3 there is only a general reference to Satan being no more in the new age. Sanders disputes these references pointing out that this "hardly counts as evidence for a view common in Judaism."⁶² He points to the reference itself in Matthew 12:28, [in isolation of v.27], as "the true source of scholarly belief in this supposed Jewish eschatological view."⁶³

For the synoptic writers, the significance of Jesus' confrontation and the defeat of evil forces point to the advent of God's rule.⁶⁴ This is valid unless the authenticity of Matthew 12:28 and Luke 11:20 is seriously questioned.⁶⁵ The defeat and expulsion of demons signal the coming of God's power and rule. Such a view is not unfounded since it is based on the understanding that the Messiah [or his herald] was expected in apocalyptic Judaism to overcome the demonic world and to demonstrate *his* victory miraculously by exorcisms. That God would finally destroy evil is a popular theme in Jewish apocalypics.

From the cosmic perspective, Jesus' healing and acts of exorcism are significantly interpreted by Luke as essential factors in the defeat of God's opposing forces. Garrett indicates that as the kingdom of Satan diminishes through exorcisms, the kingdom of God grows proportionately.⁶⁶ Kee understands the Lukan description of the outset of Jesus' career as a "self-evident example of the cosmic struggle motif."⁶⁷ He rightly points out that Jewish apocalypics in the first century BC emphasized the antagonistic struggle between God and his agents on the one hand and Satan and his forces on the other.⁶⁸ He refers to Jesus' exorcisms as signs of the impending defeat of all the cosmic powers and forces which are against God.⁶⁹

The same idea is expressed by Giesen who suggests that the exorcisms of Mark [1:21-28; 5:1-20; 9:14-29] carry the eschatological dimension expressed in Luke and Matthew [Lk 11:20; Mt 12:28]. Giesen understands exorcisms as the visible sign of the nearness of God's reign.⁷⁰ Yamauchi also expresses the same view that exorcisms must be understood in relation to other aspects of Jesus' ministry.⁷¹ He refers to Jesus' miracles of healing and exorcisms as having significant moral and eschatological dimensions. They reflect God's purpose of compassion as well as God's struggle to overcome evil forces that affect and may continue to influence human lives. However, if Jesus did understand his acts of healing and exorcism as indicating the defeat of Satan and all evil forces, how is it that Satan and evil spirits are still present in the world? It may be more probable to assume that Jesus had understood his exorcisms as the first stage of binding Satan [Mk 3:23-25/Mt 12:25-26/Lk 11:17-18; cp. Mt 12:28/Lk 11:20], but the final defeat will take place in the final judgement [Mt 13:30; cp. Is.24:21-22; En [Ethiopic] 10:12-13; 18:14-19:2; 21:6-7; 90:23-35; Jub 5:5-10; 10:5-9].

All the four exorcisms in Mark report an initial dramatic confrontation between Jesus and the demoniac although in Mark 7:25, it is the victim's mother who encountered Jesus. When the demoniac met Jesus he cried out [ἀνέκραζεν Mk 1:23]; the Gerasene demoniac when he saw Jesus he fell on his knees and worshipped him [καὶ προσεκύνησεν αὐτῷ], and he cried out in aloud voice [κράζας φωνῆ μεγάλης Mk 5:6-7]; the Syro-Phoenician woman came and fell at Jesus' feet [προσέπεσεν πρὸς τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ Mk 7:25]; and in Mark 9:20, the demon seeing Jesus, he threw the boy into a convulsion [καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν τὸ πνεῦμα εὐθὺς συνεσπάραξεν αὐτόν, καὶ πεσὼν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἐκυλίετο ἀφρίζων].

The confrontation disturbed the demons. Some fell and worshipped him, an indication of possible reverence and submission to his power and authority. However, others tried to counter him with violence and aggression. The accounts in the gospels often indicate a violent encounter between Jesus and the demoniacs. Demonic resistance is often portrayed by the aggression of the victim who suffers injury and pain. The whole confrontation is unfriendly, the demons showing aggression and active resistance, accusing and shouting at Jesus. Violence sometimes is inflicted on victims during the struggle.

καὶ σπαράζαν αὐτὸν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἀκάθαρτον καὶ φωνῆσαν φωνῆ μεγάλη ἐξῆλθεν ἐξ αὐτοῦ. [Mk 1:26]

καὶ οὐδὲ ἀλύσει οὐκέτι οὐδεὶς ἐδύνατο αὐτὸν δεῖσαι διὰ τὸ αὐτὸν πολλάκιςκαὶ οὐδεὶς ἴσχυεν αὐτὸν δαμάσαι· καὶ διὰ παντὸς νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἐν τοῖς μνήμασιν καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσιν ἦν κρᾶζων καὶ κατακόπτων ἑαυτὸν λίθοις. [Mk 5:3,4-5]

καὶ ὅπου ἐὰν αὐτὸν καταλάβῃ ῥήσσει αὐτόν, καὶ ἀφρίζει καὶ τρίζει τοὺς ὀδόντας καὶ ξηραίνεται. [Mk 9:18]

The violence and self-destructiveness of the demoniac were generally ascribed in the ancient world to the power of supernatural forces.⁷² Hollenbach indicates that violent demoniacs were restrained by force using guards, bonds and stocks. Some who were completely uncontrollable were ostracised from the community where they would live in places such as the desert and cemeteries [Mk 5:1-20; Lk 8:29].⁷³ The violence of the struggle reflects the nature of the conflict between two opposing forces. This struggle is not simply a cosmic battle outside the realm of humanity, but a war of the two spirits which is seen in Qumran as being fought within people.⁷⁴

In all the Markan exorcisms, the term ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ is used [Mk 1:23,26,27; 5:2,8,13; 7:25; 9:25]. Mark consistently used the term to describe the

nature and character of spirits which possess and afflict people. The term *πονηρός* does not appear in Mark's reference to such spirits. However, *ἐν πνεύματι ἀκάθαρτῳ* is characteristic of Mark⁷⁵ though the reference is also found elsewhere.⁷⁶ The term *ἀκάθαρτος* could mean impure and unclean. In *BAGD* the term can be used in the cultic sense of that which may not be brought into contact with divinity;⁷⁷ such as things which are considered common and unclean like food and objects associated with idolatry.⁷⁸ The term can also be used in the sense of impure or unclean morally. *BAGD* points out that "as the ceremonial meaning fades, the moral sense becomes predominant."⁷⁹ Thus the term *πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ* in Mark may bear both possibilities of evil in the ceremonial sense of unclean and cannot be equated with God [a force contrary to God], and also in the moral sense of being sinful and immoral. In the healing and exorcism summaries [1:32-34, 39], Mark uses *δαιμόνιον* and the verb *δαιμονίζομαι* to indicate those under the power of a demon as synonymous with the unclean spirits. In the exorcism of 7:24-30, *πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον* [7:25] is identified as *δαιμόνιον* [7:26,30]. The violent opposition of *πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον* against Jesus could therefore be due to the contrast between the character of the spirit as 'unclean' ceremonially and morally and the nature of Jesus as the 'holy one of God' [1:23-28; cp. 5:1-20]. This contrast is fully exemplified in the encounter between Jesus and the demoniac.

The violence of exorcisms indicates the resistance of demons to expulsion [Mk 1:26; 5:3ff; 9:20]. The characteristics of the boy [9:20] may suggest a case of epilepsy than that of demonic possession. The word *σεληνιαῖζω* [Mt 17:15 cp. 4:24] is etymologically similar to the Latin word 'lunatic' or 'moonstruck'. Popular Greek view did not believe that the 'sacred disease' was caused by the actual possession of a demon or a spirit but that the disease was sent by the gods. Dunn and

Twelftree both identify the epileptic nature of Mark 9 and suggest 'demythologising' of it, at least to some extent.⁸⁰ Twelftree changes his position slightly in his later work when he points out that "because a sickness is labelled, understood and cured in terms of epilepsy, it may not mean that there is not a demonic aspect to the sickness which also needs to be discerned and dealt with."⁸¹ Wilkinson indicates the same thought by pointing out that epilepsy is a symptom rather than a disease; "therefore to arrive at a diagnosis of epilepsy does not automatically exclude demon possession as the cause of the boy's disease as some commentators maintain."⁸² Although opinions are divided on the nature of the affliction, Mark is clear in presenting this case as that of possession and Jesus' dealing of it reflects an instance of exorcism.

The physical violence in exorcisms is portrayed as real and self-inflicted, and the demoniac is presented as beside himself. These exorcisms are not simply demons inhabiting their victims, but they cause pain and physical injury as well. No peace may be secured unless the spirit is cast out. Jesus' stern rebuke often leads to immediate expulsion and consequently, the dramatic transformation of the condition and character of the victim. The possessed recovers his sanity and sometimes, he would even be willing to follow Jesus [5:18-19].

5. The Words of the Demons

The words of the demons are a feature of Jesus' exorcisms and they present an interesting contrast to the kinds of dialogue between a traditional healer and an *aitu* in Samoan exorcisms. The *aitu* tends to assume control over the situation and the healer is there to mediate between the family and the *aitu* concerning the problem which had led to the *aitu's* displeasure. The stern rebuke of the exorcist

and the defensive utterance of an *aitu* which are reminiscent of New Testament exorcisms, are associated more with Christian exorcisms where the *faiifeau* assumes the role of a Christian charismatic healer over against evil and malicious spirits. The difference in the concept of spirits involved accounts for the difference in the verbal confrontation between traditional Samoan and gospels' exorcisms.

In Mark 7:24-30, the Syrophenician mother speaks on behalf of her daughter who is possessed by a demon. In Mark 9:14-29, the father speaks for his son who is possessed by a dumb and deaf spirit. However in the other two exorcisms [Mk 1:21-28 and 5:1-20], Jesus deals directly with the demoniacs, and Mark presents a dramatic vocalised confrontation between Jesus and the evil spirit.

τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηνέ; ἦλθες ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς; οἶδά σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ. [1:24]

τί ἐμοί καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου; ὀρκίζω σε τὸν Θεόν, μὴ με βασανίσῃς. [5:7]

Chilton rightly points out that the words of the demons fit well within the conventions of exorcism stories where the demon tries to defeat its opponent the exorcist.⁸³ Anderson indicates that in classical Greek, expressions such as τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί; and τί ἐμοί καὶ σοί; would mean "What have we in common?" however in Mark, it may correspond to the Hebrew usage of "Why are you bothering us?"⁸⁴ The phrase has parallels in the Old Testament [2Sam 19:16-23; 1Kgs 17:17-18; Jud 11:12].⁸⁵ The widow's remarks to Elijah [1Kgs 17] indicates that she was trying to defend her household from the prophet whose presence may have something to do with her son's illness. Jephthah's words to the king of the Ammonites [Jud 11:12] seems not so much a defensive utterance ὡς words of protest against Ammonite's aggression. Jephthah sent messengers to the king of Ammon in an attempt to avoid war by saying, τί ἐμοί καὶ σοί; and David's words to Abishai [2Sam 19:22] may be seen as words of protest to Abishai's

verdict on Shimei whom the king later pardoned. David's anger implies that he, the king must not be interfered with. In the light of some of these Old Testament parallels, the words may be interpreted as defensive cries from demons who knew of Jesus and his authority to defeat them. They may also be understood as words of protest by demons against Jesus' interference with their activities. Derrett suggests that the phrase is a "protestation that there is not, or should not be, a difference of viewpoint, still less a dispute between the two personalities."⁸⁶ Protest, may be, but otherwise Derrett's point is hardly possible in the light of what demons and evil spirits represent in the first century AD. They were indeed negative cosmic forces which were understood by Jesus' contemporaries to be in constant struggle with the forces of good represented by Jesus. Ἦλθετε ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς [Mk 1:24] indicates a defensive cry from a weaker party in the struggle to outplay its opponent. Perhaps it would be more realistic to see such statements as demons' defence against an exorcist whom they know has the power to expel and defeat them.

The οἶδά σε formula [Mk 1:24] and words of adjuration, ὀρκίζω σε τὸν θεόν [Mk 5:7] which also have parallels in the *PGM*⁸⁷ suggest a linguistic form used in confrontations. Twelftree points out that in revealing their knowledge of Jesus, demons try to control him.⁸⁸ Demons are often thought of in antiquity as having supernatural knowledge. In Mark 1:24 and 5:7 the demons address Jesus in a formal way which could be an acknowledgement of his power and authority. The designation by the demons of Jesus as ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ and υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου suggests a stronger opponent. Räisänen points out that the christological claims of demons [1:24-5; 5:7] are traditional, and for a demon to sense the stronger one is a standard motif in ancient exorcism stories.⁸⁹ Jesus' silencing of the demons is part of the battle between two contrasting forces rather than an

attempt to hide his identity.⁹⁰ Räisänen argument falls in line with the confrontational framework typical of demons and exorcists.

The designations were understood by the early Christians to refer to Jesus as Messiah [Jn 6:69]. On the other hand, the identification of Jesus with these lofty titles may not necessarily imply any sense of surrender nor of the demons confessing Jesus' authority. However, the technique is a valid exorcistic one which indicates the power struggle between the two opposing and contrasting forces. In the literature which mention exorcism, the technique of naming the opposing party generally appears as the means by which one tries to outplay the other. In this case, the demon is the one who uses the technique to ward off Jesus from interfering. To know of someone's identity may indicate some form of control over that person. In the case of the demons' encounter with Jesus, the knowledge of the opponent may be a significant step in their vain attempt to overpower him. Some would suggest that the reference to Jesus' identity is not necessarily the result of supernatural knowledge, but what any demon might have said when facing a well-known and powerful Jewish exorcist. The οἶδά σε formula is typical of the demons' response as one finds in the *PGM*. In other words, what demons are doing despite how it is understood later, even by Mark, is not necessarily and intentionally declaring Jesus' messiahship, but rather that the demons are stepping up their attack of the adversary, Jesus.

6. Words of Exorcism

The harsh words of rebuke against the demons in the gospels contrasts the pleading words of traditional Samoan healers to *aitu*. The *aitu* is often addressed in a respectful way, pleading with them that any violation of traditions will be

immediately put right. Any rebuke is given only to the spirits of those who had not lived good lives and have become malicious entities. Exorcisms performed by pastors tend to treat all family spirits as malicious and therefore would follow similar rebukes as in gospels' exorcisms.

The term φημώθητι [Mk 1:25] can mean 'be quiet' or 'be silent'. The word is often used in the 'incantation restriction' rather than simply a command related to talking. In the *PGM*, the terms φημοῦν and καταδεῖν are used as equivalents.⁹¹ Jesus' command to 'be quiet' could be understood as it is closely paralleled in the magical material to mean, 'to be bound' or 'to be restricted'. The parallels with the *PGM* have prompted some scholars like Smith and Hull to refer to the words of Jesus to demons as 'incantations'. Those who would like to identify Jesus' commands within the context of the Old Testament and Jewish tradition of God's spoken word, tend to put more emphasis on the power of the divine word rather than perhaps on the efficacy of any magical formula. Thus in Jesus' exorcisms, the emphasis is upon the 'word of command' [1:25; 5:8; 9:25]. However, Jesus' healing words which are spoken in Aramaic such as *talitha cumi* [Mk 5:41] and *ephphatha* [Mk 7:34], are interpreted by Smith as having characteristics of magical incantation.⁹² Perhaps this may be pressing the point too far since the Aramaic words *ephphatha* and *talitha cumi* should not be taken as foreign words with those originally addressed, and in any case, Mark usually provides the translation and so there should be no secrecy nor mysteriousness in the words used.

The command to the spirits to come out [ἐξελεθε ἐξ αὐτοῦ - 1:25; 5:8; 9:25] is characteristic of exorcisms generally. Apollonius used a similar expression ἀπαλλαττέσθαι which means 'to quit' [*Life* 4:20]. In the *PGM* [iv.1243-1245], similar commands are used for the same purpose. The question "What is your

name?" [Mk 5:9] is significant of Jesus' exorcisms. By identifying the demon, Jesus gains control over it. After commanding the demon to come out [Mk 5:8], Jesus then demanded to know its name. This is seen as a tactic or technique used by Jesus to further consolidate his authority upon the evil spirit. Bietenhard points out that

The magical papyri are full of expressions showing belief in the power and efficacy of names. Expressed here is the primitive belief that knowledge of names gives power over their bearers, that the simple utterance of a name puts a spell on its owner and brings him under the power of the speaker.⁹³

The command to the evil spirit "never to enter the person again" [καὶ μηκέτι εἰσεέλθῃς εἰς αὐτόν] is mentioned in Mark 9:25. The idea that demons could re-enter their former victims is implied in Jesus' reference to an unclean spirit who returned with seven more evil spirits to inhabit the same man [Mt 12:43-5/Lk 11:24-26]. Jesus' words find parallel in contemporary exorcisms. In Josephus [*Antiq* viii.46-49], the exorcist warns the demon never to come back into the man again. In Philostratus [*Life* 4:20], the demon promised that he would leave the young man alone and that he would never take possession of any man again. The idea of an evil spirit returning to its former victim is an ancient belief. Evidence shows that in order to avoid an evil spirit returning, it is important to invite the good spirits to occupy any vacuum created by the expulsion of an evil spirit. In a Babylonian text dated about 700-1000 BC, there is an incantation which says that "the evil spirit may stand aside, and let a kindly spirit be present."⁹⁴ There is also an old legend of the seven evil spirits which could be traced back to an old Babylonian incantation about the seven evil spirits.⁹⁵ This incantation constantly reappears in various shapes and forms in the legends of other semitic nations. An old Palestinian tradition of an 'unclean spirit' that reinhabits its former victim and which appears in Matthew and Luke, undoubtedly owed something of its origin to

these earlier beliefs. The injunction by Jesus to a leper to show himself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for his cleansing may also be understood as precaution against further affliction by evil spirits which were generally assumed to be responsible for sickness and affliction.

7. Exorcism and Magic

Magic is hardly an issue in early Samoa. There is no evidence of an attempt in traditional Samoa to associate magic with exorcisms. The practice of possession was an acceptable part of people's relationship with family spirits and deities, and exorcism comes as a consequence of appeasing spirits and maintaining a good relationship with them. Traditional healers are respected members of the community and their power to heal and to communicate with the supernatural is believed to have come from family deities and ancestral spirits. They are moral figures and respected heads of families. The manipulation of supernatural powers for one's selfish and evil ends is insignificant in a society where community ideals and values become the criteria by which divine power operates.

The exorcisms of Jesus have been the subject of much controversy over the question of their being closely associated with magic. Earlier scholars such as Bonner, Knox and Eitrem had previously compared Jesus' exorcisms to similar exorcisms in the *PGM*.⁹⁶ More recent works on the subject by Hull, Smith and Aune not only portray Jesus as a magician but argue that his exorcisms are inextricably linked with magic.⁹⁷

The association of Jesus' activities with magic is not a new accusation since early writers such as Celsus had accused Jesus of practising magic. In response to

Celsus' accusation, Origen pointed out that Jesus unlike sorcerers, called his followers to lives of moral transformation⁹⁸ and likewise, Eusebius indicated that sorcery was incompatible with Christ's moral character.⁹⁹ Against identifying Jesus' healing and exorcisms with magic, other church fathers would defend his position by suggesting that Jesus performed miracles without the usual magical materials, rituals and formulae characteristic of the activities of magic men.¹⁰⁰ Similarly, Lactantius asserted that Jesus healed not with his hands nor did he use any form of remedy which could be of suspicious nature, however, he healed by a 'word and a command'.¹⁰¹

Magic was not considered a respectable phenomenon in the early church, and church fathers were adamant to defend Jesus' healing and acts of exorcisms as different from the art of the magicians practised in the first century AD. Geisler rightly points out that magic was conceived as amoral and profane, one which did not bring glory to God [but to the magician himself], and that there were usually no divine truth claims connected with it.¹⁰²

The criticism of magic also came much earlier from pagan classical writers such as Plato, Hippocrates and Pliny. Plato severely condemned magic, tricks, incantations and binding spells to the point that any who practised such art deserved to be put to death.¹⁰³ Hippocrates in his work *On the Sacred Disease* denounced magic as opposed to religion.¹⁰⁴ Pliny the Elder regarded magic as "detestable, vain and idle".¹⁰⁵ Apuleius defended himself against the charge of magic.

In the gospels, Jesus is accused of many things, but he is never explicitly called a magician. In the story of the Gerasene demoniac, Jesus was accused of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebul. The use of 'spittle' in his healing miracles as

well as his injunction of rebuke may be seen as magical. However, the Jews who accused Jesus many times never explicitly identified him as a magician in the gospels. Smith suggests that this would be an understandable 'cover up' because the term 'magician' was a dirty word.¹⁰⁶ It was only later in the Tannaitic tradition preserved in the Talmud¹⁰⁷ that Jesus' miracles were directly attributed to magic.¹⁰⁸ A medieval work dated about the ninth century AD, the *Toledoth Jeshu* followed the same tradition of accusing Jesus as a sorcerer. It reported of Jesus conducting his healing in a very secretive and mysterious fashion when "he whispered an incantation over this lame man, with only his lips moving while his voice was not heard."

Bonner identifies three aspects of the technique of exorcism. First, he refers to the fact that demons must be made to speak. A dumb spirit would be an obstacle to exorcism because he could not reveal his identity. Reference to attempts to make the spirit speak is characteristic of exorcisms. In the *PGM* IV.3038ff, the incantation starts with the words, "I conjure you, every demonic spirit, to tell whatever sort you may be ..." In the Testament of Solomon 13:2, the demons resented the order to speak, however they countered the exorcist by demanding also to reveal his identity. *Asmodeus* when asked about his identity, he replied with a look of fury "Who are you?" Second, the demon must reveal his name, his nature and his work and Mark 5:9 ["What is your name?"] seems to correspond closely with *PGM* 1:160f ["What is your divine name? Reveal it to me ungrudgingly, so that I may call upon it."] And third, Bonner points out that demons must always leave a visible sign of his departure.¹⁰⁹ These features of exorcisms which are found in the *PGM* and Jewish exorcisms resembled those performed by Jesus.

In recent years, works by Hull, Aune and Smith consistently portray Jesus'

exorcisms as presenting characteristics which could be identified as magical. Hull like Smith based his work on the *PGM*. Hull believes that by the time the earliest gospel was written, the tradition of the acts of Jesus had already been saturated with the outlook of Hellenistic magic so that almost every reference to exorcism in pre-Christian and first century literature is associated with magic.¹¹⁰ He points out that the so-called 'magical view' of Jesus which shows prominence in Mark and Luke-Acts may have been toned down by other evangelists such as Matthew and John.¹¹¹ In his comparison of synoptic exorcisms with those of the *PGM*, Hull identified numerous similarities between Jesus' exorcisms and the magical formulations in the *PGM*. For example, the "I know you" formula of the demons,¹¹² the demons' acknowledgement of the names,¹¹³ the adjurations,¹¹⁴ and the command of Jesus to the spirits "to come out";¹¹⁵ all these formulations in the Synoptic Gospels find correspondence in the *PGM*. Hull suggests that the general technique of exorcism in Mark's gospel is also that of magical exorcism, however he acknowledges that there is in Mark a striking absence of the use of rings, holy water, herbs and similar aids common in the exorcisms of the *PGM*.¹¹⁶

The use of the name 'Jesus' in the repertoire of the professional magicians also provides an argument for the magical interpretation of his exorcisms.¹¹⁷ From this close association of exorcisms in the gospels with the incantations and formulations of the *PGM*, Hull is convinced that the exorcisms of Jesus were inextricably linked with magic. He points out that Jesus undoubtedly had entered without reserve to the magician's art, such as his struggle with evil powers portrayed in his exorcisms.¹¹⁸ Hull's views therefore can be summed as follows.

- i. Exorcisms are inextricably linked with magic
- ii. Jesus practised exorcisms
- iii. Jesus therefore was a magician

Like Hull whom he cites in his work *Jesus the Magician*, Smith relies for his evidence primarily on the *PGM* which may be dated about the third century AD and perhaps later.¹¹⁹ Despite the later date associated with the *PGM*, Smith believes that some of the materials could be dated as early as the gospels' material. He identifies the three marks of a magician which fits well with the image of Jesus in the gospels.

- i. a magician had to perform miracles, and Jesus was portrayed primarily as a miracle worker by the synoptic evangelists.¹²⁰
- ii. a magician claimed to be divine, and Jesus cannot be eliminated from such claim. The synoptic writers made him keep it as a secret, though they acknowledged that the claims were made indirectly by voices from heaven, demons, disciples as well as by the crowd.¹²¹
- iii. 'prayer' was a speciality of ancient magicians, and Jesus not only prayed, but had taught his disciples to pray.¹²²

Smith indicated that an early Greek term for a man who can get what he wants from the gods, and who will later be called a magician, is a "pray-er" namely one who can pray effectively.

Smith's portrayal of Jesus as a magician follows directly from his parallel analysis of Jesus' life and activities with the *Life of Apollonius* and the *PGM*.¹²³ He was convinced that the magical materials contain prescriptions or stories of cures for most afflictions cured by Jesus.¹²⁴ His name was used in spells as the name of a god [*PGM* III.146]; the cure was the major concern of magic; and incantations for the cure of fever are not infrequent in the magical materials. The magical tradition preserves an appropriate rebuke for fever [*PGM* XLIII.1-27; XLIV.1-18; cp. Lk 4:38f]. That a fever can be caused by a demon is often presupposed in the *PGM* and the notion that diseases are demons appear in *Sophocles*.¹²⁵ The reference to sickness recalls the demons mentioned in Luke 11:24ff that when

expelled, they travelled far away places looking for homes and finding none, they returned with many more other demons to inhabit the former victim again. In *Life*, Apollonius identified the demon which caused the sickness disguised as an old beggar. The plague was avoided by stoning the beggar to death [iv.10].

Smith rightly points out that since Jesus' exorcisms and healing miracles closely resemble those in the magical tradition, both traditions therefore must share a similar view of the world. Such view includes a hierarchy of supernatural beings such as gods, angels, spirits and demons. The demons have their own hierarchy and they are divided into different categories. They caused sickness and disability, and themselves often bearers of afflictions such as deafness, loss of speech, fever, blindness and physical disability.¹²⁶ Demons may enter their victims and the remedy is to drive them out. In possession, demons may not only inflict and disable their victims, but they would also inhabit and speak through them. Smith points out that a helpful magician like Jesus would not only loosen the spells and relieve the afflicted, but he will also have to bind the demons and stop them from causing any more harm.¹²⁷ He portrays Jesus' exorcisms as presenting close parallels with the magical techniques and tradition of the time. From the close parallels between Jesus and the contemporary magical tradition such as the identification of the demon, silencing it with commands and rebukes, the threats and prayers, the use of physical contact like the touch and spittle and the command not to return, Smith is convinced that Jesus must be classified as magical.

The radical views of Smith had been sharply criticised by numerous scholars.¹²⁸ His excessive reliance upon parallels in Philostratus' *Life* and the *PGM* is criticised by Kee as 'historically anachronistic'.¹²⁹ Kee strongly objected to both works of Hull and Smith which tried to identify Jesus' exorcisms as none other than magical

acts typical of magicians in the *PGM*. He writes,

Both books overlook the fact that phenomena perceived as miracle or magic must be analysed by the historian in relation to the life-world of the writer [and his community in which they appear] and to the social functions which they serve. Both writers in these studies reason backward from third and fourth century evidence to posit historical conditions from which they draw conclusions about the first century. For that period no adequate documentation exists. The authors assume that, because demons were dealt with by magical means in the later Roman empire, wherever demons appear in the text the appropriate way to describe such phenomena is as magic.¹³⁰

Vermes likewise takes a different view from that of Hull and Smith. He sees Jesus' activities not as the work of a magician in line with the magical techniques and formulations in the *PGM*, but as activities of one in the tradition of the Jewish holy man. He advocates that the Synoptic Gospels knew nothing of a ritual of exorcism as one finds in the *PGM*. Unlike many contemporary acts of exorcism which used incantations [*Antiq* viii.45], foul smelling substances like *baaras* root [*Antiq* viii.46-7] and the heart and liver of a fish [*Tobit* 8:2], various medicines [*Jub* 10:10,12], the laying on of hands, the use of finger rings and a bowl of water [*Apoc Gen* 20] and amulets [*PGM* xvii c.1-14; xviii a.1-14; xviii b.1-7], he points out that Jesus' exorcisms are portrayed as simple and straightforward. They were consistently accomplished by a direct word of command. Vermes therefore concludes that Jesus performed his exorcisms not necessarily as a magician as pictured by Smith and Hull, but as one who is in line with the model of a Galilean holy man whose healing and expulsion of evil spirits reflect one of the greatest blessings expected at the end of time [*Is* 35:5-6]. The spiritual image of Jesus as he went about doing what he did, performing miracles of healing and acts of exorcism, and granting forgiveness to those whose affliction may have been caused by sin and moral failure, appeared to have been part and parcel of the charismatic style [*4Qpr Nab*]. His lifestyle and attitude to material wealth which Borg refers to as 'holy poverty' reflects one who was not to be distracted from any

such material passion. Jesus' language and activities are reminiscent of the holy man model or the Old Testament prophetic image in the line of early prophets like Elijah and Elisha [Mt 16:14; Lk 4:23-26].¹³¹ Vermes concludes that

In order to perceive the truth and purpose of Jesus' mission as an exorcist and healer, it must therefore, be reinstated in the place to which it belongs, that is, in the charismatic stream of post-biblical Judaism.¹³²

In comparison with some of the Jewish exorcisms, Jesus' expulsions strike a discordant note. On the one hand, his acts of exorcisms were simple with emphasis on his emphatic command, however Jewish exorcisms used incantations and smelly substances to ward off demons and evil spirits. On the other hand, Jesus' exorcisms follow closely contemporary Jewish thought in identifying exorcisms with the overall cosmic struggle to defeat evil. The healing of Pharaoh by Abraham indicates the kind of remedy which uses the technique of exorcism similar to those in the gospels [Mt 9:32-34/Lk 11:14-15; Mt 12:22-24 cp. *IQap Gen* 20:16-19]. The use of prayer, the laying on of hands, the command of rebuke and the departure of the spirit, all provide striking parallels to Jesus' healing and exorcism. Illness is cured through body contact, such as touching and the laying on of hands [Mk 5:23; Mt 9:18; Mk 6:5; cp. 2Kgs 5:11], however, demon possession is expelled by the command of rebuke [Mk 1:25; Lk 4:35; Mt 17:18; Lk 9:42; cp. *b.Meil* 17b]. The only exceptions are the healings of the deaf mute [Mk 7:32-33] and the man with a withered hand [Mk 3:1-6]. In the case of the deaf mute, the touching and the verbal command occur simultaneously, while the withered man's hand is healed by word of mouth alone.

Vermes points out that the reference to the title 'Son of God' by the demons may suggest affinity between Jesus and the role of a charismatic exorcist; i.e. a person able to dominate and purge unclean spirits.¹³³ The title suggests one who has

divine power, a trait which may be seen in the temptation narrative where Jesus as the 'Son of God' is expected by the devil to perform miraculous acts.

A feature also of Jesus' miracles is that he sometimes heals and exorcises from a distance [Mk 7:24-30; Mt 8:5-13/Lk 7:1-10]. A similar feature occurs in the story of Hanina ben Dosa curing the son of Gamaliel who was suffering from mortal fever.¹³⁴

Vermes identifies Hanina ben Dosa [before 70AD] as the chief rabbinic counterpart to Jesus. His portrayal of Jesus' exorcisms helps to reaffirm the comparability of Jesus' healing activities within the framework of contemporary Judaism. His evidence from inter-testamental sources proves more valuable than the rabbinic material upon which he relies so heavily, since the rabbinical material is regrettably of such uncertain date.¹³⁵

B. *MA'I AITU*

1. Healing and Exorcism

The term *ma'i aitu* means spirit sickness, and this includes all sickness which are thought to have supernatural causality. The term *ma'i* means sickness and *aitu* could mean a deity or a spirit of a dead person. In Samoa today, the term *ma'i aitu* indicates not only demon possession [as in demons and evil spirits of the gospels], but it also conveys the meaning of sickness and affliction caused by supernatural and spiritual beings.¹³⁶ Although many Samoans in the past believed that sickness and disability were caused by *aitu* and other supernatural beings, yet the distinction between *aitu* possession on the one hand and affliction caused by them on the other was clear and distinct. The case of *aitu* possession corresponds

in many ways to the phenomenon of demon possession in the gospels. The main characteristics being the presence of the spirit in the person, the victim loses control of himself or herself, and the remedy is effected when the *aitu* leaves. One finds such examples of demon possession in the ministry of Jesus.

In the second category, the presence of the *aitu* may not be necessary, however, sickness or disability is attributed to the *aitu*. The *aitu* may not necessarily inhabit the person, however, the affliction is attributed to its activities. This group of *ma'i aitu* has parallels in the healing ministry of Jesus. The case of the woman with a 'bent back' [Lk 13] where the presence of the evil force is not mentioned, but that her deformity is attributed to 'a spirit of infirmity' is one good example. Another case is the healing of the deaf and dumb demoniac in Matthew and Luke. Here, the condition of the young man is attributed to the work of an evil spirit. However at the same time, it can also be classified as a form of possession since the presence of the dumb spirit is implied. With the popular belief in contemporary Judaism that many of the sickness that people suffer from are attributed to evil spirits, this second category of illness in Samoa finds parallels in the gospels. The healing of Peter's mother-in-law and the cleansing of lepers may also come under the category of illness caused by evil spirits.

Moyle lists a number of these traditional disorders which were originally believed to have supernatural origin. Sickness like *mo'omo'o*, *osofā* and *laoa* were attributed to the work of spirits.¹³⁷ The remedy was not exorcism but the performance of various rituals which were accepted for their efficacy in relieving the supernatural cause.¹³⁸ In this category, we may include also illness caused by the breaking of traditional taboos and violations which offend family deities and spirits. In these cases, the spirit provoked is responsible for the physical disability and illness

suffered by the offender. The remedy is not exorcism but the performance of a ritual of *ifoga* to appease the injured spirit. In the process of healing, the victim and family members would review their previous activities in order to identify what might have been offensive to the spirit.¹³⁹ Health is restored when the offense is identified and appropriate measures taken to restore the broken relationship with the spirit concerned. C & L Macpherson rightly acknowledge that illness reflects a disturbance in relations between a person and the spiritual and social world.¹⁴⁰

The distinction between healing and exorcism is sometimes difficult to identify. In incidents where illness occurs simultaneously with the presence of a spirit, the remedy is effective only when the *aitu* leaves. These cases correspond^{to}/the ones where Jesus had to expel the demons in order to effect a cure [Mt 12:32-34/Lk 11:14-15; Mt 12:22-24; Lk 4:38-39].¹⁴¹ Moyle points to this type of illness in the Samoan community. The affliction of the head known as *fe'e* cannot be treated by herbal medicine nor by massaging, but only by the ultimate technique of exorcism where certain incantations are used to effect an expulsion.¹⁴² The physical disorder is believed to have been caused by the presence of the spirit, and like the exorcisms of Jesus, the demon has to be exorcised in order to effect healing.

However, despite the fact that gospels' and traditional illness are attributed to the presence and activities of the supernatural, the technique of dealing with the presence of *aitu* in Samoan illness varies from those in the gospels and in contemporary Jewish and Hellenistic exorcisms. In Samoa, it is more important to appease the spirit than invoking or rebuking it. The difference in dealing with possession comes from the difference in the way Samoans initially conceive of their spirit-world. As indicated in Chapter One, the *aitu* is not necessarily of the same nature and character as the demons and evil spirits in the gospels. It was only

through contact with Christianity that they became identified as demons and evil spirits, however, they were respected spirits and deities of families and villages. Traditional exorcisms do not usually take the form of a rebuke or a command to force a spirit out of an individual, however, a healer or family *ali'i* [head] would make pleas with the *aitu* to leave. Spirits may leave on their own accord, but only after they have been properly acknowledged and appeased in respect of a violation and misdemeanour that the victim or family may have committed.

Aitu possession is distinct from other forms of sickness classified under supernatural illness. Although the causality is generally ascribed to the activities of *aitu*, yet the distinction remains clear. The identification and removal of the source of displeasure of *aitu* is a significant aspect of the healing process, and failure may lead to the deterioration and eventual death of the victim. It is important in Samoan healing and exorcistic remedies that social and spiritual relationships be restored in the family if health and well-being are to be maintained.¹⁴³

2. *Aitu* possession

Aitu possession may be classified into two categories. The first concerns possessions by respected family spirits. This form of possession like demon possession in the gospels often leads to serious but temporary physical pain and suffering. However, in *aitu* possession, the presence of *aitu* is understood as disciplinary rather than malicious acts of spirits. The second form of possession is more closely identified with demon-possession. Here, the presence and activities of *aitu* are understood as malicious acts motivated by the evil nature of the entities concerned. Because of their nature, their activities are considered to be motivated only by evil and spiteful intentions to inflict pain and physical harm to the victims.

These are the *aitu* of those who had been spiteful and unpleasant in real life and have become evil spirits at death. Consequently, they became roving spirits in the countryside causing harm and terrorising people. Both possessions could be just as serious and physically damaging to the victims. Both need to expel the spirits in order to effect a remedy. However, the response of healers and exorcists may vary from one category to another.

The visible features of traditional possession resemble those of the Synoptic Gospels as well as exorcisms of Jewish and Hellenistic communities. The victims display extreme physical strength that it would be difficult to physically restrain them. Lazar records an incident of *aitu* possession in the migrant community of Samoans in California which reflects similar characteristics. He writes,

The symptomatology of *ma'i aitu* follows a prescribed cultural pattern. Without obvious warning, a woman displays stereotyped shaking and convulsive movements. At the onset, she may also exhibit a violent behaviour, including spitting, kicking, biting, and screaming. In such cases, several people [up to four adult males] are needed to hold the woman down. As the attack continues, the eyes dilate, accompanied by frequent bouts of vomiting. Behaviour is consistent and predictable.¹⁴⁴

The shouting and the screaming, the shaking and the convulsive movements all seem stereotypical of the phenomenon [cp. Mk 9:14-29], and early Samoan society would ascribe such display of physical strength to the power of the *aitu*. In the course of possession, the victim may show signs of physical pain and fatigue which are self-inflicted although the voice believed to be that of the *aitu*, tends to set itself apart from its victim. Such display of physical strength beyond one's own normal ability is a common feature of *aitu* possession, and it is often understood that such strength comes from the power of the supernatural. Contemporaries of Jesus identified these signs as demonic, and Jesus is portrayed to have remedied the situation by exorcising the evil spirit.

Aitu possessions function as means whereby the society maintains and safeguards its cultural and value system. Many believe that when an *aitu* visits an individual, it is an indication that something had gone wrong with either the person or his family. The immediate response is to identify where the violation had occurred. The phenomenon of *aitu* possession may not necessarily be acknowledged as an activity of malicious beings, however it may be understood as a means whereby divine sanction is imposed upon society. The remedy may not be condemnation or rebuke but appeasing and mollifying the anger of the spirit concerned. Words of respect are said in order to persuade an *aitu* leave. The *aitu* is addressed as *lau afioga* or *lau susuga*, a very respectful way of addressing people of high status in the community. This is different from the way demons and evil spirits are addressed in the gospels. Demons and unclean spirits in the gospels are rebuked, condemned and forced out of their victims. The *aitu* are not expelled nor forced out of their victims, however, the healers make pleas and the spirits would only leave when satisfied that the individual or family had taken note of the problem and appropriate measures taken to resolve it.

Possessions also function as means whereby supernatural spirits communicate with the living. This often occurs when families are faced with important decisions in relation to family disputes over land and titles. Possession of family members and the consequent dialogue that follows between the *aitu* and family members through the possessed is often taken seriously as the will of the ancestral spirit. It is often noted that difficult decisions of families are resolved by acknowledging the mutterings of a victim as the will of family spirits.

But there is also another category of possession in early Samoa which could be identified as of the same nature as demon possession in the gospels. They are

attributed to those who had failed in life and their spirits have become malicious beings who harass and inflict pain to people without any reason other than of their own spiteful nature. Such possessions are often exorcised by the use of various traditional techniques such as herbal medicine, the use of heat and fire and strong words of rebuke. This category of possession follows the nature of exorcisms in the gospels. Here, certain features are characteristic such as the actual presence of the spirit, the loss of autonomy and the aggression shown against Jesus and the victim.

Aitu possession of this nature is very much concerned with the presence of the spirit. An early reference to *aitu* possession by John Williams pointed to similar features.¹⁴⁵ Goodman who wrote of modern *aitu* beliefs indicated a common understanding among Samoans that "when an *aitu* enters a living body, it does so through the armpit. It remains there in the lower abdomen, or in the back of the neck."¹⁴⁶ The victim may feel empty and cold as the spirit takes control. Physical aggression and violence are frequent features of such phenomenon.¹⁴⁷ Lazar records a case of possession which again highlights the common features of the phenomenon.¹⁴⁸ Jesus' concern is to relieve the person of the spirit and this is also the priority of the healer, to ensure that the spirit is appropriately let out of its victim either through the process of appeasing it or rebuking and forcing it to leave.

In the initial confrontation, the healer is very cautious in his response to the *aitu*. Sometimes the *aitu* at the approach of the healer will immediately identify itself and acknowledges the cause of possession. In cases of possession by a family and ancestral spirits, the healer often addresses the *aitu* in terms of respect.¹⁴⁹ The healer will make a plea on behalf of the person and family. On many occasions,

the promise of fulfilling a responsibility is demanded and a public apology for an offence is required before one could secure the release of the victim and the departure of the *aitu*. No aggressive confrontation was expected between the healer and a family *aitu*.

3. *Aitu* possession and the *Lotu*

Within the church, the respected family *aitu* and traditional spirits are identified in the same category as evil and unclean spirits in the gospels. They are denied of power and influence since they are meant to have been defeated and made void by the power of *Atua*. Thus within the framework of the church, family spirits are not meant to be respected and appeased but condemned and exorcised by word of command. Healers or heads of families who are themselves Christians are very cautious in dealing with *aitu* possession. On the one hand, they respect the spirits and would recognise possession as having a positive function within the family and community. On the other hand, the identification of *aitu* within the church as evil forces presents them with a difficult choice to make. Many who deal with *aitu* possession have continued to follow the traditional motif of respect and appeasing the spirit in order to effect a cure. The *fai-feau* in village congregations are presented with the same dilemma. As church leaders, they are expected to rebuke and expel the spirit forces, however, many would find it hard to perform the role of 'gospel' exorcists when dealing with ancestral spirits and family *aitu*. A minister friend once confided that it is not easy to condemn family *aitu* as evil spirits and demons or deny their existence despite his commitment and faith to the new *lotu*. The choice should not be there but that the church should acknowledge and respect traditional spirits within its Christian framework. Jesus did not come to defeat the *aitu* nor annul family ancestral spirits, but to deliver men and women from the

forces of evil and malicious beings. The parallel drawn between *aitu* possession and demon possession has undoubtedly led to the negation of *aitu* within Samoan Christianity.

In cases where possession is considered to have come through acts of malicious and evil spirits, the technique of exorcism is necessary to expel the *aitu*. In ancient Polynesian cultures, similar methods were used for extracting evil spirits from their victims. A Marquesan would stroke the afflicted part of the body and drawing out the demon which will be finally caught and destroyed.¹⁵⁰ A Maori diviner would use a grass stem or flax which he will hold above his patient while he utters his incantation. In the process, the spirit will re-enter the lower world from whence it came through the flax.¹⁵¹ In the Society Islands, a heated stone wrapped in cloth was frequently used to frighten an evil spirit.¹⁵² The Tongans not only massaged the afflicted part of the body but also used strong smelling leaves to ward off evil spirits from their victim.¹⁵³ Like their Polynesian neighbours, the Samoans have used fire and sweet or foul smelling herbal medicine accompanied by incantations to exorcise an evil *aitu*. Such techniques resemble closely some of the contemporary methods used by exorcists during the time of Jesus [*Tob* 8:3; *Gen Apoc* xx:28f; *Antiq* viii.45ff].

In a confrontation between a healer and an *aitu* the identity of the spirit is revealed. An evil spirit is warned that its remains will be destroyed by fire if it would not leave immediately. Failure to obey may lead to the destruction of its remains, purging it of any continued presence and influence. Some healers may use the *vai aitu* [herbal medicine for exorcisms]. The medicine may be taken or used to massage the body. Acute aggression from the spirit was often witnessed during the application of *vai aitu*, however in the end, the spirit will finally

succumb to the healer and acknowledge departure.

In Mark, the spirits that Jesus confronts are identified as unclean [ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ 1:23], and in Luke they are evil [πνευμάτων πονηρῶν 7:21; 8:2; 11:26]. These spirits are responsible for inflicting physical damage and pain on people. The identification of spirits as unclean or evil is not as pronounced in the spirit-world of Samoa. It is true that many believe in the existence of evil *aitu*, however they are the spirits of those who had not been given proper funeral rites or who themselves have not lived good moral lives. Their spirits have become malicious entities like demons and evil spirits in the gospels. Many Samoans today would still respect their own family spirits alongside the *Atua*, and they would see these divine forces as integral parts of everyday life. The spirits of the dead may act as guardians and protectors of family life, family taboos, values and traditions, and *aitu* possession is often an indication of a violation or some form of negligence which must be addressed immediately.

The cosmic significance of the exorcisms of Jesus has been suggested. This accordingly has provided gospel exorcisms with a significance that goes beyond the usual notion of expelling demons and restoring health and wholeness to victims. The defeat of evil spirits signals the dawning of the kingdom of God and the initial overthrow of forces contrary to God. This battle and the turn of events in favour of God's forces over against those of Satan is foreign to traditional exorcisms where *aitu* possession and exorcism are not considered in terms of the defeat and overthrow of its spirit-world, but a normal phenomenon in a society that recognizes its spirits and ancestors as essential elements of its present life and existence. It is only within the framework of the church that people are led to believe that traditional spirits represent an order which is contrary to Christian

belief in the one and only God. Consequently, *aitu* possession becomes a negative phenomenon and the *aitu* irrespective of whether it is a respected family spirit or an evil one, they must all be negated and condemned. The traditional spirits have become polarised to represent those cosmic forces that Jesus had waged war against in his ministry.

The cosmic significance of *aitu* possession has always been a reality. The Samoan world-view consistently maintains a complementary understanding of the two worlds of reality, the physical and the spiritual. The phenomenon of *aitu* possession is not considered an intrusion into the physical order from the spiritual realm, but a normal pattern of activities which reflects the unity of the two spheres of reality in traditional belief. By the process of possession, the state of order and harmony can be checked and maintained between the physical and spiritual worlds. Spirit possession is considered the channel through which a family spirit is able to communicate with family members in order to ensure that harmony is maintained between the family and its *aitu*.

In Samoan exorcisms, knowing the identity of the spirit is a significant step towards solving a crisis. The name of the spirit determines the response of the healer and the form of remedy required. An *aitu* possessing a family member may receive proper acknowledgement and respect from the healer and members of the family. No confrontation may be expected except a promise by the family to abide by the demands made by the spirit. On the other hand, evil and malicious spirits may resist an expulsion. They may demand that the victim deserves punishment and therefore would continue to remain and to resist any form of expulsion. However with its identity revealed, the spirit feels vulnerable to a prolonged struggle. The dialogue between an *aitu* and a healer is a normal feature of possession. As in

gospel exorcisms, the verbal confrontation in traditional possessions reflects a normal process of two forces trying to outwit and overpower each other, however, the knowledge of each other's identity is decisive in the solution of the conflict. The response of the healer varies according to the nature of the spirit involved. An evil *aitu* does not get much respect but a command in the form of a rebuke or an expulsion. A respected family spirit receives a proper apology and a promise to carry out its wishes.

Some well-known healers are recognised and feared by many evil spirits. The mere mention of their names prompts an immediate response. The authority of these healers is well recognised and their presence and words of command are instantly obeyed. Two nationally recognised *aitu*, *Telesā* and *Sauma'iafe* are considered the most feared for their influence over many individuals. Both *aitu* are often associated with the cause of illness and possessions experienced today in the island communities. The exorcisms of these *aitu* can only be conducted by certain family members. The healer who is the family *matai* or his sister is acknowledged and respected by the *aitu*. The relationship between them is characterised by mutual respect and a recognition of each others' function and authority within the community. The healer acts as a medium between the victim or family and the offended spirit.

In an encounter between the healer and the spirit, certain features can be highlighted.

i. The use of *vai aitu* [spirit medicine] may suggest magic rather than medicine. The technique of using *vai aitu* is confined with cases where the *aitu* is identified as a malicious spirit. The technique of expulsion involves the use of fire and foul

smelling substances accompanied by some form of incantation.

ii. The shaking and convulsive movements represent the powerful and violent nature of an *aitu*. The behaviour of the possessed such as swearing, biting and hitting at the healer shows not only the violent nature of the struggle between the *aitu* and the healer but also the reluctance of the spirit to give in.¹⁵⁴

iii. The *aitu* often communicates through the victim. The possessed is often eager to dialogue with those around. There is no dumb or deaf demoniac in traditional possession. However the person constantly talks and dialogues and the voice is assumed to be that of the *aitu*. It is through this means of communication that information about the identity of the spirit and the motive behind possession is revealed. The dialogue is one of the most significant factor in the process of dealing with possession. Without the dialogue, the healer is at loss in dealing with the problem. Defensive utterances are characteristic of possession especially in situation where an evil *aitu* may resist an expulsion.

iv. Signs of the actual departure of the *aitu* are expected in a traditional exorcism. Such would involve the shaking of the blinds of the Samoan *fale* [house] as the *aitu* leaves¹⁵⁵ and this coincides with the victim's change of behaviour to normality, a feature prominent also in Jewish and synoptic exorcisms. In Mark 5:13, the evil spirits entered the pigs and the whole herd rushed down the cliff and were drowned. The demoniac was no longer violent and aggressive but "was sitting there, clothed and in his right mind" [Mk 5:15]. Mark 1:26 speaks of an unclean spirit convulsing and crying with a loud voice as it left the man. In the *Life of Apollonius* iv.20, the demon knocked down the statue as it left the young man. In Josephus' *Antiquities* viii.2.5, the demon confirmed its departure by

upsetting a bowl of water as it left.

v. The confrontation often weakened the healer. The healer is often exhausted and felt drained of his power in the process of healing and exorcism, and it would be for sometime before the healer is able to fully resume his role again in the community.¹⁵⁶ In the healing of the woman with a flow of blood, Mark points out that Jesus felt his power been drained from him [5:30].

vi. The *aitu* often recognises the healer and likewise the healer the spirit. Mutual acknowledgement often creates a situation whereby no confrontation is involved. Instead, the healer would acknowledge a violation by his client and promises immediate recompense. On the other hand, an evil spirit may recognise the authority of the healer and promptly leave. The identity of the parties involved is significant in the process of healing and exorcism. In the Synoptic Gospels, demons and evil spirits recognised Jesus, and their knowledge of the healer determined their response to his commands. The demons obeyed and acknowledged Jesus by his titles. The sons of Sceva were identified by the evil spirits as fake exorcists, and instead of obeying, the spirits attacked and overpowered them [Acts 19:14-16].

vii. The traditional healer is considered a medium through whom family gods and spirits of the dead communicate to the living.¹⁵⁷ They are regarded as living embodiments of the deities and spirits they serve. Many of these healers are themselves traditional heads of families [*matai*]. The *matai* is traditionally referred to as a family deity [*o atua o aiga*]. Their power is none other than the *mana* of the deities and it is by virtue of this *mana* that they are able to heal and exorcise. They are not magicians but respectable heads of families and community.

They function for the benefit of the community, and their authority and *mana* come from deities and family spirits. Jesus' authority and power to cast out demons was by virtue of his identity as the "holy one of God" [Mk 1:24] and "son of God" [Mk 3:11; 5:7]. His power to heal and to exorcise was no magic, nor achieved through magical means and technique, but an authority derived from God. The Synoptic Gospels present him not as a magician but as one endowed with divine power that when the demons came face to face with him, they fell down and worshipped him.

4. Traditional Healers

Acts of exorcism in Samoa are often performed by people of good moral standing in the community. The traditional healers are often men and women whom society recognises for their charisma and gifts of healing in the community. The heads of families normally perform such roles. Their appointment as heads comes through the recognition by the extended family of their moral status, gifts of leadership and wisdom. Such figures often act as mediums of the family spirits and they are responsible for mediating between family members and the spirit-world of supernatural beings and *aitu*. Since sickness and physical disability in traditional society were frequently ascribed to the activities of the supernatural, healing therefore was conceived to have come through bridging any disharmony incurred with the spirit-world. Such a task could only be performed by one who can represent both orders. Acts of exorcism by traditional healers were not considered as magic or sorcery done mainly for the purpose of personal gain and advantage, but genuine attempts to maintain harmony and goodwill between the victim and the spirit-world.

In ancient Polynesian societies, a prominent category of inspired men and women formed a definite class who had a prominent role to play within the community. In Samoa, *taulaitu* which literally means anchor-men and women was applied to this class of inspirational diviners who functioned in communal, family and private worship.¹⁵⁸ They were subject to possession by a family deity and would become mediums between family members and the spirits. The divine men and women are categorised by Stair into four classes.¹⁵⁹ Of the four, the family healers [*taulaitu o aiga*] performed the function of healing and exorcism. They communicate to patients and family members the intention of spirits during the diagnosis and remedy of an illness. However in a case of possession, the healer engages the spirit in a dialogue to identify the spirit and the cause of the problem. The healer during diagnosis sometimes uses incantations and herbal medication. However, the power and authority to heal and to exorcise come from the family deities and spirits.

Magicians and sorcerers were an insignificant part of the social order. Stair points to *taulaitu vavalu ma fai tui* as representing magic men and sorcerers. *Taulaitu vavalu* refers to prophets but *taulaitu fai tui* specifically alludes to magic men and sorcerers who inflict harm through the use of sorcery and magical arts. They were regarded as professionals in the sense that they were hired to inflict injury to prospective enemies. They claimed to have ability to heal and to exorcise. However, their power came not from family deities and spirits but from magical incantations and mysterious rites and rituals and their status in the community was often advanced through fear. The community considered their art as mysterious and often immoral.

The claim that Jesus' exorcisms in the gospel traditions represent the activities of

charismatic men in the line of Jewish holy men, falls more in line with the *taulaitu o aiga* model than of *taulaitu fai tui*. The *taulaitu o aiga* claimed their authority and *mana* from family deities and spirits, and their motif in healing and exorcism was to re-establish union and harmony between the community and its spiritual counter-part. The activities of family healers conformed to the moral and cultural ideals of the community. However, an identification of Jesus with the magic men of his time would fall into the *taulaitu fai tui* model which gave more emphasis to the efficacy of magical rites, incantations and the use of various substances, than on the inherent divine power of the exorcist. The activities of the *taulaitu fai tui* were often considered as immoral, dominated by fear and terror rather than seeking to reconcile the parties involved.

The Samoan *faiife'au* are expected to exorcise spirits today. They take the place of traditional priests, prophets and healers of ancient Samoa as mediums between *Atua* and people. John Garrett points to the significance of *faiife'au* in the Samoan community.

The pastors took the place of the priests and prophets of ancient Samoan religion as mediators with the unseen world. ... They were honoured as men of God .. and their prayers and presence were indispensable on ceremonial occasions.¹⁶⁰

The demonization of traditional spirits by *lotu* meant that any form of possession is regarded in the church as the work of evil spirits and demons. However many *faiife'au* would respond differently to various cases of possession. Where the spirit is identified as evil, the command in the form of rebuke is used. However in cases of respected family *aitu*, a word of prayer is offered which may result in the departure of the spirit. Many instances of possession are dealt with by traditional healers using traditional techniques of exorcism. Attempts to explain this

phenomenon in psychological terms may appeal only to a few that even with migrant communities of Samoans in New Zealand, Australia and the United States of America, *aitu* possession is still very much a reality to them. *Aitu* possession is an important social and religious phenomenon within the Samoan community today.

Since possession is strictly identified as *ma'i Samoa* [Samoan sickness], it is considered to be outside the framework of the medical profession. The victim of spirit possession is kept away from medical doctors except in cases where physical injury is involved. In the medical profession, the phenomenon of spirit possession is explained and treated differently. Modern medicine and social scientists would ascribe such phenomenon to various psychological experiences and social deprivation which individuals need to work through in order to achieve their health and well-being. Social and mental stress and anxiety, the feeling of guilt and depression, can be related to these experiences which show symptoms of delusions, hallucinations and passivity of experiences.¹⁶¹ Those who suffer from such symptoms need more the psychiatric attention than an exorcist. Medical science has shown us that psychological factors are important in precipitating an attack in those already predisposed to epilepsy or schizophrenia. However, to ascribe such experiences to demons, the sufferer has to believe in demons and to live in a culture which accepts the existence of spirits and supernatural entities. The techniques for exorcism are remarkably similar in many different cultures and with different religions all over the world.¹⁶² The traditional understanding of possession may seem archaic and irrelevant in our modern and scientific perception of the world, however, it might be possible to suggest ways that may do justice not only to the present medical beliefs but also those beliefs which are closely related to a world-view which accepts supernatural spirits as part of everyday reality. The close relationship between one's physical well-being and his mental,

social and spiritual welfare provides validity for a form of healing or remedy which seek to incorporate these social, religious and spiritual realities of a community.

C. CONCLUSION

The analysis of demon possession and demon inflicted illness as well as Jesus' acts of healing and exorcisms present not only parallels but also differences with the traditional and present forms of *ma'i aitua*. The following observations and conclusions can be highlighted.

i. Both communities share a relatively similar understanding of the world where supernatural spirits are important in the daily activities and welfare of the community. Despite this common outlook, the *aitua* behind many of the traditional illness and possessions are not necessarily of the same nature and category with demons and evil spirits of the gospels. These traditional spirits were and still are respected divine entities within the Samoan system of belief.

ii. The symptoms and physical characteristics of a possessed person are considered stereotypical and universal. The nature of demoniacs in the gospels is similar to the character of the possessed in other cultures. They all manifest characteristics of people under the control of some outside force, such as speaking with a different tone of voice, displaying strength and aggression, spitting and grimacing, and the person showing obvious signs of being beside himself. The demoniacs which Jesus dealt with could be found elsewhere.

iii. An aggressive confrontation between an evil spirit and Jesus resembles those between malicious *aitua* and the healer. The techniques used by the healer to deal

with these evil entities correspond/^{more}closely those used by contemporary Jewish and Hellenistic exorcists than by Jesus. The traditional exorcist would rebuke an evil *aitu* and threaten that its remains will be exhumed if it would not leave immediately. The *aitu* sometimes refuses the command to leave, and in such extreme circumstances, the use of herbal medicine, heat and fire as well as foul smelling substances are employed to drive them out. Pain is often acknowledged by *aitu* when the *vai aitu* or heat is applied. This indicates that reciprocal pain could be inflicted upon an *aitu* by the healer. The confrontation between Jesus and evil spirits is often portrayed in unfriendly terms. The spirit is reluctant to leave and tries to put up a fight though in the end succumbs to Jesus' command to leave. In cases of possession by a family spirit, there is no aggressive confrontation. However the healer would address the spirit with respect, a feature which is absent in gospel exorcisms. The *aitu* often leaves when the family performs the ritual of appeasement and promises the fulfilment of certain responsibilities and duties.

iv. Jesus the exorcist is portrayed in Mark as one who has the authority of God. The authority to heal and to exorcise is recognised by evil spirits as divinely endowed. His acts conform to the moral and ethical aspiration of the community. Jesus is portrayed in the gospels as a person of moral values and his exorcisms are understood not as avenues for personal gain but are directed for the welfare both physically and spiritually of the community he served. The moral dimension of his healing practices and acts of exorcisms, and his concern for the welfare of those who suffered, raised his activities beyond the level of practicing magicians of his time. Samoan healers would fit into such charismatic model. They were and still are respected members of the community. Many of them are family *matai*, and as healers they function for the benefit and welfare of the community they serve.

The *faiſe'au* also function in a similar manner. They are seen as mediums through which the *mana* of *Atua* is channelled to exorcise and to heal. Although Jesus was not a family head in the traditional sense, yet he is presented in the gospels as one endowed with an authority of one who could rightly be identified as the head of the new community.

v. The significance of Jesus' acts of exorcisms may be seen to go beyond the mere expulsion of an evil force. His casting out of demons demonstrates the beginning of God's reign over evil and consequently the establishment of God's rule. His acts of exorcism relieve the individual of suffering and guarantee healing and wholeness from the activities of evil spirits. The significance of traditional exorcisms also go beyond the mere expulsion of *aitu*. Although traditional exorcisms do not anticipate a universal defeat of all evil and malicious forces, yet they function as a way of maintaining welfare and harmony between the community and its spirit-world. The act of possession by a family spirit signals the need to reconcile both realms. By an act of possession, people come to acknowledge the problem and seek ways to achieve harmony with its spiritual counterpart. It is only through bringing the two realms into harmony that real and genuine wholeness and well-being of an individual and the community^{may}/be achieved.

vi. The impact of *lotu* has led to the identification of *aitu* with demons and evil spirits. In the framework of the church, *aitu* include ancestral spirits. The place of ancestral spirits within the church provides a significant issue in some non-Western cultures where the presence and respect of past ancestors is significant. Kwame Bediako argues for a valid recognition of African ancestors within the Christian spiritual framework.¹⁶³ Christian theology provides a possible place in the doctrine of the 'communion of saints' however, the analogy may not be valid

since some of the ancestors were not Christians. St Justin the Martyr [second century AD] in his doctrine of the Logos attempted to form a bridge between pagan philosophy and Christianity. He taught that although the Divine Logos appeared in his fulness only in Christ, 'a seed of the Logos' was scattered among the whole of mankind long before Christ. Therefore he refers to Old Testament personalities and prophets, as well as respectable figures such as Socrates, Heraclitus and the like who could be identified as partakers of the Logos.¹⁶⁴ Perhaps the place of ancestral spirits within the respected spiritual framework of *lotu* may be seen in the light of Justin's doctrine of the Logos.

Endnotes

1. M.J. Borg, *Jesus A New Vision*, 71.
2. No iv in a collection of "Magical Formula for Mother and Child," [15th century BC], in Lexa, *La magie dans l'Egypte* II.29; see also J.M. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic and the Synoptic Tradition*, [London:SCM, 1974]], 61-2; cp. healing of Peter's mother-in-law.
3. E.A.W. Budge, *Egyptian Magic*, [London:Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co/Ltd, 1899], 207-212.
4. L.W. King, *Babylonian Religion*, [London:Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co/Ltd, 1899], 201.
5. R.C. Thompson, ed. & trans, *The Devils and Evil Spirits of Babylonia*, [London:Luzac & Co. 1903], Vol I, xxiv.

6. R.C. Thompson, *The Devils*, Vol I, xlix. Plate vi.

The Man of *Ea* am I,
The Man of *Damkina* am I,
The Messenger of *Marduk* am I,
My Spell is the Spell of *Ea*,
My incantation is the incantation of *Marduk*,
The Ban of *Ea* is in my hand,
The tamarisk, the powerful weapon of *Anu*,
Into my hand I hold;
The date spathe, mighty in decision,
In my hand I hold.
Unto my body may they not draw nigh;
Before me may they wreak no evil,
Nor follow behind me,
On the threshold where I stand, let them not set themselves;
Where I stand, there stand thou not!
Where I sit, there sit thou not!
Where I walk, there walk thou not!
By Heaven be thou exorcised! By Earth be thou exorcised."

7. R.C. Thompson, *The Devils*, Vol I, xlvii.i.

Headache hath come forth from the Undersworld,
It hath come forth from the Dwelling of *Bel*,
From amid the mountains it hath descended upon the land,
From amid the ends of the mountains it hath descended upon the land,
From the fields not to return it hath descended,
With the mountain goat unto the fold it hath descended,
With the ibex unto the Open-horned flocks it hath descended,
With the Open-horned unto the Big-horned it had descended.
Tablet iii. Series *Ti'i* vol.ii

Headache hath settled upon the man and
Sickness of the land, the disease of woe[?] hath settled upon man,
Headache like a flood roameth loose,
Headache from sunrise to sunset,

Headache shrieketh and crieth

.....

Ea his decision gave in answer to him:

Go, O my Son! Frighten the snare of Headache.

8. R.C. Thompson, *The Devils*, Vol II. xxi-xxii.

9. Vol I. Plate xxii;

May the evil Spirit, the evil Demon,
Into the earth descend!

May the evil Ghost, the evil Devil
Go forth from this city!

By the great Gods may ye be exorcised!
Into the house may they not enter.

The fence may they not break through,
Unto the neighborhood of the palace may they not draw nigh,....

Vol II. Plate ii

May the evil Spirit [stand] aside,

May the evil Demon [stand] aside,

May the evil Genius [stand] aside,

May the evil Ghost [stand] aside,

May the evil Devil [stand] aside,

May the Kindly Spirit be present,

May the kindly Guardian be present,

May the kindly Thought be present,

That this man may become pure, become clean, become bright!

Into the favouring hands of his god may this man [be commended]

10. Homer, *The Odyssey* [London:William Heinemann, 1919] v.396.

11. Aeschylus, *Eumenides*, [London:William Heinemann, 1926], 264-6, lines 304f. See also J.M. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic*, 62f; cp. E. Rhode, *Psyche*, trans. by W.B. Willis [London:1925], 213 n.162; 562: n.86.

12. L.W. King, *Babylonian Religion*, 201.

13. G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, 65-78, 206-213; E.E. Urbach, *The Sages I: their concepts and beliefs*, trans. by Israel Abrahams, [Jerusalem:Perry Foundations, 1975], 97-123.

14. M.J. Borg, *Jesus A New Vision*, 60.

15. G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, 61; J.D.G. Dunn & G.H. Twelftree, "Demon Possession and Exorcism in the New Testament," *CH* 94 [1980], 216. They refer to this exorcism as unique in pre-Christian Judaism.

16. M.J. Gruentbauer, "The Demonology of the Old Testament," *CBQ* 6 [1944], 25.

17. See M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, [Philadelphia:Fortress, 1974], I.130; II.88.

18. J.A. Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll of Qumran Cave ii*, [Oxford:Claredon Press, 1965], 77-78.
19. G. Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, 87-90; M.J. Borg, *Jesus A New Vision*, 62.
20. G. Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, 89-90.
21. G.H. Twelftree, "ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια" *Gospel Perspectives* Vol.6, ed. by David Wenham & Craig Blomberg, [Sheffield:JSOT Press, 1986], 364; M.J. Borg, *Jesus A New Vision*, 61.
22. P.W. Hollenbach, "Jesus, Demoniacs, and Public Authorities," *JAAR* XLIX/4 [1981], 568.
23. The Lukan version has similarities to both Matthew 9:32-34 and 12:22-24. However, Luke 11:14-15 and Matthew 12:22-24, both serve as introductions to the controversy between Jesus and the Pharisees on the question of how Jesus performed his exorcism. This controversy over the nature of Jesus' exorcism confirmed Jesus as indeed an exorcist.
24. G.H. Twelftree, "ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια," 364; G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, 23.
25. J. Wilkinson, "The Case of the Bent Woman in Luke 13:10-17," *EQ* 49 [1977], 195-205.
26. The authenticity of Luke 13:32 has been supported by Bultmann who sees it as a piece of biographical material and Taylor who indicated that its sense of irony, urgency and mission as well as the roughness of the saying point rather to its authenticity. R. Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, [Oxford:Basil Blackwell, 1972] 35, 56; V. Taylor, *Jesus and His Sacrifice*, [London:Macmillan, 1937], 167-171; cp. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke x-xxiv*, [New York:Doubleday & Co/Inc, 1983], 1028. Fitzmyer also supports v.32 as the original pronouncement and v.33 possibly as an 'added unattached' saying, with the catchword 'today and tomorrow' providing the bond or link.
27. Concerning Luke 4:39, Kee suggests that on the basis of the study of the background of ἐπιτίμων it is not enough simply to equate ἐπετίμησεν with 'reproach' as J.M. Robinson has done. However, when Jesus uses the word, he is uttering the commanding word by which the demon as a representative of the forces opposed to God and his purposes is overcome. H. Kee, "Terminology," 232-242; J.M. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark*, 36; C.F. Evans, *Saint Luke*, [London:SCM, 1990], 281-2. Fitzmyer however, does not think that a demon is explicitly involved, *Luke i-ix*, 548-9.
28. R.C. Thompson, *The Devils*, Vol I. Plate xiii; *PGM* XLIII.1-27; XLIV.1-8.
29. H. Kee, "Terminology," 232-246; G.H. Twelftree, "ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια," 364; J.M. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic*, 61-2.
30. Cp. *PGM* IV.745: "And say the successive things as an initiate, Over his head, in a soft voice, so that he may not hear." *PGM* IV.1229: "Excellent rite for driving out daimons: Formula to be spoken over his head." *PGM* IV.2735; "Go stand above her head..." see also R.C. Thompson, *The Devils*, Vol I.103, 119-121.

31. G. Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, 87.
32. *Ibid.*
33. R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 267; see also R. Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium, I. Teil*, [Freiburg:Herder, 1976], 272; H. Branscomb, *The Gospel of Mark*, [New York:Harper, 1937] 87; V. Taylor, *The Gospel according to Mark*, [London:Macmillan, 1966], 275.
34. H.C. Kee, *Miracles*, 163.
35. The offensiveness of such charge against Jesus may suggest historicity. See J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology: The Proclamation of Jesus*, [London:SCM, 1971], 91.
36. J.M. Robinson, J.M. *A Quest of the Historical Jesus*, [London:SCM, 1959], 121; cp. N. Perrin, *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus*, [London:SCM, 1963], 74-76; J.D.G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, [London:SCM, 1975], 44.n.18; M.J. Borg, *Jesus A New Vision*, 60-61.
37. M.J. Borg, *Jesus A New Vision*, 61.
38. *Ibid.*, 61.
39. Mk 3:27/Mt 12:29; and Lk 11:21-22; that Matthew used Mark as a source, and Luke Q, see J.M. Creed, *The Gospel according to Luke*, [London:1930], 161. B. Lindars, *New Testament Apologetics*, [London:SCM, 1961] 84-85, on the other hand suggested that Luke elaborated Mark. It is worth noting that the comparison of a possessed victim to a 'house of demons' is a common analogy in the East. See J. Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, [London:1972] 197.
40. *BAGD*, 728.
41. πνεῦμα πύθωνα - *spirit of divination*, *BAGD*, 728-9; see also J.K. Howard, "New Testament Exorcism and its Significance Today," *ExpTim* 96 [1985], 107.
42. B. Lindars, "Rebuking the Spirit: A New Analysis of the Lazarus Story of John 11," *NTS* 38 No 1 [Jan 1992], 89-104.
43. R. Bultmann, *Synoptic Tradition*, 25; J.M. Creed, *Luke*, 138-9; V. Taylor, *Mark*, 407; S.E. Johnson, *The Gospel according to St Mark*, [London:Adam & Charles Black, 1960], 165; E. Haenchen, *Der Weg Jesu: eine Erklärung des Markus-Evangeliums und der kanonischen Parallelen*, [Berlin:de Gruyter, 1966], 327; E. Schweizer, *The Good New According to Mark*, [Richmond, VA:John Knox Press, 1970], 194; H.C. Kee, *Community of the New Age*, [Macon:Macon University Press, 1983], 43.
44. *Pseudo Philo LAB*, 60; Josephus, *Antiq*, 8:46-49. Eleazar used the name of Solomon in his exorcisms.
45. *PGM* IV.3019-3030; cp. 1233. Concerning the date of *PGM* IV, Lane suggests that *PGM* IV provides little evidence that would allow us to date it, but it is

generally put vaguely in the fourth century AD. E.N. Lane, "On Date of PGM IV," *SC* 4:1 [1984], 25. See also A.D. Nock, *Greek Magical Papyri, Essays on Religion and the Ancient World*, [Cambridge:Mass., Harvard University Press, 1972], 1.80.

46. *t.Hull* 2:22-23; *y.Sabb* 14.4; 14d; *y.Abod Zar* 2.2.40d-41a; *b.Abod Zar* 27b; *b.Sanh* 56a,74a,107b.

47. On the use of Jesus' name by Jewish exorcists; see D. Chwolson, cited by A. Fridrichsen, *The Problem of Miracle in Primitive Christianity*, [Minneapolis:Augsburg, 1972], 170 n.29.

48. O. Böcher, *Christus Exorcista*, 77-80.

49. *Ibid.*, 160-1.

50. M.J. Borg, *Jesus A New Vision*, 61-2.

51. T.A. Burkill, "The Notion of Miracle with Special Reference to St.Mark's Gospel," *ZNW* 50 [1959], 44.

52. G.H. Twelftree, "ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαίμονια," 363. Burkill also identifies exorcism as an independent theme. T.A. Burkill, "Miracle," 43-44.

53. T.A. Burkill, "Miracle," 44.

54. G. Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, 87-90.

55. R.H. Fuller, *Interpreting the Miracles*, [London:SCM, 1963] 39.

56. N. Perrin, N. *The Kingdom of God*, 76. Sanders disputes such conclusion. He sees no evidence that the sign of the coming kingdom was generally thought to be exorcism, for one thing, there were too many exorcists, and one cannot identify all acts of exorcisms as such. *Jesus and Judaism*, 378.fn.56.

57. G.H. Twelftree, "ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαίμονια," 390; cp. M. Trautmann, *Zeichenhafter Handlungen Jesu*, [Wurzburg:Echter, 1980], 265.

58. C.H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, [London:Nisbet & Co.Ltd, 1936/53], 28ff; R. Bultmann, *Synoptic Tradition*, 14.

59. N. Perrin, *The Kingdom of God*, 76.

60. T.Mos 10:1 "And then His Kingdom shall appear throughout all His creation, And then Satan shall be no more, And sorrow shall depart with him." T.Levi 18:12 "And Beliar shall be bound by him, And he shall give power to His children to tread upon the evil spirits".

61. C.K. Barrett, *The Holy Spirit and the Gospel tradition*, new ed., [London:SPCK, 1966] 57-9; cp. E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 134-5.

62. E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 135.

63. *Ibid.*

64. Mt 12:28; Lk 11:20; see J.K. Howard, "New Testament Exorcism," 105; J. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, 48-9; W.G. Kummel, *Promise and Fulfilment*, 2nd ed., [London:SCM, 1961], 106.n.6; L. Goppelt, *Theology of the New Testament*, I [Grand Rapids, Mich.:1981], 147; G.H. Twelftree, "ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια," 389.

65. Bultmann suggests authenticity since the statement is full of that feeling of eschatological power which must have characterized the activity of Jesus. *Synoptic Tradition*, 162.

66. S. Garrett, *The Demise of the Devil*, 45.

67. E.g. The temptation stories set out within the context of the conflict between Jesus and the force of evil 4:1-13; the first healing 4:31-36 which is understood by the demon to be a battle in the cosmic war between God and Satan, the modification of the healing of Peter's mother in law in order to emphasise it as a form of exorcism 4:38-39; the expansion of Mark 1:32-34 to stress Jesus' control of the demons, an issue of significance in his divine commissioning 4:40-41; and finally Luke's record of one of Jesus' earliest followers Mary Magdalene, whom he had delivered from demonic possession; all these incidents in Luke highlight Jesus' struggle against cosmic powers and their initial defeat in the form of spirits and demons. H.C. Kee, *Miracles*, 204.

68. T.Simeon 6:6-7; T.Levi 5:10; 6:4; T.Asher 7:3; T.Benjamin 3:3; T.Levi [Armenian B-text] 18:12.

69. H.C. Kee, *Miracles*, 155.

70. H. Giesen, "Damonenaustreibungen - Erweis de Nahe Herrschaft Gottes, zu Mk 1:21-28," *Theologie der Gegenwart* 32 [1989], 24-37.

71. E. Yamauchi, "Magic or Miracle?" 141.

72. Cp. Josephus, *Antiq* vi.166; "state of strangling and suffocation;" Philostratus, *Life* 4:20; "the demon cried out with a scream."

73. P.W. Hollenbach, "Jesus, Demoniacs, and Public Authorities," 571.

74. *IQM* xiii; *IQS* iii; P. Pimental, "The Unclean Spirits of St Mark's Gospel," *ExpTim* 99 [1987-8], 173-4.

75. V. Taylor, *Mark*, 173; J. Hawkins, *Horae Synopticae*, [Oxford:Oxford University Press, 1899], 10; P. Pimental, "The Unclean Spirits of St Mark's Gospel," 174; G.H. Twelftree, "ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια," 371.

76. Mt 10:1; 12:43; Lk 4:36; 6:18; 8:29; 9:42; 11:24; Acts 5:16; 8:7; Rev 16:13; 18:2; cp. LXX Zech.13:2; T.Benj.5:2; Cat.Cod.Astr x.179, 19, 181, 5; *PGM* IV.1238; see also *BAGD*.

77. Jos., C. Ap.1,307, *Dit.*, *Syll.*³ 1043, 3; see *BAGD*.

78. Amos 7:17; is 52:1; Sib Or 5.264; Acts 10:14, 28.

79. Plato, *Laws* 4:716E; Is 6:5; 64:5; Sir 51:5; Prov 3:32; Philo, *Deus Imm* 132; *Spec Leg* 3:209; Josephus, *Wars* 4:562.
80. G.H. Twelftree and J.D.G. Dunn, "Demon Possession," 22.
81. G.H. Twelftree, *Christ Triumphant*, [London:Hodder & Stoughton, 1985], 170.
82. J. Wilkinson, "The Case of the Epileptic Boy," *ExpTim* 79 [1967-8], 42; cp. C. Brown, *Miracles*, 265.
83. B.D. Chilton, "Exorcism and History:Mark 1:21-28," *Gospel Perspectives* VI, 260f.
84. H. Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark*, [London:Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1976], 91.
85. See also Philo, *Deus Imm*, 138.
86. J.D.M Derrett, *Law in the New Testament*, [London:Longman & Todd, 1970], 241.
87. *PGM* VIII.6-7, 13, "I know you Hermes..."
PGM IV.3019, "I adjure you by the God of the Hebrews"
88. G.H. Twelftree, "ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια," 374-5.
89. H. Räisänen, *The Messianic Secret in Mark's Gospel*, [Edinburgh:T&T Clark, 1990], 169f.
90. H. Räisänen, *The Messianic Secret*, 170.
91. *PGM* IX.9; XXXVI.164; see S. Eitrem, *Some Notes on the Demonology in the New Testament*, [Oslo: A.W.Brogger, 1950], 30-1.
92. M. Smith, *Jesus the Magician*, 95.
93. H.B. Bietenhard, "ὄνομα," *TDNT* V, 250; cp. T.Sol.2:1; 3:6; 4:3,4; 5:1; "I, Solomon, got up from my throne and saw the demon shuddering and trembling with fear. I said to him, Who are you? What is your name?" See also *PGM* V.247-303; IV.1017-1019.
94. R.C. Thompson, *The Devils*, II. Series on Fever Tablet: Plate ii.
 May the evil spirit [stand] aside,
 May the evil Demon [stand] aside,
 May the evil Genius [stand] aside,
 May the evil Ghost [stand] aside,
 May the evil Devil [stand] aside,
 May the kindly Spirit be present,
 May the kindly Guardian be present,
 May the kindly thought be present,
 That this man may become pure, become clean, become bright!
 Into the favouring hands of his god may this man [be commended]

95. Vol I. xlii-xliii; Tablet v.col.v,1.28.
 The Seven Evil Spirits
 Seven are they! Seven are they!
 Battening in Heaven seven are they!
 Bred in the depths of Ocean.
 Nor made female are they,
 But are as the roaming windblast.
 No wife have they, no son can they beget;
 Knowing neither mercy nor pity,
 They hearken not to prayer or supplication.
 They are as horses reared among the hills...

Tablet xvi.1.13.

Of the seven [the first is the South Wind....]
 The second is a dragon with mouth agape
 That none can [withstand];
 The third is a grim leopard
 That carrieth off children...
 The fourth is a terrible serpent....
 The fifth is a furious beast[?]
 After which no restraint....
 The sixth is a rampant....
 Which against god and king...
 The seventh is an evil windstorm
 Which

The seven are the Messengers of *Anu* the King,
 Bearing gloom from city to city,
 Tempests that furiously scour the heavens,
 Dense clouds that over the sky bring gloom,
 Rushing windgusts, casting darkness o'er the brightest day,
 Forcing their way with baneful windstorms.
 Mighty destroyer, the deluge of the storm - God,
 Stalking at the right hand of the Storm God.

R.C. Thompson, *The Devils*, Vol II.109; cp.19-21; Vol I.103, 119, 151; see also
 G.H. Twelftree, "ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια," 380.

96. C. Bonner, "Traces of Thaumaturgic Technique in the Miracles," *HThR* 20 [1927], 171-181; W.D. Knox, "Jewish Liturgical Exorcisms" *HThR* 31 [1938] 191-203; S. Eitrem, "Some Notes on the Demonology in the New Testament," *Symbolae Osloenses, Supplement* 20, [Oslo:1966], see also M.J. Geller, "Jesus' Theurgic Powers: Parallels in the Talmud and Incantation Bowls," *JJS* XXVIII no.2 [Autumn 1977], 141.

97. M. Smith, *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark*, [Cambridge:Mass., 1973]; idem. *The Secret Gospel*, [London: 1974]; *Jesus the Magician*, [San Francisco: 1981]; J.M. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic*; idem. "Exorcisms in the New Testament," *IDB* 312-314; D. Aune, "Magic in Early Christianity," *ANRW*, ed. by H.Temporini & W.Haase, [Berlin:Walter de Gruyter, 1980].

98. H. Chadwick, *Origen, Contra Celsum*, [Cambridge:Cambridge University Press, 1980]; E.V. Gallagher, *Divine Man or Magician? Celsum and Origen on Jesus*, [Chico:Scholars Press, 1982]; S. Benko, "Pagan Criticism of Christianity during the

first two Centuries A.D." *ANRW*, 11.23.2, 1085-1118.

99. G. Lampe, "Miracle and Early Christian Apologetic," *Miracles: Cambridge Studies in their Philosophy and History*, ed. by C.F.D. Moule, [London:Mowbrays, 1965], 213.

100. Arnobius: *Adv.Nat.* 1:44; "But it is agreed that Christ did all he did without any paraphernalia, without the observance of any ritual or formula but only through the power of his name, and as was proper, becoming, and worthy of a true god." see A. Fridrichsen, *The Problem of Miracle in Primitive Christianity*, [Minneapolis:Augsburg, 1972], 90.

101. Lactantius, *The Divine Institute* iv.15.9; in the series *The Fathers of the Church*, Vol 49, translated by Sister Mary Francis McDonald, OP. [Washington:The Catholic University of America Press, 1981].

102. N.L. Geisler, *Miracles and Modern Thought*, [Grand Rapids:Zondervan, 1982], 120-1.

103. Plato, *Laws* IX.933 A-D.

104. Hippocrates, *The Sacred Disease* II.1ff.

105. Pliny, *Nat Hist* XXXI.

106. M. Smith, *Clement of Alexandria*, 235.

107. *b Sanh* 43a; "He is going forth to be stoned because he has practised sorcery and enticed Israel to apostasy."

108. See also E. Bammel, "Christian Origins in Jewish Tradition," *NTS* 13 [1967], 317-335; W. Horbury, *The Trial of Jesus*, [Leiden:Brill, 1971] 1-7; E. Yamauchi, "Magic or Miracles," 151, fn.12.

109. C. Bonner, "The Technique of Exorcism," 39-49.

110. J.M. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic*, 142-3; 158.n.102; idem. "Exorcisms in the New Testament," 313.

111. J.M. Hull, "Exorcisms in the New Testament," 313.

112. Mk 1:24; the demons cry out, "I know who you are.." cp. *PGM* IV.1500, 2984f; VIII.13; "I know you, Hermes.."

113. Mk 1:24 "Holy One of God"; 3:11 "Son of God"; 5:7 "Son of the Most High God"; cp. *PGM* III.570ff "I invoke your Holy Name from every side ... *Iao Aoi Oai..*"

114. Mk 5:7 "I adjure you by God, do not torment me". cp. *PGM* XXXVI.189f "I conjure you, by the sleep releaser..."

115. Mk 1:25; 5:8; 9:25; cp. *PGM* IV.1243f "Come out, daimon, whoever you are and stay away from him"; *PGM* IV.1245; "Come out, daimon, since I bind you

with unbreakable adamantine fetters..."

116. J.M. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic*, 68.

117. PGM IV.3019f; "I adjure you by the God of the Hebrews, Jesus, *iaba, iae, Abraoh*"; PGM IV.1230f; "Hail God of Abraham; hail god of Isaac; hail God of Jacob; Jesus Chrestos,...."

118. J.M. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic*, 143.

119. E. Yamauchi, "Magic in the Biblical World," *TynBul* 34 [1983], 173; idem. "Magic or Miracle," 153, fn.49; E.N. Lane, "On Date of PGM IV" 27, places the *terminus post quem* of the PGM IV at 380AD.

120. M. Smith, *Jesus the Magician*, 81.

121. *Ibid.*, 92.

122. *Ibid.*, 130.

123. *Ibid.*, 85ff.

124. *Ibid.*, 107.

125. Sophocles, *Philoctetes*, [London:William Heinemann Ltd, 1939], 758ff.

126. E.g. deaf and dumb Mk 9:25; Lk 11:4. *Avdollent, Defixionum Tabellae*, [Paris: 1904]; 22:24; 26:15f; 29:14; as quoted in J.M. Smith, *Jesus the Magician*, 126.

127. M. Smith, *Jesus the Magician*, 127.

128. P.J. Achtemeier, "Review," *JBL* 93 [1974] 625-628; T.T. Bruce, *The Secret Gospel of Mark*, [London: Athlone, 1974]; R.P.C. Hanson, "Review," *JTS* 25[ns] [1974], 513-521; H.C. Kee, "Review," *JAAR* 43 [1975], 326-329; Q. Quesnell, "The Mar Saba Clementine: A Question of Evidence," *CBQ* 37 [1975] 48-67; Per Beskow, *Strange Tales about Jesus*, [Philadelphia:Fortress, 1983] ch.14. Sanders though he appreciates Smith's analysis disagrees with his conclusion. He writes "There is too much evidence in hand which inclines us to call him an eschatological prophet to permit us to dismiss it and allow our title for this type to be determined only by his miracles." E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 170.

129. H.C. Kee, *Miracle*, 288.

130. *Ibid.*, 211-2.

131. G. Vermes, *Jesus and the World of Judaism*, [London:SCM, 1983], 8ff; M.J. Borg, *Jesus A New Vision*, 28-32, 105.

132. G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, 42.

133. *Ibid.*, 203.

134. *b.Ber* 34b; *y.Ber* 9d.
135. G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, 74-5; M.J. Borg, *Jesus A New Vision*, 31.
136. I.M. Lazar "*Ma'i Aitu*" 163, errs in confining the term to demonic possession only.
137. R.M. Moyle, "Samoan Medicinal Incantations," 162, 176-7; R.J. Crawford, "Missionary Accounts of *fofō mo'omo'o*" *JPS* 86, no.4 [December 1977], 531-534. These illnesses are discussed more fully in chapter one.
138. The treatment of *mo'omo'o* by various traditional healers revealed a common pattern of technique used. Despite the different kinds of *mo'omo'o*, there was much agreement in the use of incantations for the removal of the supernatural cause. R. Moyle, "Samoan Medicinal Incantations," 163ff; cp. R.J. Crawford, "Missionary Accounts of *fofō mo'omo'o*," 531-534.
139. C. Macpherson, "Samoan Medicine," 2.
140. C. & L. Macpherson, *Samoan Medical Belief & Practice*, 96.
141. E.g. the dumb demoniac, Mt 9:32-34/Lk 11:14-15; the blind and dumb demoniac, Mt 12:22-24; and also the fever of Peter's mother-in-law, Lk 4:38-39.
142. Moyle recorded a few incantations associated with the treatment of the *fe'e* sickness. The incantation used by various healers all reflect the familiar desire and longing for the spirit-*fe'e* to leave its victim. It is significant that in order to stop the course of the *fe'e* sickness, the evil spirit causing it must be exorcised. R. M. Moyle, "Samoan Medicinal Incantations," 167,170,172; J.D. Freeman, "*O le Fale o le Fe'e*," *JPS* 53 [1944], 121-144; R.A. Goodman, "*Aitu* Beliefs," 463-4.
143. C. & L. Macpherson, *Samoan Medical Belief & Practice*, 97.
144. I.M. Lazar, "*Ma'i Aitu*," 175; cp. Mk 5:3ff; 9:18.
145. J. Williams, *SSJ*:1832; see also J.D. Freeman, "*Siovili* Cult," 191.
146. R.A. Goodman, "*Aitu* Beliefs," 467.
147. *Ibid.*, see also J. Williams, *SSJ*:1832, 20; R. Rose, *South Seas Magic*, [London: Robert Hale Ltd, 1959], 102ff.
148. I.M. Lazar, "*Ma'i Aitu*," 175.
149. R. Moyle, "Samoan Medicinal Incantations," 157; *lau susuga*, and *lau afioga* are reserved only for people of very high status and titles such as paramount chiefs and heads of families.
150. E.S.C. Handy, *Polynesian Religions*, 233; "The Native Culture in the Marquesas," *Bishop Mus Bull* 9 [1923], 269.
151. E.S.C. Handy, *Polynesian Religion*, 51.

152. *Ibid.*
153. E.E.V. Colcott, "Sickness, Ghosts, and Medicine in Tonga," *JPS* XXXII.138.
154. R.A. Goodman, "Aitu Beliefs," 468f.
155. *Ibid.*, 469; R. Rose, *South Seas Magic*, 100.
156. R.A. Goodman, "Aitu Beliefs," 469.
157. G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, 246; E.S.C. Handy, *Polynesian Religion*, 159.
158. J.B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, 70.
159. *taulaitu o aitu tau* - divine men who were consulted on all warlike occasions; *tausi aitu tau* - those who cared for the material objects associated with district war gods; *taulaitu o aiga* - those who summoned the aid of various gods; *taulaitu vavalu ma fai tui* - prophets and sorcerers; R. Moyle, "Samoa Medicinal Incantations," 156; J.B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, 37,42-43.
160. J. Garrett, *To Live Among the Stars*, 124.
161. A.C.P. Sims, "Demon Possession: Medical Perspective in a Western Culture," *Medicine and the Bible*, ed. by Bernard Palmer, [Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1986], 184f.
162. W.H. Trenthowan, "Exorcism: A Psychiatric Viewpoint," *JME* 2 [1976], 127-137.
163. K. Bediako, Duff Lectures, [unpublished] New College, University of Edinburgh, [1992].
164. St Justin the Martyr, *Apology* 1,46; see also J. Quasten, *Patrology*, Vol I, *The beginnings of Patristic Literature: From the Apostles Creed to Irenaeus*, [Westminster, Maryland: Christian Classics, Inc., 1986], 209-212.

CHAPTER FOUR

SIN AND SICKNESS

A. SIN AND SICKNESS IN THE GOSPELS

B. BREAKING OF TABOOS AND ILLNESS IN SAMOA.

1. Introduction

The miracles of Jesus do not exist in isolation. There are many threads linking them to other issues, for in a miraculous healing, the question of the relationship between sickness and sin immediately arises. Other related questions involve the relationship between forgiveness and healing, faith and healing, and healing and salvation.¹

The close relationship between sin and sickness is evident in the healing of the paralytic [Mk 2:1-12/Mt 9:1-8/Lk 5:17-26]. The three parallel accounts reveal that the healing of the paralysed man is closely associated with Jesus' utterance of forgiveness.² A possible parallel of the synoptic healing miracle in John's gospel is found in the healing of the paralysed man beside the pool [Jn 5:2-18]. Here again, Jesus' later encounter with the paralytic after the healing incident, is highlighted with these words of Jesus, "See, you are well! Sin no more that nothing worse befall you." The assumption that sin is the cause of the paralysis is to some extent implied in these healing incidences. The utterances of Jesus provided

the lynchpin between the physical condition of these men and their spiritual state of sin and separation from God.

In these healing miracles, Jesus is portrayed as one who believes that the physical disability and illness which affected men and women of his time were caused by their own sins and wrongdoings. On the other hand, other gospel narratives present views which contradict this interpretation. In Luke 13:2-3, Jesus insisted that the Galileans did not suffer their fate because they were greater sinners than others in Galilee, but that their sudden death challenged those still alive to repentance.³ Jesus' emphatic reply, "I tell you, No;" to the question, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered thus?" contradicted the retributive principle that he tended to uphold in the healing of the paralysed man. The same also can be said of Jesus in John 9:1-3 where he was again confronted with the same issue concerning the blind man. "Who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind?" Jesus' negative answer somewhat deflected the issue from that of causality to that of purpose. This alternative tradition in Luke and John which challenges the popular belief concerning the causation of sickness and misfortune, may well represent the genuine voice of the historical Jesus speaking out against popular belief of his time.

The apparently conflicting views in the gospels on the question of sin and sickness reflect the complication and enormous scope of the issue. The problem is not a new one for it represents a belief which is not only popular within different societies, but one which was in existence long before the time of Jesus. The writers of Job, the Babylonian *Ludlul* as well as of some of the psalms of protest were struggling with the same problem. The association of sickness and healing with the activities of deities and supernatural beings like demons and evil spirits in

various cultural setting and background, is very significant in the understanding of this problem. People who believe in the influence of these supernatural beings upon their physical and spiritual welfare would acknowledge that maintaining ethical and cultural values within their relationships with the spirit-world would guarantee their continuous health and well-being. Acts of disobedience and the breaking of cultural values and taboos however, could lead to sickness and physical misfortune from their own deities, spirits and ancestors.

This chapter is an attempt to understand the belief that sin could be a cause of sickness as it is portrayed and implied in the gospels. In doing this, I propose to make a comparison with the traditional Samoan belief in the causality of sickness and misfortune from the breaking of taboos. This will first involve a thorough discussion of the background of the belief before the New Testament period and its possible influence on the thinking of Jesus and his contemporaries. The retributive theory which implies that affliction and suffering often come as punishment for moral misdemeanour is a long standing belief among early societies. The doctrine of retribution is evident in the teaching of the Old Testament as well as of early Judaism. This idea was indeed present in the first century AD and no doubt had influenced Jewish thinking during the time of Jesus. In the context of Jesus' own healing miracles, emphasis is at least in part, focussed on Jesus' standpoint in relation to this belief. The connection of sin with sickness as it was understood among the early recipients of the gospel message may compare to some extent with similar ideas and concepts in the traditional and Christian Samoan understanding of sickness, health and well-being, and their relationships to the breaking of cultural, traditional and religious taboos.

2. Sin as a cause of sickness

The belief that sickness is a punishment which the spirits and deities can in their wrath inflict upon people is a popular one. Van der Loos points out that

Out of sheer anger, or because he feels himself offended by some negligence or the other on the part of men, the spirit brings down all kinds of diseases and disasters upon the heads of his victims.⁴

The belief that sickness is caused by the anger of the spirits who inflict punishment for offence committed against them, is very much related to a specific understanding of the world. The world-view of the time of Jesus endorsed an understanding that spirits and divine beings have significant influence on the daily lives and activities of people. We find in the gospels incidences where sickness and physical disability were believed to have been caused by evil spirits and demons. The contemporaries of Jesus acknowledged the presence of these spiritual forces in their world-order and the hold and influence they have over people. Jesus in his dealing with these sicknesses, physical afflictions and possessions, would acknowledge the forces behind them as real, though he himself indicated that he had the power to overcome them [Mk 3:23ff]. There is a significant element of confrontation in the gospels in the struggle between Jesus and Satan with his hordes of demons and evil spirits. Sickness was sometimes assigned to the malicious nature of the spirits, and sometimes, as a consequence of the victims' own sinful and immoral deeds which brought about divine retribution. Such understanding is representative of the apocalyptic world-view, where the world is portrayed as in a constant struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. This concept of a world with all its spiritual forces and deities that control and influence the lives and destiny of men and women, a world full of dynamic spiritual forces that either work for or against people, resembles to some extent an early Samoan concept of the world. Polynesian cosmogony originally depicted the universe as a

spiritual dynamism which manifested itself physically; behind and within all natural manifestation was life and spiritual force.⁵ All objective phenomena of nature had their origin in this dynamic spiritual reality. In the light of this reality, it is only fair to understand how a Polynesian mind works in relationship to the world and to all the supernatural forces in it. Following from this understanding of the world, Samoans would naturally see physical illness and misfortune as the result of psychic or spiritual causes or conditions rather than as simply physical. Severing one's relationship with the spiritual forces may lead to physical misfortune and illness, however, maintaining peace and good relationship with the spirits may lead to a good and prosperous life and well-being.

The taboo system in Samoa emerged as a logical outcome of a dualistic view of the world. In societies where the taboo system operates, life is seen inevitably as the sphere of influence of spiritual and divine forces. The *mana* which is an integral part of the value system, is supernatural and divine. This *mana* is present in all that the society holds as taboo. The force or power inherited would make certain individuals, objects, land and properties taboo, and these therefore are considered as sacred, prohibited and set apart. The taboo system provides a moral and spiritual constraint which sanctions the people's sphere of activities. Behavioural patterns and cultural values find their basis and validity in these taboos. The belief that sickness and well-being are closely associated with the relationships of people to the gods, supernatural spirits and beings, brings this crucial question of sickness and healing within the realm of morals and ethics as well as of cultural values and systems. If deities and spirits are influential in the course of one's health and well-being, then the relationship between the supernatural and the natural, be it moral, spiritual or cultural is significant. It is believed therefore that the responses of people to the spirit-world can be instrumental in

questions relating to their health and well-being.

3. Sin and sickness in the ancient world

Within early Babylonian religions, the natural protectors of human beings were their own patron gods and goddesses. L.W. King pointed out that when misfortune or sickness fell upon the people and they perceived that their patron deities were offended with them,

the people's first act was to hasten to the temple of their gods and goddesses and secure the services of a priest who might help them in regaining their favour.⁶

He also indicated that

if people were sore afflicted with disease, or were oppressed by their sense of guilt, they would sit or lie upon the ground and with bitter sighs and groans would declare their sin and pray for absolution.⁷

This understanding of sickness and well-being among the Babylonians is also implied in some of the incantations for healing and exorcisms from Babylonia recorded by R.C. Thompson.⁸

Casting a woeful fever upon his body,
A ban of evil hath settled on his body,
An evil disease on his body they have cast,
An evil plague hath settled on his body,
An evil venom on his body they have cast,
An evil curse hath settled on his body,
Evil and sin on his body they have cast.

In these incantations, a disease is identified as an evil or a sin which has been inflicted upon the human body. Pritchard alluded to a penitential hymn to a goddess named *Peak*. The psalm that Pritchard recorded was dedicated by a man of humble origin to this goddess who was also known as the "Lady of Heaven, the mistress of the two lands, or *Peak* of the West." This penitential hymn implied the motif of sin and wrongdoing as closely related to punishments inflicted by the goddess upon those who committed offence.⁹ Oepke points out that

Many Babylonian words for sin also have the sense of 'disease' or 'infirmity' [*assaku*] or are mentioned in the same breath as sickness and trouble [*ikkibu*=mysterium, taboo, ban]. The noun *killatu*, which derives from *kullulu* [to demean oneself before the cultus], corresponds in bilingual texts to the Sumerian *PA-GA*, to read *sigga=mihsu*, 'stroke', 'sickness', and more than the other words is linked with *mešû*, 'to forgive'.¹⁰

Following from this close correspondence of words for 'sin' and 'sickness' in the Babylonian language, Oepke is able to understand "why there is such frequent complaint at sickness in the Babylonian penitential psalms, and why this is often related to the confession of sins or assurance that no sin is known."¹¹ In these psalms therefore, one encounters the view that disease is the consequence of and a punishment for sin, or an assurance that no sin is known. Following from the evidence of the penitential psalms, Oepke claims that for the Babylonians, it was an established fact that all sufferings and diseases could be a consequence of sin.¹² This claim may indeed be true, although there could also be other alternatives which Oepke may have overlooked. For example, the sufferer may indeed be innocent and therefore sickness could be attributed to some other reasons than sin. It is also possible that the sick person is a sinner although the two problems may not necessarily be related. In such cases, both conditions need separate solutions, i.e. the person needs forgiveness as well as healing. However, in view of the belief that sickness can be caused by sin, it would be more likely to assume that forgiveness was necessary for healing.

The conclusion of Oepke that "even if sin and sickness here begin to part company as guilt and punishment, the concepts are still so closely connected that they are often used interchangeably"; though the conclusion would rightly serve to emphasize the importance of such a belief in early Babylonian traditions, however, it would be hard to assume that even within such a tradition, the causality of sickness was always attributed to sin and wrongdoing. In fact, the penitential psalms can be

understood as saying that either the sufferer was not aware of sin, or there must be some other reason behind one's sickness, disease and affliction.

Thompson presented a similar understanding of the Babylonians. He wrote that

the plagues which affected the body were portrayed as consequential of evil and sin, and in order to release a person from such affliction, the names of *Ea* and *Marduk*, two of the most powerful gods of the Assyrians were invoked to ensure recovery.¹³

Walter Beyerlin recorded an Akkadian invocation to *Ishtar* which was a petition by a worshipper for forgiveness. This petition is comparable with Old Testament penitential psalms [Pss 6,32,38,102,143] which all carry the notion that sickness could be a consequence of wrongdoing against the deities.¹⁴

The *Poem of the Righteous Sufferer - Ludlul Bēl Nēmeqi*¹⁵ which for a long time has been referred to as the Babylonian Job, dwells upon the theme that the righteous sufferer was unjustly stricken with a severe illness. The complaint of the sufferer for his unjust sickness and affliction points indirectly to the belief that sickness is a logical outcome of disobedience and sin, but health and prosperity the consequence of righteous deeds and faithful obedience. The poem resembles the story of Job where the sufferer complains that he has met the fate of the wrongdoer [ii.12-22], though he himself is innocent [ii.13-32]. Like Job, the writer is perplexed by the lack of justice in a world ruled by *Marduk* from whom justice is expected. How could *Marduk* allow the most devoted to suffer? The *Ludlul* is significant because it indicates a different tradition like that in the book of Job, which portrays sickness and suffering as not necessarily caused by sin.¹⁶ The author of the Babylonian *Ludlul* found no answer adequate to solve the mystery. All he can say is that, "though it be the Lord who had smitten, yet it is the Lord who will heal." Reference is also made to 'guilt', 'iniquity', and 'transgression', as

if they have some bearing upon the illness from which the sufferer is delivered.¹⁷

In primitive Oriental and Greek thinking, sickness was closely linked with the violation of taboo. These taboos were closely related to individual deities and spirits, as well as various rites, rituals and ethical behaviour associated with them. The violation of these taboos could lead to sickness and diseases inflicted by the gods and spirits for the offences committed. Sometimes, diseases are caused by demons who by their own malicious nature conveyed illness. Oepke indicates that "the Greeks attribute sickness to the wrath of the deity."¹⁸ Among the Greeks, Apollo was the god of healing, but in his wrath, this 'sun god' could also afflict people with serious diseases and plagues. In Homer's *Iliad*, Apollo the son of Zeus and Leto is said to have avenged the discourtesy done to Chrysus his priest by punishing with sickness and disease. When Chrysus was insolently dismissed by king Agamemnon, he entreated vengeance from Apollo who inflicted a deadly plague on the king's army, destroying his men.¹⁹ Often, physical affliction was regarded as a form of punishment sent by angry gods. In sickness, there might even be resort to unknown gods as may be seen from the reported sacrifice of Epimenides in Athens. Oepke wrote that

Epimenides is supposed to have fought a plague in Athens by letting loose black and white sheep on the Areopagus and sacrificing them τῷ προσήκοντι θεῷ where they lay.²⁰

The *Letter of Aristeas* ²¹ cites two instances, one of a historian Theopompus [378-300 BC] and the other of a poet Theodectes [375-334 BC] who are both said to have been afflicted with sickness because of their lack of respect of the sacred writings. Theopompus was stricken with mental derangement for more than thirty days because he was too rashly intending to introduce into his history some of the incidents from the *Book of the Law* which had been recently translated. It was only when he stopped that he recovered. Theodectes was afflicted with cataract of

the eyes when he intended to introduce into one of his plays something recorded in the *Book*, and it was only when he besought God's mercy that his sight was recovered.²²

The relationship of morality with sickness is also recognised in Plato's teaching. Oepke points out that for Plato, "the real suffering of the inward man is ignorance. Hence, it is equally necessary to heal both outward and inward sickness."²³ He goes on to say that for Plato,

Sickness is an analogy or figure of the inner corruption which causes failings and of the mischief to which this leads by immanent causality.²⁴

In Plato's writings, it is implied that it is evil which corrupts the souls of people; i.e. injustice, intemperance, cowardice and ignorance. These evils of the soul caused the diseases which wasted and reduced and annihilated the body.²⁵

In Greek traditions, healing was never purely a medical case, however, both religious and medical motifs were present in many healing activities. The gods were regarded as doctors of the physical body and saviours of souls.²⁶ This is true of the god Asklepios who was known as the god of healing. Various sanctuaries were built at Pergamum and Cos for the cults of these gods. In much later times, Asklepios is said by the Roman emperor Julian to have cured not only the body but also the soul, ἐπανορθοῦται ψυχὰς πλημμελῶς διακειμένας καὶ τὰ ὄματα ἀσθενῶς ἔχοντα.²⁷ Howard Kee refers to Asklepios as

an extraordinary endowed human being,..who in Greek traditions is both the progenitor of a hereditary clan of physicians, known as *Asklepiads*, and the god who comes to the aid of the sick when they visit his shrines, curing their diseases. .. *Asklepios* became, therefore, the god of both the physicians and patients.²⁸

The causality of illness and diseases among the Greeks was not confined to

religious and moral causes, however, there were also numerous afflictions attributed to natural causes, and the healing of injuries suffered through accidents and war. The Hippocratic tradition was portrayed as having a rationalistic approach to sickness and healing. The search for causality and diagnosis of illness points more to the biological functions of the body than to the supernatural, and it tries to see illness as a disruption of the natural balance of the body.²⁹ Hippocrates is given credit for founding the medical school at Cos. Pindar in *Pythian Ode* [iii.47-53] refers to Asklepios healing those who suffered from the forces of nature, or with their limbs wounded either by grey bronze or by a hurled stone, or with bodies wasting away with summer heat or winter's cold. Healers like Asklepios though known as a divine healer, yet at the same time, he was honored in medical places like Pergamum and Cos for his medical skills. Greek and Hellenistic medical traditions did not see disease and illness as having spiritual and supernatural causes only, however, they also developed a strong rational approach to healing motifs which pointed to organic and natural causes of illness and disease.³⁰

In a letter from Zoilus [a servant of the god *Seraphis*] to Apollonius, [an Egyptian minister of finance in Alexandria 258-257 BC], it reveals that the god *Seraphis* has sent sickness to Zoilus because he has paid insufficient attention to *Seraphis'* command to build a temple.³¹ The letter emphatically portrays the god who punishes the stubborn so terribly with sickness and who will reward obedience with health and long life. The *Vita Apollonii* states that near Tyana, there was a pool called *Asbama* which was dedicated to the god Zeus. The water had a healing effect on honest men, but oath-breakers were punished forthwith by all kinds of diseases.³² Rivers points out that in other ancient cultures like India, one can also find the idea of disease as a punishment for sin. These diseases were inflicted by the offended beings, including ghosts of ancestors and deities. The diseases were

believed to be punishment not only for the offences which they have committed in their present life, but also for the sins they had committed in their former existence. In Indian folk religion, disease is said to have been caused by offences committed to a minor god or spirit. Rivers also mentions that the Indian god *Rudra* is said to have fired disease bearing arrows at his victims.³³

4. The Old Testament

The close relationship of morality with illness is present in the teaching of the Old Testament. Here, sin and disobedience to God is associated with physical suffering, disease and illness. In Exodus 15:26, Yahweh is spoken of not only as the healer but also one who can inflict diseases upon people. He had power to inflict the disease of the Egyptians upon his own people if Israel chose to disobey him. He is believed by the Jews to be the source of all health and strength, and sickness and healing are considered to be within his power and concern [Deut 7:15]. The Deuteronomic principle clearly sums up this relationship; if the people keep his commandments and statutes, none of the diseases will come upon them. The Jews believed that there was indeed a moral framework within which God operated, and any sickness or misfortune that the Israelites had suffered from, was understood to be a consequences of their sin and acts of disobedience.

In some parts of the Old Testament we also encounter the idea that not only individual sins but also those performed collectively, are punished by God with disease and disaster.³⁴ There is throughout the Old Testament a steady insistence that the Israelites as a people and nation are in some form of covenant relationship with God. The solidarity of this covenant community meant that the action of any individual member carried with it the responsibility of either blessing or punishment

from God. As such, an Israelite can be held responsible as an individual or as a member of the community, even if not directly guilty personally.³⁵ Sickness and misfortune were seen as symptoms of sin and disobedience on the part of the Israelites as individuals or as members of the covenant community.³⁶ Cairns clearly sums up this Jewish understanding.

Diseases, premature death, poverty, famine, pestilence, national defeat, disaster, captivity, all the ills to which flesh is heir, are constantly described in the Old Testament as due to man's folly and sin. The Hebrew never accepts them as part of the unchangeable nature of things. He is persuaded that they have no permanent place in God's world, and that they ought not to be, and would not be if only men with all their hearts turned to God.³⁷

In Old Testament, life for an Israelite means a long, full, untroubled and prosperous life, which includes fruitfulness of the body, flock, soil and commerce, together with national safety. Yahweh is the living God the giver of life, and to enjoy good health and material prosperity is to walk with him in fulness of life. It therefore follows that the Israelites would interpret sickness in terms rather of Yahweh's disfavour, than of organic disorder.

The first of the healing stories in the Old Testament which indicates the relationship of human ailment with divine action in terms of sin is that of Abimelech in Genesis 20. By taking Sarah [Abraham's wife] as one of his concubines, the king had brought upon himself and his wives and servants divine punishment. It was only after Abimelech had reconciled himself to Abraham, and Sarah returned to her husband, that the king and his wives and servants were healed. This same story reappeared in a new form with the same emphasis on sin as the cause of Abimelech's misfortune in post-biblical Judaism [*Gen Apoc* 20:16-20].

In Deuteronomy 28:15ff, the writer speaks of curses which will be incurred upon

those who will not obey the voice of the Lord and follow all his commandments and statutes. As punishment for their disobedience, Yahweh will smite them "with consumption, and with fever, inflammation and fiery heat" [28:22], "with the boils of Egypt, and with the ulcers and the scurvy and the itch, of which they cannot be healed" [28:27]. The Lord will smite them "with madness and blindness and confusion of mind" [28:28]. In Numbers 2:4-9, healing is bound up with a test of the people's trust in Yahweh's decrees. For example, the serpents have bitten the people whereupon they confessed their sins. Miriam was stricken with leprosy for criticising Moses [Num 12:9-10]. In the healing of Naaman by Elisha [2Kgs 5:1ff], Naaman was cleansed of his leprosy, but because of the evil that Gehazi [Elisha's servant] had committed, Gehazi was cursed with the same leprosy that Naaman was previously inflicted. Saul through disobedience fell in disfavour of the Lord, and thus his mental sickness was ascribed to an "evil spirit from God" [1Sam 16:15]. His physical and mental deterioration was attributed to a punishment from God for his evil deeds and acts of disobedience. King Asa suffered a severe disease in his feet, and the chronicler commented that "yet in his disease he did not seek the Lord, but sought help from physicians" [2Chron 16:2]. The sickness of Hezekiah was attributed to moral failure [2Kgs 20:1-7; Is 38:1-21]. The implication is that his reign had deteriorated and fallen away from Yahweh, and therefore Isaiah was to convey the warning, "to set his house in order", otherwise sickness leading to death would come upon him. The warning that Hezekiah received led to his acts of repentance, pleading and praying the Lord for forgiveness. The Lord heard and healed him of his affliction. His recovery meant that the Lord had heard his plea and had forgiven him of his sins.

The idea of Yahweh as the one who forgives the sins of his people and heals their afflictions is a significant and powerful imagery in the Old Testament. The

chronicler witnessed to this nature of Yahweh when he wrote,

Yahweh spoke to Solomon saying, "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins and heal their land." [2Chron 7:14]

Similarly in Psalm 103:3, Yahweh is presented as the one "who forgives all your iniquity" and "who heals all your diseases", with the result that their lives are renewed. In Psalm 107:17-22, sickness and affliction are portrayed as the consequence of human sin. For example, in verse 17 it says, "Some were sick through their sinful ways, and because of their iniquities suffered affliction".

The penitential psalms in particular, concern themselves with the relationship between sin, sickness and suffering. Since the psalmist has infringed the divine commandments, he must undergo all kinds of sufferings, [Pss 6:2; 31:12; 32:3ff; 38:2-11; 39:10f; 41:4; 88:3,7; 107:17-20]. Psalms 38:1ff and 88:1ff portray the belief of the psalmist that physical distress is often the occasion of self-examination. The sufferer's suppression and concealment of his transgression prey on his strength until he finally admits his guilt and seeks God's forgiveness [Pss 32:3-5; 107:17-19]. The belief is that, Yahweh's forgiving consolation is an important step towards recovery. In the lament psalms, one finds that the idea of sin and moral failure as the cause of sickness and physical misfortune is present in the mind of the writer. In these psalms, the psalmist lodges a complaint in respect of his condition and argues for his innocence [Pss 5; 7; 17; 26]. His petition against the injustice committed to him implies this sin-sickness motif.

The complaint does not necessarily mean that the psalmist is innocent since he may have sinned although he had no knowledge of it. Or if he be right that he is innocent, then sickness could be the consequence of some other cause than sin.

The same can also be said of Job who was consistently accused by his friends of sinning; however, Job's repeated claims of innocence had finally brought recompense from God. Job's problem was that he could not understand the cause of his afflictions. By right, he should not have to go through his terrible sickness and suffering. However, because of his steadfast commitment and faithfulness to God, Job was rewarded in the end. His ordeal revealed that the strict framework of sickness and suffering as consequences of sin, disobedience and moral failure, may in fact be inadequate and limited in explaining all cases of illness and affliction that may overcome anyone.

J.A. Sanders in his book *Suffering as Divine Discipline in the Old Testament and Post Biblical Judaism* points to another way of understanding suffering in the Old Testament. Though he agrees that some would suffer as a form of punishment for sin committed, yet this motif alone could not fully explain all suffering and sickness in the Old Testament. He points out that some affliction could be interpreted as divine discipline. In such cases, suffering provides an opportunity for the person concerned to repent and be healed of the affliction. Sanders provides the criteria by which one can distinguish sickness and affliction as punishments from discipline.

It is only when punishment is interpreted as an opportunity to repent and is seen as evidence of God's goodness and love that it is called divine discipline.³⁸

This positive way of looking at suffering in the Old Testament provides an opportunity for the people concerned to re-examine what they have done in the past [Lam 3:40], to acknowledge and accept responsibility of what they have done wrong [Deut 30:1-3; Jer 31:18-19; 1Kgs 8:47], then to confess and repent of their sins [Ps 106:44; Jer 24:4-7; 29:12-13; cp. *b Arak* 5:9; *Sifre Deut* 32, *b Sanh* 101a, *Sir* 18:13-14, *b Shab* 33a]. Sanders also points to the positive element of the suffering servant in Isaiah 53. He indicates that "suffering can atone for sins

and effect forgiveness."³⁹ Sanders has rightly pointed out that sickness and physical suffering in the Old Testament, although they may be closely related to sin and moral failure, should not always be interpreted negatively as a form of punishment for sins committed. Sickness and suffering can be a form of discipline in order to bring out some goodness from those concerned. Not all sickness and physical affliction in the Old Testament can be explained by the retributive principle. This alternative tradition to the strict retributive dogma popular in the Old Testament, we find also in the gospels in the teaching of Jesus [Lk 13:1-5 and Jn 9:1-3].

The prophets, especially Jeremiah, use disease on a number of occasions as a figure of speech to give expression to the disastrous situation of the people of Israel as a result of their defection from God. The sinful state of the people is portrayed in terms of sickness and disease from which they are in need of healing. Even if the prophets did not directly ascribe the affliction of people to sin, yet the relationship of the two conditions were so closely identified that sickness and physical suffering as consequences of sin were inevitably implied [Is 1:5,6; Hos 5:13; Jer 14:17; 29:17; 30:12-15]. Israel's God is a holy God who wants his people to observe his laws and to live in accordance with his will [Lev.19:2]. From this follows the observation of Van der Loos that, "whosoever does God's will finds God's pleasure, and whoever does not do God's will experiences God's displeasure."⁴⁰

Van der Loos has rightly highlighted some significant aspects of the Old Testament in relation to sin and sickness as well as forgiveness and healing. He points out that

In the Old Testament, the idea of sin and sickness, forgiveness and healing

are inseparably bound up with one another. The same God who in His wrath punishes with disease and disaster when His commandments are broken, is the same God who forgives the sins and grants healing when man turns to Him in humility and repentance.⁴¹

It seems that Van der Loos is justified in concluding that "the concept of forgiveness and healing are closely interwoven in a number of texts to which both the translation 'healing' and that of 'forgiveness' could be applied."⁴²

5. Jewish Apocryphal and Apocalyptic Literature

The belief that sickness and physical suffering come because of sin is continued within post-biblical Judaism. In 2Maccabees 5:17, Antiochus is portrayed by the writer as an agent of God to inflict punishment upon sinful Jews. The writer believes that God disciplines his people with physical suffering because of their sins [2Macc 6:12-17], or that we suffer according to our own sins [2Macc 7:22-23]. This belief is also echoed in other writings of the period [Tob 13:2-9; Ecclus 16:10-12; Pss of Sol 16:11-15]. The belief similar to that we encounter in the Old Testament that suffering serves a positive cause, also finds support in some of the writings of post-biblical Judaism.⁴³ Sanders points out that "in *Erubin* 41b, we find the statement that afflictions atone for sins."⁴⁴ In other words, people would experience discipline because they have failed in their responses to God and have strayed from God's ways.

In the book of Ecclesiasticus, the religious context of healing is portrayed as having many features in common with the older traditions of healing. The writer has a great respect for the use of natural medicine and the medical profession; however, he still emphatically ascribes the element of healing as wholly dependent upon God. ["All natural medicines are God-given, and were revealed to physicians by God"

Ecclus 38:3.] He indicates that both the cause and remedy of an illness are revealed through a God-given insight, a kind of revelation which enables the physician to bring relief to the ailing.⁴⁵ In his writing, ben Sirach also portrays a close link between sin and sickness. He writes,

My son when you are sick do not be negligent, but pray to the Lord, and he will heal you. Give up your faults and direct your hands aright and cleanse your heart from sin. .. He who sins before his Maker, may he fall into the care of a physician. [Ecclus 38:9-11,15]

Wolff concludes that for the writer of Ecclesiasticus,

... it can be a punishment to fall into the hands of a doctor. God and the physician are therefore seen in conjunction with one another in curious and multifarious ways.⁴⁶

Healing for the writer of Ecclesiasticus is undoubtedly much more than what doctors can do. Although sickness may need the natural medicine as well as the doctor's skill [both understood by the writer to be divinely-given], yet there is still room for repentance and the cleansing of one's heart from sin in Ecclesiasticus' framework of healing. Wolff may have overstressed the view of sickness as the inevitable consequence of sin, when perhaps another alternative is also possible. That the writer of Ecclesiasticus gives credit to the use of natural medicine and the skill of doctors would undoubtedly imply that sickness may well have natural causes. Sickness needs healing, and the physician and the natural medicine are the right agents to deal with such problem. On the other hand, sin could also be the cause of an illness, and consequently, the need for repentance and the receiving of God's forgiveness is a necessary aspect of the healing process.

In the *Genesis Apocryphon* 20:16-29, the affliction of Pharaoh is attributed to his taking of Sarah, Abraham's wife as his mistress.⁴⁷ The story indicates that Pharaoh only recovered from his affliction when he had repented of his evil deed and Sarah duly returned to her legitimate husband. In a polemical context, the

common gospel theme of healing as closely related to the forgiveness of sins, though depicted as scandalizing scribes [Mk 2:6ff], as well as lawyers and Pharisees [Lk 5:17-26], finds near perfect support in the Qumran *Prayer of Nabonidus*. In the Markan account, the paralysed man is forgiven first before Jesus healed him. It can be argued from the text that forgiveness is an integral component of the healing of the paralysed man. If these two concepts [forgiveness and healing] are not identical, they are still so closely related in the story that one would find it difficult to dismiss forgiveness as an unnecessary component in the healing of the paralysed man. Jesus had initially forgiven the sins of the paralysed man and what logically followed was that his physical condition was restored. A similar process is also found in the *Prayer of Nabonidus*, where the forgiveness of sins was instrumental of the cure. The healing is interesting because it was closely related to a demonic exorcism. However, what is important here is the connection of the expulsion of the demon with the grant of forgiveness of sins. The absolution from guilt and sin appears to have been part and parcel of the charismatic style, and this is well illustrated by the *Prayer* which depicts a Jewish exorcist as having pardoned the Babylonian king's sins, thus curing him of his seven year illness.⁴⁸

Philo referred to the close connection between sin offering and healing when he wrote, "the sin offering is for the healing of trespasses which the soul has committed" [*Spec Laws* 1.197]. Philo was speaking figuratively of healing here [θεροπαεία] as referring to forgiveness of sins. Sin offering was meant to effect the forgiveness of sins and Philo was referring to three kinds of offerings;

the whole burnt offering having no other in view but God Himself alone whom it is good to honour, the other two having ourselves in view, the preservation offering .. and the sin offering for the healing of the trespasses which the soul committed [*Spec Laws* i.197].

Where there is a belief in a close relationship between the body and soul, it would be hard to separate what happens to our bodies from the state of our souls. Where sickness is believed to be the consequence of sin, such terms as sickness and healing could easily be understood as metaphors for sin and forgiveness. This may also be the case with Philo who in *Therapeutae* wrote of the Essenes of whose cures concern not only the body but also the soul. He wrote of the "souls oppressed with grievous and well-nigh incurable diseases, inflicted by the pleasures and desires and griefs and fears, by acts of covetousness, folly and injustice and the countless host of other passions and vices."⁴⁹

In the *Testament of Gad*, the writer attributed the disease of the liver which he suffered to sin.⁵⁰ In the apocryphal writing the *Paraleipomena of Jeremiah*, figs were used for the healing of the sick, and the prophet is reported to have continued to teach the sick to abstain from the pollution of the gentiles of Babylon. The connection of pollution with sickness implies that the sickness of the people may have been caused by their acts of idolatry.⁵¹ The condition of paralysis was regarded as divine punishment upon tyrants and the destroyers of God's people. One of these tyrants during the Maccabean period was *Alcimus* who commanded that the wall and the inner court of the sanctuary be pulled down. He is said to have been stricken with a palsy so that he could no longer speak nor give orders concerning the destruction of the temple [1Macc 9:55]. Another was Ptolemy who was punished for "insolence and effrontery, tossing him to and fro like a reed on the wind until he fell impotent to the ground, with his limbs paralysed and unable to speak, completely overpowered by a righteous judgement" [3Macc 2:22]. Heliodorus, who had gone to Jerusalem on the orders of the Syrian king Seleucus to demand the temple treasures is said to have been sorely afflicted and struck blind in the treasury [2Macc 3:22ff]. Josephus indicates that king

Uzziah was afflicted with leprosy because he wanted to act as a priest [*Antiq* ix, x.4]. He also reports that when Herod attempted to remove treasures from the tombs of David and Solomon, his servants were consumed by flames of fire from the tomb [*Antiq* xvi, vii.1].

6. Rabbinic Judaism

In rabbinic literature, the system of retribution was maintained unabridged and was elaborated.⁵² The idea that the sins of the parents could be 'visited' on their children is contained in the decalogue [Exod 20:5; Deut 5:9]. The notion that parental guilt was often punished through their children was widespread in the ancient world, and this was developed particularly within Judaism.⁵³ The *Jerusalem Targum on Deuteronomy* 21:20 bids parents who bring a rebellious boy to the elders to say,

We had transgressed the decree of the Lord; therefore was born to us this son, who is presumptuous and disorderly; he will not hear our word, but is a glutton and a drunkard.⁵⁴

Such idea is representative of the Old Testament view of man. The Hebrews understand people in their complex relationships with their families and kin, their environment and more importantly with their God. The cause therefore of one's misfortune and physical illness and malady would not necessarily be oneself or one's own sins. It could be regarded as the influence of parents, or family, or kin, or the community. The disciples of Jesus voiced this belief when they asked, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" This view has been modified by Jeremiah and also Ezekiel. Jeremiah and Ezekiel emphasized specifically an individual in his/her relationship with God [Jer 31:29f; Eze 33:7ff]. No longer should the children suffer from the guilt of their own parents, "but every one shall die for his own sin; each man who eats sour grapes, his teeth shall

be set on edge."

In the *Babylonian Talmud* and indeed earlier in the *Mishnah*, there are many references which show that this belief was popular and very significant in the Jewish understanding of health and sickness within the first few centuries AD. In *b Shab 32a*, it is stated that

If one falls sick and his life is in danger, he is told, Make a confession, for all who are sentenced to death, Make confession.

Our Rabbis taught: For three sins, women die in childbirth:

[i]. Aha said, As punishment for washing their children's napkins on the Sabbath;

[ii] because they call the holy ark a chest;

[iii] because they call a synagogue *beth-'am* house of the people.

For the sins of unfulfilled vows of the parents, their children would die young. It is also taught that as a punishment for continuous hatred, strife will multiply in a man's house, and his wife will miscarry, and his sons and daughters will die young [*b Shab 32b*]. The popular belief was that there was no suffering without guilt and no death without sin. Rabbi Ammi said, "There is no death without sin" [*b Shab 55a*]. Rabbi Oshaia indicated that

He who devotes himself to sin, wounds and bruises break out over him, as it is said, Stripes and wounds are for him that devoteth himself to evil [Prov.xx.30]. Moreover, he is punished by dropsy [*b Shab 33a*].

Rabbi Alexandri said in the name of Rabbi Hiyya b Abba,

A sick man does not recover from his sickness until all his sins are forgiven him, as it is written, Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases [*b Ned 41a*].⁵⁵

Rabbi Kahana fell sick so the Rabbis sent Rabbi Joshua son of Rabbi Idi instructing him, "Go and find out what is wrong with him" implying that it was a punishment [*b Pes 3b*]. In the *Shemoneh Esreh* or *Amidah*, the prayer of forgiveness precedes the prayer of healing.⁵⁶ Thus in the *Amidah*, the relationship between repentance and healing is indicated. This relationship is understandable especially in the light of the many references in the Old Testament where sickness

is seen as a consequence of sin and disobedience to Yahweh. Rabbinical literature sometimes ~~attributed~~ a particular fault or transgression to each sickness, and to each fault a punishment. Dropsy was a sign of sin, jaundice a sign of causeless hatred, croup or diphtheria was a sign of slander or the neglect of tithes [*b Shab* 33ab], the cause of leprosy was closely associated with sin and blasphemy [Num 12:9; *IQH* 1:32; *b Shab* 97a; *b Shebu* 29],⁵⁷ ulcers were due to immorality and licentiousness, epilepsy and physical handicaps of children were the punishment of marital infidelity [*b Pes* 112b].⁵⁸ Leprosy was regarded as a divine punishment for serious sins,⁵⁹ and it was among the worst evils to afflict anyone, a living death [*b Ned* 64b]. Because of its nature as a punishment for sins committed, leprosy therefore lacked atonement [*b Shab* 132a; *b Pes* 18b, 59a], and the cure of leprosy would require sin offering, guilt offering and a whole offering [*b Ned* 36a; *b Neg* 147a]. Even the concealment of the symptoms of leprosy was regarded as a serious transgression [*b Shab* 94b]. Lachs notes that leprosy was considered a punishment for slander, "one of the most reprehensible sins in Rabbinical circles."⁶⁰ Nolland suggests that "the uncleanness of leprosy is a potentially powerful image for human defilement in sin."⁶¹ Leprosy was identified as a plague, and therefore anything that a leper comes into contact with would also become unclean [*b Neg* 13.11]. Purification and atonement would involve sin and guilt offering [*b Neg* 14.7a], an indication of the belief that leprosy was indeed a punishment for one's sins and acts of disobedience.

From all the evidence given, it is right to say that Jewish and Rabbinical thinking before, during, and immediately after Jesus' time recognised this relationship of sin as a cause of or as closely related with sickness and physical affliction, and indeed healing as being connected with forgiveness. Sickness sometimes can be caused by an evil spirit, which Jews may believe to have been sent by God as a punishment

for sin.

However, this moral framework does not exhaust all causes of sickness and disease in Judaism. Many illnesses were attributed to natural causes and healing comes through the use of natural remedies and medicines. Josephus refers to medical practices of the Essenes which not only have religious and supernatural causalities and remedies [*IQapGen*, *4Qpr Nab*] but also natural causes which can be treated by the use of herbal medicine and natural items with medicinal potential, similar to Hellenistic healing practices [*Antiq* 8.44, 136]. The fragment from Qumran Cave 4 [*4Q Therapeia*] gives clear evidence of the community's knowledge of Hellenistic medicine, and perhaps even the presence of a kind of health officer who treated both members of the community and visitors. There can be no doubt of a wide knowledge of medicine among the Jews of first century Palestine, that medical perspectives on sickness and health had even penetrated isolated communities like the Essenes. The same also may be said of rabbinical medical practices. Although sickness was very much associated with religious and supernatural causalities, however, there was also a significant medical and organic approach to sickness and healing in rabbinical literature. For example, the sickness of the bowels which priests often suffered from, was attributed to their walking barefeet, and a poor diet of just meat and water [*Shek v Mishnah 1*]. There is also reference to the purchase of medicines by Eleazar for the cure of bowels [*Shek v Mishnah 2*]. Indigestion a common problem with the poor was attributed to a change of diet from their weekly dry bread to meat and expensive food during Sabbath and festival days [*b Baba Bathra* 146a]. Rabbi Judah points to radishes as good remedy for fever, and beet for cold shivers [*b Abod Zarah* 28b]. The rabbis also refer to a health diet as having curative effects such as cabbage, beets and a decoction of dry *sisin* - a medicinal herb [*b Abod Zarah* 29a]. However, despite

the natural and medical approach to illness and healing, the moral and religious framework still remained a significant motif in healing and wholeness in later Judaism.

7. New Testament

i. The Healing of the Paralysed Man

In the New Testament, the close connection between sin and sickness was manifestly still popular among Jesus' contemporaries. In the story of the healing of the paralytic [Mk 2:1-12/Mt 9:1-8/Lk 5:17-26]; it is open to question whether Jesus here implied that the man's paralysis was due to some special sin [Jn 5:14; cp. Lk 13:1-5; Jn 9:2f], or that he simply thought of the man as sharing universal human sinfulness. Marshall points out that

The thought of the time is certainly not free from associating sin with punishment and illness, and nothing is done here to change that impression; on the contrary, Jesus' action would suggest that the sin which caused illness needs to be dealt with before the cure would proceed.⁶²

The implication of Jesus' encounter with the paralysed man is that he recognises an organic connection between sin and sickness, though perhaps not in the sense that the man suffers in exact proportion to whatever sin he may have committed.⁶³ The sick man is not unusually sinful, but his case makes universal separation of man from God clearly visible, and thus it illustrates the popular belief which is proclaimed frequently in the Old Testament that all sufferings and diseases are well rooted in man's separation from God [Ex 15:16; Deut 28:15-28; 1Sam 16:14-15]. Here, it seems that Jesus is treating the man's plight not as a mere physical illness, but as the symptom of a deeper and more serious problem, his sinfulness. Jesus would understand sin as the power which holds man in bondage, and

therefore, he offers the paralysed man God's gift of the remission of sins. In other words, both healing and the forgiveness of sins may not necessarily be two separate things, the one inward and spiritual, the other outward and physical, and both aspects are necessary for a true and holistic remedy of the sick man. Guelich points out that "healing the sick and forgiving the sinner represent a single issue" in the healing of the paralysed man.⁶⁴ This may indeed be an argument for the unity of this miracle story. As already been indicated, there is a self-evident connection between sin and sickness in the minds of contemporary Jews [Jn 5:14; 9:2; cp. Ps.103:3], and therefore it is not surprising that Jesus simultaneously grants forgiveness of sins and healing to the paralysed man. There is really only one single action, but on two levels, spiritual and physical. Guelich again points out that healing the sick and forgiving the sinner correspond to the prophetic hope for the age of salvation. Therefore it would logically follow that in the pronouncement of forgiveness upon the paralysed man, Jesus has made explicit the fundamental character of his healing ministry.⁶⁵ Jesus' healing is therefore "not limited to the symptomatic treatment of the illness, but it represents the wholeness of the new age [Mt 11:3-5/Lk 7:18-23; also Lk 4:18-21]."⁶⁶ Healing and the remission of sins, as well as the expulsion of evil spirits, may all therefore be understood as integral parts of Jesus' message of the kingdom of God. Fuller indicates that "the forgiveness of sins is the total gift of salvation of which physical healing is a part."⁶⁷ Would this mean that forgiveness of sins is the whole, and healing is only part of it? Perhaps Fuller has overstressed this very aspect of Jesus' message of salvation. The kingdom of God in the teaching and ministry of Jesus encompassed all the same, the spiritual, moral and physical welfare of God's people. His concern was for the holistic well-being of everyone, and this involves not only the physical and social but also the spiritual dimensions of one's life. Healing and exorcism like the forgiveness of sins, are all parts of Jesus' message of

salvation. In his ministry, he endorses the close connection of these various aspects of his message, and therefore he sees the hope of the paralysed man of complete healing only through the forgiveness of his sins, an act of God's grace which is God's prerogative alone [Mk 2:7].⁶⁸

In the healing of the paralytic, the relationship between forgiveness and healing comes clearly to the fore; the forgiveness of guilt is followed forthwith by healing. The reference to forgiveness at a point where one would expect the word of healing is abrupt [Mk 2:5; Mt 9:2; Lk 5:20]. The inference seems justified that Jesus traced the man's plight to sin, and he believed that the man's spiritual restoration was indeed a primary and indispensable condition of his full recovery. To assume that Mark 2:5b is a gloss is strongly contested by Pesch who rightly points out that there is no strong basis for its re-assertion if it is secondary.⁶⁹ Some would suggest that Jesus by no means believed that sin was the sole cause of affliction and calamity, but he could not fail to observe how closely mental, spiritual and physical conditions are connected.⁷⁰

Pedersen has rightly pointed out some profound and striking things about the intimate relationship between soul and body in the eyes of the Israelites about the calamity of man in his totality. It is sin that sometimes makes the soul and body sick. Pedersen wrote,

Bodily suffering cannot be something isolated. It is the soul that suffers, being dissolved, powerless, devoid of vitality, and power to keep upright.⁷¹

Pedersen is quite right in emphasizing the close relationship of our physical body with other aspects of our humanity. This is true of the Jewish understanding of people and true also of many different cultures. Sickness can be caused by a combination of many factors, and not just physical or organic. A human being is

a composite entity of body, mind and soul, and the well-being of all these various components is significant in maintaining the welfare of an individual. The causality of sickness and physical disability may have religious, spiritual, moral, cultural, psychological and social implications which are closely related to a person's belief system, cultural setting and background. In a religious community where sin is believed to be the cause of illness, the sick person can only become healthy and well when the breach caused by sin is restored and his/her sin forgiven. In the healing of the paralytic, we witness this joint occurrence of forgiveness and healing, this complete recovery of both soul and body as a redemptive deed by Jesus. Marshall rightly points this out when he writes, "partial salvation is not what Jesus wishes to bestow here."⁷² Guelich states this same thought in no unclear terms when he points out that

The declaration [of forgiveness] makes clear Jesus' concern to bring wholeness to the person not just healing of a physical infirmity. Thus, Jesus' teaching of the sick corresponds to his fellowship with sinners, and the expression of God's forgiveness is congruent with healing of the body.⁷³

So in other words, Jesus might not wish to perform physical healings which could become incomplete ends in themselves, and thus fail to be seen as symbolic parts of a greater whole. Healing and forgiveness are both part and parcel of his message of salvation,⁷⁴ and any hope of an holistic cure can only come when both the spiritual and physical ailments are remedied.

The question about the authority of Jesus to forgive sins is a significant issue in this healing miracle. The controversy seems to capture the attention of many scholars and commentators. The Markan account bears witness to the question of the authority of Jesus to forgive sins. The problem raised in Mark 2:7 implies that the forgiveness of sins was exclusively God's prerogative [cp. Ex 34:6-7; Is 43:25; 44:22]. The question no doubt reflects the contemporary Jewish perception

that the forgiveness of sins was God's sole right.⁷⁵ That Jesus put himself in the place of God by forgiving sins has often been suggested.⁷⁶ Sanders argues that Jesus did not claim to usurp God's place by indicating that the passive form used ἀφίενται, implies that Jesus was speaking for God and not claiming to be God.⁷⁷ Other passages also use the same passive form and would similarly imply God as the source of forgiveness [Mk 3:28; 4:12; Jn 20:23]; and Jesus as agent on behalf of God [Lk 7:49]. The accusation of the scribes [Mk 2:6; Mt 9:3] and Pharisees [Lk 5:21], does not really correspond to Jesus' utterance, yet it has led many scholars to think that the problem was Jesus' assuming the authority of God. Sanders suggests that on the contrary, the controversy was not about Jesus granting God's forgiveness, since this implied no unique claim made by Jesus. In fact, to proclaim God's forgiveness was not an act of blasphemy. We read of the prophet Nathan who pronounced God's forgiveness upon king David when he repented of his sin against Bathsheba [2Sam 12:13]. Sanders indicates that "we have no reason to think that the Pharisees thought that the priests could not announce forgiveness on God's behalf."⁷⁸ In the *Prayer of Nabonidus*, we can see that the Dead Sea Community thought that exorcists could forgive sins. Vermes writes,

It is worth noting that although the devil, sin, and sickness are logically combined in the Qumran picture, the story is told elliptically. The narrator mentions the king's illness without referring to its cause; and the exorcist is credited, not with the expulsion of a demon, but with the remission of the sufferer's sins.⁷⁹

It seems therefore, that the right to speak for God is not denied, and it would be highly unlikely that such claim could lead to an accusation of blasphemy. What then is the cause of the strong feeling against Jesus when he pronounced God's forgiveness upon the paralysed man? The problem as Sanders suggests is probably that Jesus was usurping the function of the priesthood. He writes,

If Jesus claimed to know whose sins were forgiven, he might have been seen

as arrogating to himself the prerogative of the priesthood. He would have been seen in any case as claiming to be spokesman for God, and that would have been resisted by those who were not convinced. It goes too far, however, to say that Jesus, in claiming to speak for God, was guilty of blasphemy.⁸⁰

Guelich has rightly points out that

One of the strongest arguments against the integrity of Mark 2:1-12 lies in the difference between the pronouncement of forgiveness in 2:5 expressed in the divine mode and the implicit charge in 2:7 which becomes explicit in 2:10, that Jesus claimed for himself the right to forgive.⁸¹

The controversy about the authority of Jesus to forgive sins is indeed a significant issue here. It seems that the original unity of the episode is somehow threatened by the controversy. After dealing with all the arguments relating to the unity of the episode, René Latourelle still thinks that "it is probable that the story of the healing originally existed as an autonomous, internally coherent unit."⁸² However, despite the fact that the solution may be inconclusive, this does not mean that the sick man could not have been perceived by Jesus nor by his own disciples and contemporaries as a sinner. The evangelist's association of the two issues, if not two different episodes [healing and forgiveness], can only point to the fact that such connection between sin and sickness was very much alive in the minds of Jesus' contemporaries. We have noted the close association of sin and sickness in Jewish thought, so the sick and the sinner would naturally correspond.

Fitzmyer sees the conflation of the miracle story on healing with the pronouncement story on forgiveness, as reflecting a common Palestinian conviction about the relation of sin and suffering inherited from the Old Testament.⁸³ The ministry of Jesus as understood by the early church and also by Mark represents this connection. Jesus is portrayed as a healer and also at the same time, a friend of the sinners [Mk 2:15-17]. John 5 and 9 also indicate the close relationship between sickness and sin, and therefore it would be understandable that such

connection between forgiveness and healing should be found within one single healing miracle.

Caird suggests that Jesus' utterance to the paralysed man does not necessarily mean that all illness is caused by sin, but rather that Jesus has in this case diagnosed the illness as 'psycho-somatic', and that "where illness is caused by sin, a cure is proof of forgiveness."⁸⁴ Caird has rightly acknowledged the limitation of this incident as the model by which all contemporary sickness be viewed, at the same time pointing out the close connection between one's physical and spiritual welfare. Leaney has also indicated a similar concern when he writes,

It is important to observe that no theory that all disease is due to sin is necessarily implied; what is implied is that a man cannot find healing from God without forgiveness preceding it.⁸⁵

These views rightly portray the understanding of the time that although sin and sickness do interrelate, this interrelation does not fully explain all cases of sickness and affliction. However, in incidents where sin is believed to be the cause behind the sickness, it is important in the healing process that some form of forgiveness or absolving of guilt be done, otherwise true and holistic healing, which is what Jesus had achieved in his healing ministry may not be possible. The pronouncement of forgiveness on a patient who is overburdened with guilt and sin is undoubtedly therapeutic. It is therefore important to understand Jesus' healing of the paralysed man within this contemporary framework, especially when sin was thought to be the cause of an illness.

Various interpretations are given on Jesus' utterance "Your sins are forgiven." Ellis points out three ways of dealing with it.

- i. Jesus is making a connection between the paralytic's sickness and his sins.

- ii. He assumes the popular view of such connection; e.g. John 9:2f.
- iii. He affirms the generic although not necessarily personal relationship between sin and sickness and thereby points to the true significance of his healing.⁸⁶

Ellis' interpretation is valid in the light of the popular understanding in the Old Testament and early Judaism of the close connection of sin to sickness and suffering. However, I would be reluctant to put more emphasis on the generic and be as dismissive of the personal relationship between sin and sickness as Ellis tends to imply. It is true that our fallen state is weak, and that there is a close connection between our fallen humanity and things that afflict us. However, it would be difficult at the same time to undermine our own individual responsibility and moral accountability with some of the illness and physical mishaps that affect us and those around us. Some sickness and suffering may also be due to the fault and wrongdoing of other people. This is not only true of early understanding of illness but very much so of life today. Many doctors would confirm that quite a number of patients in hospitals are there because of their own fault or because of the failure of others. Very often sickness and accidents that affect us and our children are the direct results of our own irresponsible acts and unethical living. Such immoral and irresponsible acts may not necessarily be understood as sin and sickness in various contexts, however they constitute a similar framework in which the sin-sickness motif belongs. The case of the paralysed man and Jesus' response implies not only a generic connection, but more the personal and moral accountability of the sick man or his own kin to his present affliction.

It is to be noted that the true significance of Jesus' healing miracles can never be separated from his proclamation of the kingdom of God. His miracles imply that the evil power of Satan is overthrown. An individual is freed from the bondage of sin, sickness, meaninglessness, death and judgement. It may be true that the

restoration of physical health is not the primary aspect of salvation, but it cannot be denied that it is indeed an integral part of it. The preaching of the gospel and the healing of the sick are not to be considered as two separate and unrelated items, however, they must be understood as two different aspects of the same thing. The healing of the people of their ailments is indeed God's kingdom come with salvation and with power. The essential combination of healing and preaching which is at the heart of Jesus' ministry is continued in the mission of his disciples [Mk 6:7-13; Mt 9:35-10:23; Lk 9:1-6; 10:1-20]. In the charge to his disciples, preaching and healing are combined. Jesus' healing miracles are often the occasion where his teaching and preaching take place. They are not simply independent units but are always set within the context of his teaching and preaching ministry. The healing miracles of Jesus must therefore be set in their corporate and representative setting. What is most promising in Jesus' healing, is the relationship between body and spirit in the cause and cure of sickness. This indeed is holistic healing, and a person's wholeness would include above all, one's relationship with God as well as other members of the community.

Vermes writes,

In the somewhat elastic, but extraordinary perceptive religious terminology of Jesus and the spiritual men of his age, 'to heal', 'to expel demons' and 'to forgive sins' were interchangeable synonyms.⁸⁷

It seems that Vermes may be over-emphasizing the relationship between healing and forgiveness in the ministry of Jesus. In the healing of the paralytic, the two though integrally united, cannot be equated as synonymous. Healing and forgiveness which are united in the case of the paralysed man are integral aspects of one whole, which is God's kingdom and God's salvation which Jesus claims to bring forth. Jesus is a teacher and a physician of both the body and soul. Healing the sick and exorcising spirits and demons earned him a place in that

stream of Judaism inherited from prophets such as Elijah and Elisha.⁸⁸ Following the Old Testament belief of sickness, disability and misfortune as possible consequences of sin and wrongdoing, Jesus performed his healing miracles in the manner that portrayed not only his power to heal but also his prerogative to save through the forgiveness of sin. The healing of the paralysed man is therefore no mere display of healing or miraculous power, but rather a sign of the coming of the kingdom of God. Just as exorcisms and the defeat of the evil spirits were generally regarded as signs of the coming of the kingdom of God [Mt 12:28; Lk 11:20], so was the forgiveness of sin in apocalyptic Judaism regarded as one of the promises of the eschaton.⁸⁹ Fuller points out that the "remission of sins is definitely messianic."⁹⁰ Jesus is represented here as one who already in his lifetime, and as exalted son of man of the early church, has remitted sins in anticipation of the final remission of sin at the day of judgement.⁹¹ Fuller therefore concludes that Jesus' miracles are acts by which he makes available in advance the blessings of the age to come.⁹² Fuller's argument rests on the assumption that the 'son of man' is an apocalyptic title. This assumption may be true for the evangelist Mark, but unlikely for Jesus who may have used the title simply to mean 'man' generally.⁹³

As it is unrealistic to try and separate healing from the forgiveness of sin in the case of the paralytic, it would likewise be difficult to sever sin from its relationship to illness and physical disability. Jesus first promises forgiveness to the sick man [Mk 2:5]; it is later on after the intervention of the scribes that he performs the miracle.⁹⁴

Both sin and sickness are the signs and symbols of the kingdom of evil. They are to be put down to the account of Satan and the demons [1QS iii.20-24]. The

healing of the body would only be half a victory without the healing of the soul; indeed, measured by eschatological standards, the latter is more important and an act peculiar to God himself.⁹⁵ The insight is that

There is indeed a close and age-old connection between man's fallen estate and everything that afflicts, with the further implication that God's will is for man's wholeness or completeness in every aspect of his being.⁹⁶

It is indeed a fact that often it is through one's own sinful acts and irresponsible behaviour that bring sickness, suffering, misfortune and destruction upon himself and sometimes upon those around him. It is a reality that although sickness may often be due to natural causes which are beyond one's control, it is however also often the case that suffering and illness are the consequences of one's own sinful and irresponsible actions. In the gospels, it is portrayed that God's will is that every person should be liberated from these forms of evil. So in Jesus' acts of the remission of sins and the healing of the paralysed man, he was undoubtedly acting on God's behalf. As Betz puts it,

Both his actions made it clear that the warrant to heal can indeed be the proof of the right to forgive sins.⁹⁷

ii. The healing of the paralysed man in John 5

Irenaeus in his writing *Adversus haereses* indicates that from John 5:14, Jesus signified that disease emanated from the sin of disobedience.⁹⁸ This understanding of John 5:14 by Irenaeus clearly sums up the general assumption concerning the cause of the man's 38 years of paralysis. This assumption is indeed not unfounded, since the popular understanding of the time tends to ascribe illness and disease to moral responsibility of individuals and sometimes of their kin. Guelich sees John 5:14 as representing a similar perspective to that of Mark 2:5 in

their common association of sin with sickness and consequently, that of forgiveness to healing. Although the belief is rarely presented directly in the gospels apart from these two references and John 9, however, their presence points to the fact that "healing the sick and forgiving the sinner represent a single issue after all."⁹⁹

The healing of the paralysed man by Jesus in John 5 has no explicit mention of any forgiveness of sins nor of any indication that the former sins were the cause of the paralysis. Despite the fact that paralysis was sometimes ascribed to sin in Jewish and rabbinical circles, yet in the actual healing incident there is no mention of such possibility. It is only in the second encounter of Jesus with the healed man that a warning is issued against sinning. The words may reflect the synoptic story of Mark 2:5 where healing is the proof of divine forgiveness. This is uncertain however, since we have no proof whether the version of the story that John had in his source contained this feature or not. Lindars would rather see it as a bit of John's editorial work based upon the "conventional connection between sin and sickness."¹⁰⁰

Some would be surprised at the mention of sin by the evangelist as a possible cause of the paralysis, especially since nothing has as yet been said about sin here, by contrast to the synoptic account of the healing of the paralytic. Furthermore, in John 9:3 Jesus has denied or at least questioned any connection between the blindness and sin, whether of the man himself or of his parents. Schnackenburg however, attempts to draw a connection between healing and forgiveness here by appealing to verse 17 "My Father is working still, and I am working." He writes, "the will of the Father that the man should be forgiven also obliges the Son to work."¹⁰¹ But Beasley-Murray's paraphrasing of μηκέτι ἁμάρτανε, "do not continue sinning any longer" could imply that the man's illness was connected with

his former sinful ways.¹⁰² This would indeed be possible especially in the light of the traditional understanding of sin as the cause of the paralysis. However, μηκέτι ἁμάρτανε could also be read, "you may not sin from now on"¹⁰³ where the emphasis is not on the sins but on the future. In this sense, the emphasis will be on the final judgement, and it could be interpreted as showing that the moral condition of the man from then on determines his state in the future judgement. The saying implies that if the man would continue to sin, then something worse will happen to him in the eschatological future. This way of reading John 5:14 may be compatible with Luke 13:5 where the same problem of suffering relating to the moral condition of the victim is highlighted. The emphasis in Luke 13:5, "Unless you repent you will all likewise follow" could therefore be taken as a warning about the consequences in the future if they failed to repent, rather than as a reflection upon the past and present condition of the Galileans. If the second reading of John 5:14 is to be preferred, then the connection of the paralysis of the man with his former sins would therefore be undermined, and likewise also any connection of healing with forgiveness. However, the mere fact that the saying about sin occurs within the context of the healing miracle makes that reading unlikely, especially in the light of the popular view that sins committed already can be the cause of illness [cp. Jn 9 & Lk 13]. If the disability in this specific case is not a consequence of any personal sins of the paralysed man, it could still not discount the popular and ancient belief in a close and an age-old connection between our fallen humanity and things that afflict us. This would be true especially in the light of Jesus' own ministry in the Synoptic Gospels, where he tends to portray sickness and physical sufferings as part of the whole sinful realm of Satan, which he himself throughout his ministry consistently countered. Jesus' saying in 5:14, which may be interpreted as a warning to the man not to sin any more so that nothing worse may happen to him, could also imply that the present

paralysis of the man may only be a minor effect of his past condition of sin. But to continue in that state of affairs, would undoubtedly bring upon himself even worse consequences in the future. Either way of interpreting John 5:14 would not remove the implication that the paralysis that the man had suffered may well have been the consequence of either his fallen humanity or of his own past sins. Therefore Jesus' utterance "Sin no more, that nothing worse befall you" contains not only a warning for the sick man on how he should live in view of the future, but also an emphatic command to make a complete break from his past existence in sin. The paralysis is only a minor consequence of his sinful past when compared to what would happen in the future if he continues in it. If sin is the consequence of the paralysis as may be the case here, then, Jesus' healing miracle is much more than simply physical remedy. The cure of the paralysed man must have included above all the forgiveness of his sins, otherwise, his healing would have not been complete.

iii. The healing of the leper

In the healing of the leper [Mk 1:40-45], the biblical assumption that a disease is evidence of sinfulness is present, perhaps to some extent indirectly. A leper is declared unclean and an outcast, not by civil but by religious law [Mk 1:44]. An unclean person is deprived of various religious and social rights normal for a healthy human being, e.g. the person is only allowed as far as the precincts of the temple; the afflicted would lack atonement; the leper's condition is regarded as a plague which could contaminate and defile others; and social contacts and access to public places are very much limited since such presence and contact could cause defilement to objects and people.

Sanders indicates that uncleanness is not necessarily to be equated with sin.¹⁰⁴ For example, in the Old Testament and early Judaism, there are many prohibitions related to purity, such as corpse uncleanness [Num 19], menstruation, intercourse and childbirth [Lev 12:1-8; 15:16-24], and Sanders has rightly pointed out that uncleanness from such unavoidable and natural circumstances cannot necessarily be identified as sin. He writes,

People in a state of impurity according to these and similar laws - the laws which were presumably accepted by all - were not sinners, nor had they done anything which made them inappropriate companions for 'table fellowship'.¹⁰⁵

The same also applied to rules about eating or touching unclean objects and creatures [Lev 11; cp. *Antiq* iii.259f]. Those who violated such purity laws according to Sanders, are not to be regarded as sinners since their impurity can be removed by the "washing and the setting of the sun" [Lev 11:28].¹⁰⁶ Although it is true that uncleanness is not necessarily to be identified with sin, yet there are obviously some forms of uncleanness within early Judaism that can be identified as an act of sin. Perhaps some forms of uncleanness that come from deliberate acts of disobedience to the code of purity can be classified as sin. Even Sanders has to admit to some cases of uncleanness which could be identified as sinful. He writes,

There are a few prohibitions which involve the transgressor in sins, such as the eating of certain fats or blood. For these, the penalty is 'cutting off' [Lev.7:22-27]. In the later Rabbinical interpretation, 'cutting off' puts the transgression strictly between human and God, and it is atoned for by repentance. The same penalty is prescribed for those who, while impure, eat sacrificial food [Lev 7:20f].¹⁰⁷

The contact of a clean and an unclean person does not necessarily result in uncleanness or sin, although such contact may be discouraged to avoid its spreading. However, uncleanness that comes through sexual contact of a clean person with an unclean partner could lead to both partners being 'cut off', a penalty which implies transgression [Lev 20:18], and in rabbinical Judaism requires

'sin offering' [*Niddah* 2:2].

The uncleanness which resulted from leprosy has a strong connection with sin since leprosy alone was thought of as a consequence of sin. Leprosy in the Old Testament and early rabbinical Judaism was considered a punishment for sin [Num 12:9-12; 2Kgs 5:27; *b Shab* 132a; *b Pes* 18b,59a; *b Ned* 36a; *b Neg* 147a].¹⁰⁸ 'Leprosy' in the Old Testament and also in the New Testament refers to a variety of skin diseases which is known as *sara'at*. The fact that leprosy was closely associated with sin, uncleanness and the state of defilement, made the sufferer a social and a religious outcast. The uncleanness of leprosy 'cuts off' the afflicted from their relationship with the community and especially with God, and such situation of separation implies transgression. Leprosy was considered as among the worst evils to afflict one, a living death whose healing was equivalent to being raised from the dead [2Kgs 5:7]. Jesus' severe attitude to the leper [ὀργισθεὶς] may well have been intended to represent divine anger against sin or against the domination of the present age by evil.¹⁰⁹ In the healing of the ten lepers [Lk 17:11-19], the Samaritan who returned to give praise to Jesus is portrayed as receiving more than the nine who did not return. He not only received physical healing from Jesus and the confirmation of being cleansed from the priest, but he was also assured of spiritual wholeness and salvation. Otherwise, what more would he had that the other nine did not get? Jesus' utterance ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε would no doubt include spiritual cleansing and the forgiveness of his sins which would be integral to his salvation.

iv. The woman with a haemorrhage

Another healing incident which is of significance in the sin-sickness dichotomy is

that of the woman with an issue of blood [Mk 5:25-34; Lk 8:43-48]. Kee mentions a case dealt with by Rufus in his *Journals* which has close resemblance with the woman who has the flow of blood. Rufus speaks of a woman who had paralysis similar to the case in Mark 2:3ff, and her condition is complicated by bleeding from the uterus which resembles that of the woman with a haemorrhage in Mark 5 and Luke 8. Kee points out that

Rufus diagnosed her condition as 'a hot, dry δυσκρασία', resulting from her having eaten too much dry, warming food.¹¹⁰

The remedy that Rufus recommended included the use of a salve of deer fat, styrax, oil and wax to apply to the neck. Further use of wax salve made with rose oil, honey and bee wax, with a diet of fish, turnips and butter eventually led to the woman's recovery. Despite the initial similarity of the symptoms of these two cases, one recorded by Rufus and the other by Mark and Luke, the remedy indicated by Rufus shows the difference in their respective understanding of the bleeding-sickness. Rufus portrays the condition of the woman as simply a physical affliction which could be relieved by the application of natural remedy and a special healthy diet. On the other hand, the sickness of the woman in Mark implies that the flow of blood was far more than a physical problem, especially when none of the physicians had been able to cure her during that long period of 12 years. Her condition probably suggested uncleanness, which may imply transgression as well as her separation from social and religious participation.

The healing of the woman with the flow of blood is sandwiched within the story of the healing of Jairus' daughter [Mk 5:21-43]. These two miracles have been suggested to have come as a unit from a pre-Markan complex of miracle stories which was available to Mark.¹¹¹ The Lucan version, apart from a few changes, was directly taken from Mark. Whether these two miracles had existed in the

tradition independently or in the form that we find in Mark, has been the target of much discussion and controversy between New Testament scholars. Achtemeier argues that it was the evangelist who inserted the story of the woman with the flow of blood within the healing of Jairus' daughter because of the typical Markan 'sandwiching' technique.¹¹² Others would like to think that Mark had found the combination of the two miracles already within his pre-Markan source.¹¹³ Any suggestion of the two miracles being remoulded by the evangelist into one continuous story has been questioned because of the difference in compositional styles between the two healing stories. Fitzmyer has rightly pointed out that

The two stories also betray different compositional styles: the historical present, short sentences, and few participles characterize the Marcan story of the raising of Jairus' daughter, whereas the Marcan form of the other story has the more usual aorist and imperfect tenses, participles, and longer sentences.¹¹⁴

Guelich states the same point when he indicates that the three verses [Mk 5:25-27], "graphically describe the woman's plight with a series of seven participles in a pattern untypical of Mark's style."¹¹⁵ It is more likely therefore, that the healing of Jairus' daughter and that of the woman with a flow of blood do belong to the group of miracles which is being ascribed to a pre-Markan source.

This pre-Markan tradition portrays the bleeding of the woman as more than simply a physical malfunction of the body. The sickness reality of the woman's bleeding within Jewish circles may have certain social, religious and moral implications. It could imply uncleanness or defilement and may even be understood as transgression. Guelich has rightly described her condition when he wrote,

This woman was not only defiled, she defiled anything and anyone she touched. Her illness had left her personally, socially and spiritually cut off.¹¹⁶

The illness reality of the woman undoubtedly goes beyond her physical discomfort, and therefore any realistic diagnosis and remedy of such cases must fall within a

wider framework in order that a true and a more holistic form of healing be achieved.

It is important to remember that women in early societies were considered ceremonially unclean during their menstruation period. The flow of blood was considered unclean and in some cases, sinful in Jewish and rabbinical circles.¹¹⁷ In Leviticus 15, various stipulations are given to reinforce the belief that women with the flow of blood were considered unclean and impure. Even more serious were women with a continuous flow of blood beyond their period of confinement. These women are said to be continuously unclean [15:25ff] until their bleeding ceases and the consequent rituals of cleansing are fulfilled. Their contact with people and objects could render them unclean. However, once a woman's bleeding had ceased, she must on the eighth day take two turtle doves or two young pigeons to the priest, and the priest would offer on her behalf a 'sin offering' and a 'burnt offering' for her atonement. The inclusion of 'sin offering' implies that a woman with a continuous flow of blood was probably considered not only unclean but also sinful. This would be very much in line with the understanding in Jewish and early rabbinical circles that uncleanness can sometimes bear the notion of moral defilement and impurity.

Guelich has rightly pointed out that in the case of the woman with the flow of blood in Mark,

Though unspecified, her problem has been associated by implication with a ritually defiling bleeding [Lev 12:1-8; 15:19-30]. Leviticus 15:25 [LXX] describes such a condition with similar terms ῥέη ῥύσει αἵματος; cp. οὔσα ἐν ῥύσει.¹¹⁸

Therefore it seems more likely that the coming of the woman to Jesus for cure represents her not only as one who has a physical ailment, but as an unclean

woman, a sinner who comes to him with 'fear and trembling' seeking cure and salvation. Jesus' word of assurance [Mk 5:34; Lk 8:48] goes beyond the physical remedy of her bleeding. The sick woman, who most likely believes that she is also a sinner, has been offered more than the termination of her bleeding, in fact, her spiritual and social condition are simultaneously restored. This is no exception to the other episodes in the ministry of Jesus where the sick and the sinner are often identified as the target of his concern [Mk 2:17; Lk 7:36-50], and therefore, the forgiveness of sins becomes a necessary aspect in the restoration of a person back to health and to wholeness [Mk 2:5; Lk 7:46-48]. This connection between healing and salvation is indeed a characteristic feature of the healing traditions in the gospels. Richardson indicates the same idea when he wrote, "miracles of healing are as it were, symbolic demonstrations of God's forgiveness."¹¹⁹

v. The use of μάστιξ and σώζειν

The use of such term as μάστιξ meaning a 'whip', 'scourge' and 'plague' to describe sickness and diseases that Jesus healed [Mk 3:10; 5:29,34; Lk 7:21], helps perpetuate the notion that suffering and scourging were sometimes punishments for sin.¹²⁰ The word μάστιξ, μάστιγος, ἡ means 'scourge', 'whip' or 'lash'. It is often used literally in its plural form to mean 'lashing or lashes'.¹²¹ Figuratively, μάστιξ means 'torment and sufferings [sent by God to men]'.¹²² It is often used of 'bodily illness' [Mk 3:10; 5:29, 34; Lk 7:21], and sometimes 'of the afflictions of the sinner' [*IClement* 22:8; cp. Ps 31:10; *Shepherd of Herma:Vision* 4,2,6]. The use of μάστιξ in relation to physical sickness bears the implication of torment, of suffering and affliction inflicted by God either as a form of punishment for sin [Jer 5:3; *Judith* 8:27], or for the purpose of discipline [Heb 12:6; *IClement* 56:4]. This implication is not far removed from contemporary Jewish and early

rabbinical understanding of sickness and diseases as sometimes punishments sent by God for sin and disobedience. Sickness therefore which is described by the Greek terms μάστιξ, μάστιγος, μαστιγώω, and μαστίζω can be interpreted as a form of scourging, punishment and suffering sent by God for sin.

Significant also is the notion of healing and saving which is present in the terminology of σώζειν. The meaning of σώζειν is somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, it simply means "to preserve or rescue from natural danger and afflictions," and this includes saving or freeing from diseases,¹²³ from demonic possessions [Mt 9:22a; Mk 5:34; 10:52; Lk 8:48; 17:19; 18:42], and in the passive form, "to be restored to health or get well."¹²⁴ However on the other hand, it can also mean 'to save' in the technical, biblical and religious sense, [i.e. of sin and death, or in a positive sense of bringing Messianic salvation or bring to salvation"].¹²⁵ The passive form implies the state of 'being saved' or 'attaining salvation' [Mt 10:22; 19:25; 24:13; Mk 10:26; 13:13; 16:16; Lk 8:12; 18:26; Jn 5:34; 10:9]. It indicates the state of salvation as an act of God and Christ.¹²⁶ In the Synoptic Gospels, σώζειν is often used with references to the healing of the sick. In Jesus' healing miracles, σώζειν occurs 16 times and διάσωζειν twice. In the context of Jesus' healing miracles σώζειν never refers to a single member of the body, but always to the whole person, and it is especially significant in view of the important phrase ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε.¹²⁷

A saying in Mark 2:17 clearly brings out this connection which Jesus himself perceived between his own healing ministry and his ministry of redemption.

Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.¹²⁸

The saying reflects a close parallel between 'those who are sick' and the 'sinners'.

This saying has some parallels in Greek¹²⁹ although this does not necessarily mean that the saying has its origin in a Hellenistic community. However, the utterance itself corresponds significantly with Jesus' ministry where the sick and the sinful are part and parcel of his ministry. In this instance, sickness is used as a metaphor for sinfulness. It is not equated with sin but the two are seen as in some way comparable. Healing and forgiveness are integral components of Jesus' ministry of healing and salvation. Sin and sickness cannot be too far apart in Jesus' mind.

The belief in the close connection of sickness to sin and wrongdoing was very much a reality among Jesus' contemporaries. His disciples were no exception when they asked whose sins caused the blindness of the man in John 9:2. Jesus' healing of the paralytic implies the possible effect of sin upon the physical and mental condition of a person. In fact, Jesus' healing of the man not only points to the importance of physical remedy but also to the spiritual welfare of the sufferer. Such could be said to be the nature of his healing miracles. They involve not only the remedy of physical ailments, but also the cure of the mental and spiritual condition. Jesus offers the forgiveness of sins and physical remedy to the paralysed man. His concern may be understood as providing a more holistic cure, caring not only for the body but also for the mind, and spirit. To save [σώζειν] in some healing contexts therefore can be interpreted not only as physical remedy but also as redemption. The concern goes beyond dealing with a specific part of the body that is affected to include the concern for the whole person, i.e. the social, spiritual and physical welfare. Jesus' act of healing helps to relieve the afflicted of the spiritual problem which may indeed be the cause of the illness.

vi. The healing of the blind man in John 9

John 9:2-3 again reveals this age-old interest in the connection between sin and sickness. The question presented to Jesus by his disciples, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" clearly points to the belief that sin could be a cause of sickness and physical misfortune that affect people. Granted the common Jewish view of sickness as a punishment for sin, why then should a man be born blind? The rabbis would have no difficulty in dealing with this question, for such a case could be ascribed to parental guilt [Ex 20:5; Deut 5:9 in spite of Eze 18:20], or it might be due to ante-natal sin committed by the mother during her pregnancy.¹³⁰ It is also possible that the warning given by Jesus to the healed man in John 5:14 reflects this same concept of retribution which attributes the sickness to sin.

This established belief concerning the close relationship between sin and sickness has been challenged by Jesus in two separate incidents, Luke 13:1-5 and John 9:2-3. In both these passages, Jesus questioned the rigid dogma of retribution, a popular belief in the Old Testament, Jewish apocryphal and apocalyptic literature, and rabbinical Judaism, and one which had also influenced the beliefs of the early Christians. This questioning might even go so far as to reject the existing dogma. The conflict between the teaching of Jesus and popular Jewish tradition is not uncommon in the gospels. The Synoptic Gospels speak of Jesus' numerous confrontations with Jewish authorities over various controversial issues such as the Sabbath [Mk3:1-6; Lk 13:10-17; 14:1-6], Jesus' attitude to the Law, and his authority to forgive sins [Mk 2:5-11]. These differences which became the cause of much hostility against Jesus from some Jewish sectarian groups, arose from the differences of interpretation or their understanding of scripture and of the various traditions of the Jews. The gospels portray Jesus as a non-conformist, refuting and denying some of the significant Jewish traditions and rabbinical interpretations of

scripture. In a similar fashion, Jesus in Luke 13:1-5 and John 9:2-3 questioned the validity of the popular dogma concerning sin and retribution. The survival of these two incidences contrary to popular belief within the gospel traditions may suggest a reliable source. Its controversial nature in relation to the widely accepted belief of his contemporaries may point to its historicity, as it would be difficult to attribute such belief to Jesus unless he himself had said so. Perhaps here we are witnessing a genuine tradition which may go back to the historical Jesus, a tradition which countered the retributive dogma as a rigid framework whereby all suffering, calamity and all sickness be understood.

Various suggestions have been made concerning the source or sources of the miracle story in John 9. It has been indicated that John was using a tradition which had a clear link with the synoptic passages, though he probably took it from an independent source.¹³¹ Critics differ on how to account for the elements of the dialogue. Beasley-Murray suggests that the dialogue in vv.2-3 is likely to be a feature of the original story and is wholly characteristic of the teaching of Jesus [cp. Lk 13:1-5].¹³² Schnackenburg points out that the conversation between Jesus and his disciples is essentially Johannine in style; the only parts which might conceivably have been part of a piece of pre-Johannine tradition, are the opening question from the disciples and Jesus' negative reply.¹³³ However, Fortna suggests an alternative. He points to vv.1,6-8 as pre-Johannine and vv.2-5 which present the issue as the Johannine redaction.¹³⁴ He thinks that this analysis would be in line with the understanding that "miracles are not events important in themselves, but only as they display theological truths."¹³⁵ Fortna attributes this view to the signs' gospel which was reasserted by the fourth evangelist. He argues that here in the healing of the man born blind, the issue of the relationship between sin and sickness provides the context whereby a theological truth is presented, and the truth

is that the condition of the blind man was for the manifestation of the work of God. This would be in line with the suggestion of Dodd that the brief dialogue 9:2-5 is inserted in the story as a 'pointer to the meaning'.¹³⁶ Those who opposed v.3 as pre-Johannine could also argue that the verse was inserted to undercut in advance the argument of the opponents which came later in verse 34. In other words, v.3 was inserted there in anticipation of the accusation made later to the sick man.

The presence of the issue of theodicy in the Fourth Gospel [vv.3-4] on the other hand, may well support its status as pre-Johannine. In fact, Dodd himself points out that although the inclusion of a dialogue in a healing narrative is in itself not unusual,¹³⁷ yet in no other healing miracle of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel do we find the question of speculative theology raised. Following from Dodd's assumption, it seems that the fourth evangelist nowhere else shows any interest in the problem of theodicy, a fact which could tell against the view that this little dialogue was the evangelist's own composition.¹³⁸ Again this argument can be countered by the suggestion that in John 5:14 the saying of Jesus may well point to the issue of theodicy, especially if his warning to the healed man is to be understood as implying that the paralysis was the consequence of his former sins.

Dodd's discussion of this passage implies that by the nature of the issue raised, the dialogue has close parallels with the synoptic tradition behind Luke 13:1-5 and also with the Markan healing of the paralytic [Mk 2:1-12]. He points out that the questioning by Jesus of the principle of retribution as the basis for moral judgement in Luke 13 and John 9 is also implied in the healing of the paralysed man. In Dodd's words,

Jesus corrects this [belief] by asserting his authority to forgive sin, and

confirming it by an act of healing, and this act is τὸ ἔργον τοῦ Θεοῦ [work of God].¹³⁹

Again, it would be difficult to associate John 9 and Luke 13 with Mark 2 especially in the light of the response of Jesus to these different situations. It may be true that the three incidents all imply the issue of sin and retribution, however, the granting of forgiveness to the paralysed man in Mark 2 as part and parcel of the healing process, points rather to the confirmation of the sin-sickness motif than to its denial.

John Bligh limits the insertion of the evangelist into the narrative to vv.4-5 which he thinks give the true interpretation of the story.¹⁴⁰ Haenchen agrees with Bligh, and regards the whole of chapter 9 as taken from a source to which the evangelist added vv.4-5 and vv.39-41; thereby changing the nature of the story from a demonstration that Jesus had come 'from God' [cp. 3:2; 20:30-31], to a sign of Jesus the 'light of the world' who has come for judgement.¹⁴¹ Painter agrees with Haenchen that the evangelist used a source as a basis of this chapter. The miracle story is contained in vv.1-7 except with vv.4-5, with vv.8-11 providing the proof of the miracle.¹⁴²

It would be difficult to dismiss vv.1-3 which present the problem of sin in relation to the blindness of the man and Jesus' response as redactional, especially in the light of the fact that Jesus' response shows a divergence from popular view about sin and its relationship to sickness. It would be highly unlikely for any genuine editor or writer to ascribe to Jesus something which may be questionable and controversial unless Jesus himself had done or said so. The original core therefore of the miracle story is more likely to be contained in vv.1-7 with vv.4-5 as redactional. It is also important to note that the dialogue in vv.2-3 is more likely

to be a feature of the original story especially as the theme itself and Jesus' response are characteristic of his teaching in other gospels [cp. Lk 13:1-5].

Although the controversy over the origin and composition of the narrative in John 9 may seem inconclusive, the issue of theodicy raised either in the pre-Johannine source or in John's own redaction, will still remain a significant issue, not only in the Fourth Gospel but also within Jesus' healing ministry. The questioning by Jesus of the popular and traditional dogma of retribution in John 9:2-3 still remains a valid and indeed a genuine response of the historical Jesus.¹⁴³ However, the task still remains of trying to interpret the view of Jesus here in relation to his whole ministry of healing not only in John but also in the Synoptic Gospels as well.

Beasley-Murray sees the denial of the accepted dogma by Jesus as fitting within the context of John's gospel.¹⁴⁴ He points out that in chapters 7 and 8, the rift between Jesus and the Pharisees has become radically deepened during the feast, and this conflict is further heightened by Jesus' questioning of this established dogma. Schnackenburg thinks that Jesus' answer has given a new breath of life to an oppressive question of the disciples, especially in the presence of a person who has suffered so much from the loss of his sight - a question which was very much influenced by an ancient, judgmental and negative way of dealing with someone's misfortune. The answer of the Johannine Jesus gives a fresh approach to the whole question of sin and sickness, which, while it does not banish all the darkness of suffering and sickness, does in the sign of this healing of a blind man, give hope in Jesus as the 'light of the world'.¹⁴⁵ Sanders and Mastin show that as in Luke 13:2-3, Jesus refused to discuss the cause of the man's affliction; instead, he directed the attention of the disciples to the opportunity which it afforded of showing forth the works of God.¹⁴⁶ Some, like Westcott and Marsh would see

Jesus' denial of the dogma in John 9:2-3, not in the sense of setting a general criterion by which all sickness and sufferings be viewed, but as a response which is specifically for this case.¹⁴⁷ As Westcott aptly puts it,

Jesus' answer refers only to this special case as in Luke 13 [cp. Acts 28:4]; and that only so far as it is an occasion for action and not a subject for speculation. Jesus was not concerned primarily with the causes, but rather with the remedying of that which is amiss and remediable.¹⁴⁸

In other words, Westcott implies that Jesus here was more concerned with purpose which may be discernible in the man's blindness than with the question of causality. The blindness when set alongside the work and purpose of God, proves profitable. Bultmann's comment on John 9:3 follows the same line. The saying cuts short the discussion of the question; yet what he says does not confute the Jewish position, nor does it suggest that there is another way of looking at such cases as suggested in Luke 13:2-5. For Bultmann, the saying of Jesus is concerned only with the particular case in question at the moment; the purpose of the blindness is that God's work should be manifested in him.¹⁴⁹

I think that focussing attention on the question of purpose indicated by vv.4-5 and dismissing the impact of the question of causality, means glossing over the problem which vv.2-3 states in no unclear terms. It is more realistic to recognise the questioning by Jesus of the cause of the blindness as an important issue [without undermining the purpose thereof which is probably Johannine redaction]. This is because such focus shows that Jesus' answer to the question of causality here is not a unique response to the problem presented. In fact, the questioning of the dogma represents an age-old understanding which goes back as far as the doctrine of retribution itself. There should be no embarrassment in Jesus' response which denies any direct connection of the blindness with sin. The questioning of the sin-sickness dichotomy goes hand in hand with the popular idea of sin and

retribution which was questioned earlier by the authors of the Babylonian *Ludlul*, the book of Job and also some of the psalms of protest. The miracle story presented in John is quite recognizable whereby the problem is presented in vv.1-3 and the healing described and confirmed in vv.6-11. Verse 12 seems to provide an editorial link between the story and the dialogue which follows from verse 13 onwards. Perhaps it is more likely that the fourth evangelist made use of a traditional miracle story which may indeed go back to the healing ministry of Jesus himself.

It seems from Jesus' response that he neither confirms nor denies any such connection between sin and blindness. Rather, he claims that the blindness was determined for reason of God's glorification v.3b. The emphasis therefore is not on sin, but on the redemptive purpose which underlies the man's condition.¹⁵⁰ Van der Loos indicates a similar interpretation when he points out that, "Jesus' reply does not contain a direct refutation of the belief, instead, it poses a third option which involves the shift of emphasis from the cause of suffering to the object and purpose thereof".¹⁵¹ Ridderbos sums this up in a few words, "not the judgement, but the glory of God in Grace" is designated as the significance of sufferings.¹⁵² Karl Barth suggests that the important point to be stressed here is "not that they are sinners but that they are sufferers."¹⁵³ Barth shows that the answer of Jesus reveals that the relation between sin and sickness must not be sought in an attempt to explain the causal connection for each case, but in the spiritual understanding of the will and intention of God in all suffering that overcome everyman.¹⁵⁴ In fact, not all suffering and punishment are consequences of sin, for there are punishments which are 'punishment of love'.¹⁵⁵ Therefore, disease and suffering cannot be generally equated with sin. They may be symptoms of sin and evil, and it may be noticed that in some occasions as in Mark 2:5 and

John 5:14, Jesus implies this connection between sin and evil with sickness and suffering. However, here in the case of the man born blind, Jesus showed another phase of suffering, a more positive value which transforms an oppressive dogma into that which manifests the glory of God's salvation which he had brought. This more positive view of understanding human suffering again follows directly from the Old Testament where suffering is seen not only as a form of divine discipline and consequent repentance and forgiveness, but also vicariously on behalf of others. Suffering can be for the purpose of God's redemption for his people.¹⁵⁶

vii. The fate of the Galileans [Luke 13:1-5].

The story of the murdered Galileans, the eighteen killed at Siloam, and the parable of the barren fig tree are to be found only in Luke, and may have been inherited by the evangelist from his 'L' source.¹⁵⁷ Bultmann regarded vv.1-5 as an apophthegm used to introduce the following parable, and claimed that the apophthegm was probably the creation of the early church.¹⁵⁸ Bultmann's dismissal of the passage as secondary was very much based upon what he thought was an apparent dependence on Josephus [*Antiq* xviii.60-62, 85-87].¹⁵⁹ However, despite his scepticism, scholars such as Jeremias, Blinzler and Taylor would regard this passage as authentic. Jeremias indicates that Luke 13:1-5 is the only passage which shows that Jesus preached the same message as John the Baptist; i.e. where Jesus called for repentance in view of the coming of the kingdom.¹⁶⁰ However, Sanders strongly opposes any such emphasis in Jesus' teaching, pointing out that any evidence on Jesus "which connects repentance to the nearness of the kingdom is, relatively speaking, slight."¹⁶¹ He identifies Luke 13:1-5 as one of "the only three substantial passages in which Jesus is depicted as calling for repentance on a wider scale."¹⁶² However, he was only too happy to dismiss it on the evidence given by

Bultmann that "it shows dependence on Josephus."¹⁶³ Blinzler indicates that the episode of Luke 13:1-5 can well be historical. He points to the fact that the incident was to be placed in Galilee which was the most likely place where such a report as in v.1 would have been brought to Jesus.¹⁶⁴ Fitzmyer agrees with Taylor that vv.1-5 form a pronouncement story¹⁶⁵ "with Jesus' questions and the punch-line repeated vv.3,5."¹⁶⁶

Although the question of the historicity of the incident recorded by Luke alone seems difficult to establish, yet Fitzmyer's analysis, if again inconclusive, seems the most helpful. In his discussion of Luke 13:1-5 in the light of Josephus, Fitzmyer rightly concludes that

there is no way of telling whether this episode is historical or the result of a Lucan confusion of it with some other incident in first-century Palestinian history. .. Luke's picture of Pilate in this episode is not contradicted by the brutal person depicted in Josephus' writings. However, it is hardly likely that the unexplained reference to the death of Galileans is a fabrication out of whole cloth.¹⁶⁷

Luke's record of this incident which is not mentioned anywhere else in the gospel traditions may imply an authentic episode in the ministry of Jesus. The fact that Jesus also questioned the popular teaching on sin and retribution in this same incident, may further help to confirm this assumption. Again, it would be unlikely that the evangelist or any other would ascribe to Jesus something which would be questionable unless Jesus himself had some claim to it.

The question of repentance in relation to punishment is implied in the words of Jesus, "unless you repent you will all likewise perish" [vv.3b,5b]. Was Jesus implying that these two incidents could have been avoided if the Galileans had repented of whatever sins they may have committed? The emphasis here seems to fall not so much on what had already happened but on the future. However at

the same time, it would be difficult to avoid the implication that Jesus' warning shows that repentance is important if one has to avoid the consequent punishment for their sins [cp. Ps 7:12-3; Jer 12:17]. The question of repentance within the framework of Jesus' healing miracles is relevant here. When Jesus met the paralysed man in John 5 for the second time, he warned him not to sin any more, otherwise something worse may happen to him. The warning carries the same message as of Luke 13:3b,5b. It prompted the healed man to a reformation of life. In other words, Jesus was asking the man that he should change direction and repent of his sins if he was to avoid judgement in the future. Sanders, who argues against the place of repentance in Jesus' teaching may be overstating his case as evidence shows that Jesus did stress repentance in his teaching here, and he also made it a condition for those who may wish to follow him [Mt 5:23-4].

It is uncertain whether these recorded events in Luke 13 had any political background. It seems however that Jesus was treating them from a religious point of view. It would be unlikely that Jesus was referring to any special sins that the Galileans may have committed, especially in the light of his own denial of the accusation that they were worse sinners than others. In fact, the Galileans may be just as sinful as anybody else. However, the statement itself would undoubtedly raise the age-old question of the relationship of sin to punishment. Despite Jesus' denial of any close relationship between the fate of the Galileans and their sins, however, the sayings would point directly to the importance of repentance if anyone wishes to avoid falling into a similar situation. Jesus' reluctance to connect the two within the context of the fate of the Galileans does not necessarily disqualify the dogma of retribution. Repentance, he warns, is important if one has to avoid future retribution. For Jesus, the moral responsibility is still significant within this episode. His responses imply the complexity of the issue which cannot be

contained within a simple framework of sin and retribution.

In this passage, Jesus asked whether the victims mentioned should be regarded as "sinners above all men". In general, the Pharisees believed that the calamity was a punishment for sin.¹⁶⁸ It could be argued therefore, that these men were greater sinners than other Galileans: *παρὰ πάντας* - beyond all the others. Marshall suggests that Jesus emphatic *οὐχί* vv.3,5 negates the belief outright.¹⁶⁹ Van der Loos points out that Jesus' *οὐχί* opposes the idea that the extent of sin and punishment can be measured by the extent of suffering. In fact what Jesus did, was to remove the problem of suffering from the personal sphere.¹⁷⁰ Jesus' response therefore to the repeated question in vv.3-4 may suggest that he was not at all concerned with the problem of causality [though he himself, would negate such understanding]. Fitzmyer writes,

He [Jesus] insists that those Galileans did not suffer that fate because they were greater sinners than others in Galilee; but their sudden death challenges those still alive to repentance, to a reformation of life [= an acceptance in faith of the saving word of God that he has come to announce].¹⁷¹

In other words, Jesus was more concerned in drawing out a moral from the fate of these Galileans than the question of causality. Fitzmyer thus pointed to a more positive purpose of the fate of the Galileans rather than dwelling on the question of their possible punishment for sins that they may have committed. In fact, it would be difficult to identify these two incidents as retribution for any special sin that they have committed. This would be in line with what Hoskyns had earlier said about the miracles of Jesus. He writes,

The attempt to attribute a special calamity to some special sinfulness is not merely inappropriate and useless speculation, but leads to a false interpretation of the miracles of Jesus and to a quite unjustifiable sense of security in those who suffer no extraordinary punishment.¹⁷²

The traditional belief which generalised all sufferings and all diseases as

consequences of sin is questioned by Jesus. The strict confinement of sickness, suffering and misfortune within the rigid framework of sin and punishment is here negated by Jesus' response to the fate of the Galileans. The extremity of the view which categorised all misfortune and labelled all sickness as the result of sin and moral failure is again being redefined by Jesus. It is not a new idea, but a reassertion of the lone voices from the Old Testament in the book of Job and some of the psalms of lamentation which were at the same time psalms of protest [22,26,27,38,51], the protest of the prophet Jeremiah [12:1ff] and the Babylonian *Ludlul*, for the whole cause of suffering could not be justly traced to the faults and moral misdemeanours of the victims, nor those of their families and kin. Jesus' voice re-echoed the theme of the vicarious suffering of the servant of Yahweh in Deutero-Isaiah and reasserted the problem of righteous suffering that the writer of the book of Job had to grapple with. For Jesus as also for Job, Deutero-Isaiah, Jeremiah, the psalmist and the author of the *Ludlul*, sickness, disease, suffering and misfortune, just cannot be confined within such a limited framework of belief as that of sin and retribution. For Jesus, diseases and sufferings fall within that framework and much more. And for that reason, they can never be confined or fully explained within such a rigid framework. Each case has to be viewed and explained on its own merits and in the light of its own situation.

In this incident and also that of the blind man in John 9, one may hear the original voice of the historical Jesus challenging the accepted norm and tradition of his time concerning sin and sickness, as he did on many other occasions throughout his ministry. His negative reply was a reminder to his own disciples and all those concerned of the complexity of the issue. Although Jesus recognised the connection between sin and sickness, yet he has made a break from this rigid mode of belief

and framework of understanding, and he set sickness, suffering and physical misfortune in a completely new light.

If sickness and suffering is judgement for the past sin, Jesus has offered another alternative, healing and forgiveness. The forgiveness and healing were Jesus' own spontaneous responses to the suffering and the sickness that he confronted, and perhaps not necessarily an outcome of any merit on the part of the victim nor of his family. Neither could it be written down wholly as a consequence of the victim's own faith. Richardson writes,

The Gospel miracles are not examples of faith-cures, and attempts to explain them along these lines are far removed from the spirit of the Gospels. The Gospels nowhere suggest that Jesus could not have worked a miracle if the belief that a cure would be effected had been lacking, they stress the necessity of faith, but it is the faith which illuminates the inner meaning of the miracle without which Jesus does not consider it to be fitting to accomplish the healing.¹⁷³

Richardson seems to be overstating his case here when he said that the gospels nowhere suggest that Jesus could not have worked a miracle. In fact, Mark 6:5 shows that Jesus "could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands upon a few sick people and healed them." On the other hand, Richardson is right in seeing Jesus' healing generally as spontaneous acts of mercy and grace which he offered. By these acts, Jesus disqualified the strict and arbitrary claims of the retributive dogma, whereby punishment and misfortune would come as the result of sin, and blessings as a consequence of works of merit. The claims of the kingdom were not to be confined within such a limited and rigid framework. Every event and every incident would be under the control of God, and where exceptions had arisen, they must not be understood as contradictions of the accepted principles but an elevation of the events to the mind and purpose of God.

Having discussed the various views indicated in the gospel traditions concerning sin

and its relationship to sickness and retribution, we are compelled to conclude that Jesus did recognise the close connection between moral responsibility and sinful acts on a few of the instances of sickness and affliction that affected the lives of people in the New Testament. Having said that, it is also important to point out that such framework of understanding sickness and misfortune according to Jesus cannot fully explain all sickness and afflictions from which the people during his ministry suffered.

B. BREAKING OF TABOOS AND ILLNESS IN SAMOA

The close relationship between sin and sickness portrayed by the evangelists to be held by the contemporaries of Jesus, and perhaps also by Jesus to some extent, is reminiscent of the way in which the traditional and Christian Samoan society had viewed morality and the breaking of taboos as instrumental in the causality of sickness, misfortunes and death among its people. This belief in the causality of sickness and physical ailment is not unique within the Samoan community alone, however, it is a belief which was and still is popular among the many Pacific islanders of the Melanesian and Polynesian groups.¹⁷⁴ Rivers wrote of the existence of such dogma not only among the Melanesians, but also among several African peoples who ascribed diseases to both human and spiritual agencies. Rivers pointed out that in a little island of *Mandegusu* or *Eddystone* in the Solomons, Melanesia, there was a very close connection between the treatment of diseases and certain religious practices especially that of taboo. The connection was so intimate that the account of medical practice was at the same time an account of taboo. The relationship between the two was so close that it would be impossible to deal with one independently of the other. Rivers points out that "nearly every disease which occurs in this island is ascribed to the infraction of a taboo."¹⁷⁵ The

motives behind these spiritual agencies are usually the breaking of a taboo, the neglect to make offerings, tend graves or perform rites which the spirits believed to be their due.¹⁷⁶ Rivers indicates that there was an intimate blending of the therapeutic process with the institution of taboo which in parts of Melanesia has a definite religious character. In Melanesia, a disease is held to be the result of the infraction of a taboo imposed in the name and under the sanction of the 'ghosts' of the dead.

In George Brown's comparison of Melanesian and Samoan taboo systems in the past, he thought the Samoan *tapui* was

more extensively used in Samoa in the olden days than in Melanesia, and the same or even greater fear of some supernatural power being connected with it was felt by them.¹⁷⁷

In traditional and early Christian Samoan society, it was difficult to say which prohibition belonged strictly to which taboo, the infraction of which would be followed by a punishment in the form of physical misfortune and sickness. The whole cultural tradition was initially infiltrated with taboo that the moral and ethical behaviour of the Samoans was largely determined by it.¹⁷⁸

In Polynesia, the taboo system was significant in the regulation of the social and religious values of the community. This taboo system was closely integrated with the cultic and ethical systems of the people, that social and religious values became an integral part of it. An infraction of a taboo was not simply a social misdemeanour, but a crime committed against the spirit forces and deities. In the religious language, the breaking of taboo was a sin [*agasala*] committed against the divine, and therefore, such violation expected divine retribution. This divine punishment was often conceived in terms of sickness, disability and sometimes death of either the person concerned or a close member of the family.

The extent of the damage done by the violation of a taboo can only be fully understood when viewed within the whole context of the nature and character of the taboo system as practised by Polynesians. The notion of taboo as a "prohibition alone, whose infringement resulted in automatic penalty"¹⁷⁹ is limited and would not do justice to the system as it was held sacred by the Polynesians. A taboo was and still is much more than simply a 'prohibition' or 'restriction'. In fact, the whole taboo system in Polynesia was closely associated with the concept of *mana* or 'divine power'. As Shires rightly puts it, "taboo is related to *mana*, as source of power is related to power."¹⁸⁰ Therefore, with the notion of being with potentiality for power, would include also the notion of awe and of sacredness which commanded both respect and fear, and which called for a separation, a keeping apart from this being, with all its dynamic potential. From this primary notion of taboo as possessing *mana* or divine power, comes the idea of 'restriction', of 'prohibition', of 'sacredness', and of 'separation'. Things are "not sacred, forbidden or restricted and therefore taboo, but taboo and therefore sacred, and sometimes forbidden and restricted."¹⁸¹ Therefore the institution of taboo in Samoa as well as in many Polynesian groups was a sacred institution, because it was an integral part of its supernatural heritage, of its divine power, and of its spirit-deities and ancestors. It was related to the people's religious belief in the divine *mana* of their *atua* and *aitu* and thus, it became the basis of the cultural and ethical value system of the people.

Thus breaking a taboo was not simply going against certain prohibitions which have only social and cultural dimensions, but a sin committed against the spirit-world. It was indeed a *sala* or *hara*, a sin against the deity, and such error would incite the anger of the spirits at the infringement of taboo.¹⁸² Tregear defines the

Maori word *hara* as meaning, "to violate taboo intentionally or unintentionally."¹⁸³ Handy suggests that *hara* is a negative condition which comes about through loss of *mana* or taboo, breaking of taboo and contact with contaminating and destructive influences which surrounded sickness, death and the like. In the Marquesan dialect, *haa* signifies "vengeful and jealous anger, rancour."¹⁸⁴ The Samoan word *sala* means "error or wrongdoing", but at the same time it conveys also a notion of a punishment.¹⁸⁵ Similar terms are used in other Polynesian islands. For example, the Tongan word *hala* means "to err", the Mangarewan *ara* "to miss a mark", and the Hawaiian *hala* means "to miss the object aimed at". In the Samoan vocabulary, the combination of *aga* meaning "nature" or "behaviour"¹⁸⁶ and *sala* meaning "wrongdoing or punishment" form the Samoan word *agasala* which means one's nature or behaviour which violates the religious, cultural and ethical norm of the society and which will bring about the divine wrath and punishment. The infraction of a taboo was indeed a *agasala* in the traditional religious terminology, a sin committed against the spirit-world which would bring about divine retribution. This same word *agasala* was used by early missionaries to describe sin within the Christian context of morality. The violation of God's commandments in the Bible as well as committing acts contrary to the teaching of Jesus, immoral and unethical behaviour which the church forbade the breaking of church rules and regulations, were all classified as *agasala* and therefore, those who committed such acts would fall under the divine retribution of *Atua* and spirits. Therefore to sin in the Christian context was understood as breaking the Christian taboos and such violation would bring sickness and suffering to those concerned. Thus alongside the Christian moral framework within which the Samoans had to abide in order to acquire the blessings and benefits from the powerful and omnipotent *Atua*, and also out of fear of divine retribution from the same powerful and loving though a vengeful God, there continued to exist a traditional framework of morality, whereby

adherence to the taboos and the respect of the spirit-world of the *atua*, *aitu* and ancestral spirits, were necessary in maintaining health and well-being. The loyalty to both orders was absolutely necessary in maintaining well-being and prosperity in life. The delicate issue of course was how to maintain a valid balance so that justice could be achieved to both systems without upsetting one or the other. This balancing act was very much to the dismay of early missionaries who would rather see the complete uprooting and annihilation of the traditional system and world-view in favour of the new and more superior understanding of the world that the new *lotu* promoted, or its relegation to the negative realm of evil spirits and demons. Macpherson wrote,

The old medical paradigm [*aitu*] continued. The missionaries despaired that the converted Samoans continued their beliefs in the power of the *aitu*. The role of the supernatural agents in sickness, then was not denied. It is acknowledged today. But this belief could not, on its own explain new patterns of illness.¹⁸⁷

The existence of these two frameworks of understanding the world, one traditional and the other introduced, had led to a dual categorising of sickness and misfortunes within Christian Samoa. The old model of understanding sickness continued to exist and remedy was continued to be sought through the old model of healing. The Samoans would call such sickness as *ma'i Samoa* while the new model of ailment as *ma'i Papalagi*. The remedy for *ma'i Papalagi* was sought within the new system of healing in hospitals, in Western-type medicines and drugs and in the Western trained medical profession.

Another very interesting development also was the recognition by the Samoans of the power of the Christian *Atua* in matters relating to sickness and healing. This recognition did not get much encouragement from early missionaries as they themselves had accorded little emphasis upon the role of the supernatural in matters

relating to sickness and healing. It did surprise the Samoans that such a powerful *Atua* of the new *lotu* had been accorded little role in healing. Macpherson again points this out.

Although the missionaries had access to an omnipotent deity, their explanations of illness and their strategies of intervention in many cases accorded only a minimal role to that deity.¹⁸⁸

However, like their own spirits and *aitu*, the Samoans would ascribe the causality of some sickness and their remedies to the power of the *Atua*. The Christian moral framework became the criterion by which they would understand sickness and their causality, especially in relation to *agasala* committed against *Atua*. So within the old traditional paradigm of viewing sickness and healing, the *lotu* was well accommodated. *Atua* was included within the number of traditional deities and spirits which could inflict not only sickness and diseases as punishments for violation of Christian *tapui* but also provided health and healing when people repented. The Christian *Atua* became not only the source of illness but also of healing. This characteristic of the Christian God fitted in well with the traditional concept of deities in the form of *atua* and *aitu* who were not only responsible for inflicting physical misfortune upon those who violated morality and traditional *tapui* but also provided the remedy when properly appeased.

The divine retribution from the breaking of taboo took the form of sickness and physical misfortune which sometimes led even to death. To accomplish any form of cure, expiation or placation of the angered spirits was required and gifts or sacrifices were presented in order to mollify the angry psychic beings.¹⁸⁹ Best shows that among the early Maoris of New Zealand, the first act of a traditional *tohunga* [healer] in seeking to help a sick person was to call upon his patients to confess all *hara* and *haruharu* [acts offensive to the religious or moral laws of the Maori tribe].¹⁹⁰ The act of confession was followed by an absolutionary rite which

acted as a loosening or setting free from all destructive hindrances.¹⁹¹ Clare Parsons recently points out this same understanding of illness among some Maori tribes today. She wrote that for the members of the *Ngati Kaungunu* tribe,

Health is a way of living. Traditionally, illness was not explained by any disease model but rather as a result of 'wrong' living or interference from the spirit-world. Such traditional beliefs and perceptions are reflected in the health process and practices of this Maori tribe today.¹⁹²

The reference to sickness as a result of 'wrong living' means the breaking of *tapu*. Parsons writes,

Mate Maori [Maori sickness] is bound up with the traditional belief that illness resulted from 'wrong living', especially the breaking of *tapu*.¹⁹³

Buck and Metge also echoed the same understanding about Maori sickness. They both presented the main causes of Maori sickness as *hara* [wrong doing] especially breach of *tapu* and *mākutu*, including what they refer to as sorcery.¹⁹⁴

A similar practice is witnessed in the healing tradition of the Samoan people. Where the sickness was believed to have been caused by an offending *atua* and *aitu*, the victim was first required to confess the *agasala* before any ritual of expiation was offered to the offended spirit. The traditional healer was often called first to establish what *aitu* was involved and the nature of the event giving rise to the displeasure of the deity. If it was one of the major *aitu* known as *Nifoloa*, *Sauma'iafe* and *Telesa*,¹⁹⁵ a course of action will be followed which aimed at discovering the nature of the offence and arriving at some form of reconciliation. The procedure involved going over the recent activities of the victim to try and identify where an infraction of a taboo had taken place or if any moral infringement had been committed. When the problem was identified, then the proper rites of penance and reconciliation must be done to ensure forgiveness and recovery.¹⁹⁶ This belief and practice is still very common within Christian Samoa today. Despite Christian teaching in the power of *Atua* to annul and make

void all the traditional *aitu* and ancestral spirits, as well as their consequent power to inflict sickness upon those who violated traditional customs and taboos, Samoan Christians would still pay homage to these traditional powers especially when sickness, disease and misfortunes which they believed to be within the category of *ma'i* Samoa affected them. Where sickness was thought to have been caused by an angered *aitu*, the ritual of remedy was to be directed to the family of the spirit concerned. The fact that the Christians still continued to seek remedy and comfort from their own traditional spirits meant that the Christian world-view and the place of Christ within it had not yet fully replaced the traditional Samoan understanding of the world. However, *Atua* is seen as one of the many powers that can inflict sickness and provide remedy for illness. Where the Christian moral code of behaviour had been violated, sickness was attributed to the anger of *Atua* and the consequent remedy can only be sought by appeasing the deity through his representative, the *faiife'au*. Pastors often find themselves in situations where the relatives of a sick person would approach them to confess the sins that their sick member may have committed and asked for God's forgiveness. I have witnessed similar incidences when my father who was a village *faiife'au* had been approached for God's forgiveness upon a sick member of his congregation. Many Samoans believe that sickness often comes because of the failure to live up to Christian morals as well as violation of church rules and taboos. However, despite the fact that the Christian *Atua* is acknowledged as supreme within Samoa today, yet the traditional spirits continue also to exist alongside. Where sickness is thought to belong to the old model, the remedy is sought within that supernatural framework. However, where sickness falls in to the new medical paradigm of *ma'i Papalagi*, then the remedy is conducted within the scientific medical framework.¹⁹⁷ This new paradigm is closely associated with early missionaries as Macpherson points out,

Perhaps the most important result of contact with missionaries was the

realisation that although the missionaries had access to an omnipotent deity, their explanations of illness and their strategies of intervention in many cases accorded only a minimal role to that deity. Thus the missionaries introduced the possibility of simultaneous belief in the omnipotence of a deity and a greater human role in the management of illness.¹⁹⁸

However, despite the minimal recognition of the power of *Atua* in health and healing by early missionaries, yet the great significance that the traditional society accorded to their own supernatural beings in matters relating to health, healing and well-being meant that the Christian God automatically fits in to such framework. The characteristic of God in the Old Testament as the one who afflicts and heals fits in well within that traditional role of deities and supernatural beings. The same also may be said of Jesus in the gospels where he forgives and heals the sick. Such role was also accorded of their supernatural beings.

It is significant to acknowledge that the way in which people conceive of illness often determines their response to it; changes in belief do sometimes, generally precede changes in practice. Some beliefs die hard, and the understanding of illness although influenced and expanded by new models and strategies yet survived significantly. Turner had pointed out that in sickness, the people of the village confessed their crimes, and prayed that they might be forgiven.¹⁹⁹ Illness was often thought to be an indication of the displeasure of an *aitu* and this belief led victims and their kin to review their behaviour and to identify actions which might have given offence to *aitu*. The identification of the offender and the offence made possible the execution of an appropriate intervention, usually focussing on appeasing the spirit. If the procedure is not carried out correctly, the sick person becomes progressively more ill and eventually death may occur. This early belief concerning traditional spirits and their significant impact on the lives of people continues to exist in Christian Samoa.²⁰⁰ The connection of sickness with the displeasure of *aitu* meant that remedy is focussed ^{more} on the violation than on the state

of the organism. Healing comes through an act of *ifoga* to appease the offended spirit. Mcpherson acknowledges the continuation of such belief today.²⁰¹

In Samoa as well as in many Polynesian societies, the paramount chief [*ali'i*] is considered taboo. He was believed to be the embodiment of divinity and an instrument of the *mana* of family deities and spirits. They are identified as family deities [*o atua po'o aitu o aiga*]. The taboo that surrounds *ali'i* is in essence part and parcel of the religious system and no arbitrary invention. This taboo is extended to include various possessions of chiefs and violation of these properties is considered an insult and an infringement of the taboo system. Therefore any infringement expects punishment in the form of an illness or physical misfortune from the spirit of whose *mana* behind the *ali'i* had been violated.

In pre-Christian Samoa, the patron deities of the various families were believed to be incarnated in certain animals, fish, birds, reptiles, trees and other objects.²⁰² A person would freely eat an incarnation of the god of another person but a taboo to eat his own. Breaking such taboo may lead to the deity avenging the insult by possessing the victim and causing sickness until the person dies.²⁰³ Many of these patron deities of the Samoans have been declared null and void by the *lotu*, where such fish, birds, reptiles and animals were caught and eaten by new converts in order to prove that they have been declared void and harmless by the *mana* of the gospel. However, certain taboos in relation to burial grounds, some of the natural pools and springs throughout the islands, the virgin's grave in the *Saleaula* lava field, the *Nifoloa* of the village of *Falelima*, the various *Vavau* or mythological monuments and village *sā* or taboos, the taboo which protects the right forms of behaviour towards *ali'i*, and taboos related to *aitu* and family spirits still remain as significant sacred restrictions and prohibitions within the society. Infringement or

violation of the traditional and ethical codes of behaviour in relation to these taboos, Samoans believe would lead to divine punishment in the form of sickness, accidents and even death. Every sickness, every accident and every misfortune are often understood as consequential either of the victim's moral behaviour or an infringement of traditional taboo.²⁰⁴

Characteristic of traditional Samoan customs are the taboos designed to protect mothers and babies, as well as expectant mothers from evil spirits and malicious *aitu*. Pregnant women are regarded as particularly vulnerable to attacks by evil spirits. In the course of pregnancy, the baby's health could be severely endangered if the pregnant mother would not abide by all the prohibitions and taboos designed to safeguard the mother and baby from these spiritual forces.²⁰⁵ Violation of these taboos could endanger not only the unborn child but also the life of the mother. The deformities of children were often ascribed to the moral misbehaviour of the mother during the course of pregnancy. For example, it was believed that a greedy and selfish mother who refused to share items of food but ate them secretly during her pregnancy could affect the development of the baby physically before birth. The unfaithfulness of the father could also account for the cause of any physical deformity of their children before birth. [cp. Jn 9:1-3; and also similar beliefs in rabbinical Judaism] These beliefs were and are still strong and current in the thinking of the Samoan people today despite medical and scientific explanation.²⁰⁶ Lazar [1985] confirmed the continued presence of such beliefs among the Samoan people when he wrote,

Family members get together and examine their actions in the context of 'confessions' to certain misdeeds that may have been the cause of the illness. .. It is claimed that illness of children are closely related to the moral behaviour of their parents.²⁰⁷

The communal responsibility, family and parental accountability to illness and

disabilities that affect family members or their own children, are quite significant within a society where social and family systems are very significant. The moral accountability of parents to sickness that may affect their children still remains a significant motif in Samoa today.

Handy much earlier indicated the nature and consequence of the violation of a taboo.

The native who disregarded *tapu*, whether of sacredness or unsacredness, was breaking a psychic law, and the resultant physical effects were sickness, accidents and death. The effect of the infringement of a psychic law was to his mind direct and inevitable. His psychic being or life principle was impaired, with consequent physical and mental effects, for it was the belief that the physical and mental effects were consequent upon the psychic condition.²⁰⁸

In Samoa, a person suffering from the effects of broken taboo could be relieved and restored to health by the prompt performance of the healing rites which strengthened the person's life principle by exorcising the spirit causing the trouble or by propitiating the offended deity. It was necessary first for the victim to acknowledge the offence which would be instrumental in identifying the offended *aitu* before proper rites could be performed to appease the spirit. Turner wrote that

The sick bed often forms a confessional, before which long concealed and almost revolting crimes are disclosed.²⁰⁹

Even certain sicknesses were attributed to specific sins. For example, ulcerous sores, dropsy and inflammation of the abdomen were considered special judgements of the gods on concealed thieving, adultery and other crimes.²¹⁰ It was understood in early traditional and Christian Samoa that "calamities are traced to sins of the individual or his parents, or some other relative."²¹¹

Ifoga: The traditional rite of penance

The ritual of *ifoga*, a ceremonial rite of seeking forgiveness was a long established traditional ritual which the Samoans practised in order to seek pardon and forgiveness from an offended party for a serious breach of conduct or taboo. The performance of *ifoga* was and still is an important practice in the process of reconciliation and the remedy of an illness.²¹² The rite of *ifoga* is a solemn and humble occasion of acknowledging repentance and seeking pardon and forgiveness from an injured party or spirit. In this very humbling occasion, the victim or his family *ali'i* would be covered with a traditional fine mat called the *'ie toga* [a finely woven mat from the bark of a tree], and he will sit outside the house of the offended party. If the rite of penance was accepted, a member of the offended party would uncover the sinner or his substitute as a symbolic act of acceptance and forgiveness, otherwise punishment or the curse will still remain effective either in sickness or in any other anticipated retribution. The acceptance of the rite of *ifoga* is an assurance of being forgiven and consequently cured of an illness. In cases where sickness is caused by the national *aitu* such as *Telesa* and *Sauma'iafe* in connection with an infringement of taboo, the rite of *ifoga* is performed and gifts offered to the *ali'i* of the *aitu's* family. It is important that these rites be duly performed to acknowledge remorse before the victim has any hope of forgiveness and cosequent recovery.

Christian Taboos

With the influence of *lotu* in Samoa, the taboo system is extended to incorporate Christian places of worship and arts and other items associated with Christian worship such as the Bible, the communion elements and utensils, and the many

objects of significance within the Christian tradition. In Holy Communion services there is a strong emphasis on Paul's warning words to those who may participate unworthily [1Cor 11:27-32] of the sacrament. Many would abstain from participation for fear of retribution from the Christian *Atua*.

The *faiife'au* has been given the traditional status of *ali'i* or chief and head of family, and by virtue of the *mana* of *Atua* in him, he, like the traditional *ali'i* would be regarded as inherent of taboo. This taboo is extended to include his possessions and property. The society has built around Christianity numerous restrictions which has become part of the cultural and religious taboo system of the community. Christian morals and practices have become part of the value system that people hold taboo. The violation of these taboos is considered as sin or *agasala* against *Atua*, and divine retribution is expected in the form of illness and physical misfortune unless *ifoga* or penance is performed and accepted. The ritual is often conducted in the presence of the *faiife'au* and the acceptance of the rite is necessary to ensure health and healing for the victim. The many unexplained misfortunes and sudden physical afflictions that overcome many individuals are often seen as retribution for the violation of *tapu* related to *lotu*.

Various terms have been used to convey the idea of *tapu* within Christianity. The two Samoan words for taboo is *tapu* and *sā*. The church building is called *falesā* which means a house which is taboo. There are two words used for the Holy Spirit. The common one is *Agaga Pa'ia* which conveys the meaning of a spirit which is holy, set apart, untouchable, i.e. not for common usage. The other term is *Agaga Sā* which literally means the spirit which is taboo. The Bible is referred to as *Tusi Sā*, the taboo book. Sunday is the taboo day, *Aso Sā*. The sabbatarian restrictions which resemble the Jewish Sabbath were strictly enforced as

Christian *tapu* that violation expected not only church discipline but also divine punishment. Christianity like the traditional religion is surrounded with many rules and restrictions which regulate the response of people to *lotu*. These rules like traditional taboos are respected and strictly adhered to. Their violation could mean divine punishment from *Atua* in the form of illness and other physical misfortunes.

Despite the early mission's separation of sickness and healing from the realm of the supernatural deities and spirits, ascribing their management to the activities of men, yet traditional Samoan understanding of sickness, health and well-being continued to prevail within Christian Samoa. It is not unusual within the ministry of a Samoan *faiife'au* to assure the sick of God's forgiveness in order to ensure some form of healing and recovery. When young people are inflicted with physical ailment, their parents are often concerned that they have not committed any infraction of either traditional, religious or Christian taboos. The sick are often encouraged to confess any *agasala* they may have committed, and parents would make sure that the appropriate response is carried out to secure forgiveness and reconciliation. The breaking of a taboo is not simply a violation of the physical order and the cultural values of a society, but an infringement of the spirit-world. The individual who is part of both orders finds himself affected both physically and spiritually by it. The consequent sickness or misfortune that comes with the breaking of a taboo implies the intimate relationship between body and spirit. The infraction of taboo was and still is a moral violation of the divine order, and one's moral depravation is reflected by his physical condition. By transgressing the spirit forces, one would bring upon himself the divine curse which may be manifested in his physical state. Any hope of healing may be achieved by securing divine favour through the performance of rituals, sacrifices, and gift offerings to the deities and spirits.

Reconciliation with the spirit-world is seen to be essential for holistic healing. This approach to sickness and healing is reflected in Jesus' healing ministry. His healing miracles and acts^{of}/exorcism present sickness and suffering as within the sphere of God's care and concern. He understands healing as holistic. The physical malady often reflects the more serious spiritual condition of the person. Jesus' healing ministry therefore, is aimed at providing a wholesome remedy of the situation. He offers forgiveness and healing to the paralysed man. He points out in Luke 13 that although the suffering of the Galileans under Pilate and those eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell were not to be confined within the rigid framework of the dogma of retribution, yet it was important for them to see that they remained in the right relationship with God through repentance, otherwise they too may perish in the future. The paralysed man in John 5 was warned after he was healed, to sin no more otherwise something worse may happen to him in the future. Again, the importance of right moral standing was indicated by Jesus in order to ensure health and well-being for the healed man.

Conclusion

Right spiritual condition is indicative of physical welfare. The complementary nature of soul and body remains a significant reality for both Jesus' as well as traditional and Christian Samoan understanding of sickness and healing. The spiritual dimension of healing indicated by the right moral relationship of a person with the spirit-world is significant. Every individual has relationships which go beyond the physical realm, and unless these obligations are properly maintained and fulfilled, total healing may be difficult to achieve. This is the reality of Jesus' healing ministry, and his cures are much more than the restoration of the physical condition of the sick. This is indeed holistic healing, where right relationship with

God and with other people is a necessary element towards true and genuine cure. Traditional and Christian Samoan understanding of healing also emphasize this significant fact that moral and spiritual rightness in relation to one's spiritual reality and also to the family and community are indeed essential and crucial for healing and for wholeness.

ENDNOTES

1. H. van der Loos, H. *The Miracles of Jesus*, [Leiden:Brill, 1965], 255.
2. Mk 2:5; "My son, your sins are forgiven." Mt 9:2 "Take heart, my son, your sins are forgiven." Lk 5:20 "Man, your sins are forgiven you."
3. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke* x-xxiv, 1005.
4. Van der Loos, *Miracles*, 255.
5. E.S.C. Handy, *Polynesian Religion*, 26.
6. L.W. King, *Babylonian Religion*, 210.
7. *Ibid.*, 211.
8. R.C. Thompson, *The Devils*, Vol 1. liii-lxv.
9. "When I did a deed of transgression against *Peak*, she punished me, I was in her hand by night as well as by day." J.B. Pritchard, [ed] *Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the Old Testament*, [Princeton:Princeton University Press, 1950], 381.
10. A. van Selms, *De babylonische Termini voor Zonde* [Diss. Utrecht, 1933], 24f; as quoted in A. Oepke "νόσος" *TDNT* IV.1092.
11. 20.45ff; 21.69f,79;
 "There came upon me sickness, disease, wasting and destruction; there came upon me distress, turning aside of face and the fulness of wrath [cp. 23.30ff]. Mine ears take not of thee, my Lady [*Ishtar*], they are directed to thee, I pray to thee, yea, to thee; take the curse from me." 23.11,26f: "I know not the sin which I have done, I know not the offence which I have committed." In between 23.21: "O Lord, my sins are many, my transgression are great" [cp. 26.25ff]. 27.39f. [request of the priest]: "Take his hand, take away his guilt, let fever and oppression depart from him...Let thy servant live that he may glorify thy power." Sin and sickness, though distinct, are interchangeable. 30: "My sins he caused to be borne away by the wind. I may lay aside my wickedness, the bird will carry it up to heaven." A. Oepke, "νόσος" *TDNT* IV.1092.
12. *Ibid.*, 1092ff.
13. The Man of *Ea* am I!
 The Man of *Damkina* am I!
 The Messenger of *Marduk* am I!
 To revive the sick man".
 R.C. Thompson, *The Devils*, Vol II. xxv.
14. W. Beyerlin, W. [ed], *Near Eastern Religious Texts relating to the Old Testament*, [London:SCM Press, 1978], 109ff.
 Promise me forgiveness, and let your disposition be soothed toward me,
 forgiveness for my tormented body.....
 forgiveness for my sick heart.....

forgiveness for my afflicted house.....
forgiveness for my mind..... [45-50]

What have I done, my god and my goddess?
I am treated as though I had not feared my god and my goddess,
Sickness, headaches, corruption and annihilation came over me,
terror, disdain and raging anger came upon me.. [67-70].

15. W.G. Lambert, *Babylonian Wisdom Literature*, [Oxford:Clarendon Press, 1960], 27.

16. This tradition is implied in Jesus' response to the question of the disciples concerning the cause of the blindness in John 9:1-3; as well as both incidents relating to the fate of the Galileans in Luke 13:1-5.

17. The sufferer was stricken with a severe illness,
However, he was made well by the power of the god, *Marduk*.
My illness was quickly over and [my fetters] were broken;
After the mind of my Lord had quietened,
And the heart of merciful *Marduk* was appeased;
[After he had] received my prayers.....
And his pleasant [smile]
[After he had said,] Be delivered, you, [who are in great toils!]to
extol,
.....to worship,
.....my guilt,
.....my iniquity,
.....my transgression,
He made the wind bear away my offences.

Table iii.41-49; W.G. Lambert, *Babylonian Wisdom Literature*, 51.

18. A. Oepke, "νόσος" *TDNT* IV.1093.

19. But he, our chief, provoked the raging pest,
Apollo's vengeance for his injured priest,
Nor will the god's awakened fury cease,
But plagues shall spread, and funeral fires increase.

The Iliad of Homer, trans. Alexander Pope, [London:Frederick Warne & Co. nd.]
Book I.9ff. [I have checked the more recent translation of Homer's *Iliad* by
E.V.Rieu 1950, but I find Pope's translation much more interesting and poetic.]

20. *Diog.L* I.110.3; as quoted in A. Oepke, "νόσος" *TDNT* IV.1093.

21. Charlesworth dated it round about the third century BC, however, it would be more correct to put it after the third century BC perhaps more likely in the second century BC. See M.A.L. Beavis, "Anti-Egyptian Polemic in the Letter of Aristeas 130-165 [The High Priest Discourse]," *JSJ* Vol XVIII No 2 [1987], 150; "Review": J.H. Charlesworth [ed] *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha ii: Expansions of the Old Testament and Legends, Wisdom and Philosophical Literature, Prayers, Psalms and Odes, Fragments of Lost Judeo-Hellenistic Works*, by Sebastian Brock, *JJS* Vol XXXVIII No 1 [Spring, 1987], 107-114.

22. *The Letter of Aristeas*, trans. H.St.J. Thackeray, [London:SPCK, 1918],

314-316. The interpretation of the afflictions of these two men in *The Letter of Aristaeus* may well represent the views of a Hellenistic Jewish writer.

23. A. Oepke, "νόσος" *TDNT* IV.1093.

24. *Ibid.*, 1094

25. Plato, *Republic* X.609cff, in *The Dialogues of Plato*, B.Jowett, Vol III, [Oxford:Clarendon Press, MDCCXCII]; Plato, *Soph.* 228aff.

26. A. Oepke, "ἰόματα" *TDNT* III.198.

27. Julian, *Contra Christianos* 200ab.

28. H.C. Kee, *Medicine, Miracle and Magic in New Testament Times*, *SNTSMS* 55, [Cambridge:Cambridge University Press, 1986], 27. See also Kee's discussion of "Asklepios the Healer" in *Miracle*, 78-103.

29. Heidel, *Hippocratic Medicine, Its Spirit and Method*, [New York:Columbia University Press, 1941], 134.

30. H.C. Kee, *Medicine*, 27-33; see also "Medicine" in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 2nd ed., ed. by N.G.L. Hammond & H.H. Scullard, [Oxford:Clarendon Press, 1970], 660-664.

31."And when I besought the god of *Seraphis* that he would free me from the work here, [i.e. building the temple, which was to be paid for by *Apollonius*, but superintended ofcourse by *Zoilus*] he cast me into a great sickness. .. But having prayed to him, if he would heal me, I said that I would endure my ministry and do that which was commanded by him". *Papiri Greci e latini*, Vol IV.5-10, Firenze, [1917], No.435, in A. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, [London:Hodder & Stoughton, 1927], 152ff.

32. *Vita Apoll.* 1.6.

33. W.H.R. Rivers, *Medicine, Magic and Religion*, [London:Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, Co.Ltd., 1924], 69; see also W. Crooke, *Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, [London:Oxford University Press, 1926], 183-226.

34. Ex 15:26; 23:25; Lev 26:16; Num 11:33; 14:12; Deut 7:14,15; 28:21,22, 59ff; 29:22,23; 2Sam 24:15; 2Kgs 1:2-4; 5:27; 2Chron 21:14,15,18,19; Job 5:18; Is 17:10,11; 19:22; Jer 16:4; 21:6; Hos 6:1; Amos 4:10; cp. Deut 24:9; with Num 12:1-16.

35. T.C. Vriezen, *An Outline of Old Testament Theology*, 2nd ed., [Oxford:Blackwell, 1970], 386ff; W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament II*, [London:SCM, 1967], 231ff; H.H. Rowley, *The Faith of Israel: Aspects of Old Testament Thought*, [London:SCM, 1956], 99-123.

36. The individual and personal relationship of one's soul with God is significant and receives considerable mention in Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the Psalms and the Wisdom literature.

37. D.S. Cairns, *Faith that Rebels: A Re-examination of the Miracles of Jesus*, [London:SCM, 1933], 58.
38. J.A. Sanders, *Suffering as Divine Discipline in the Old Testament and Post Biblical Judaism*, [New York: Colgate Rochester Divinity School Bulletin, Nov. 1955], Vol XXVIII.117.
39. J.A. Sanders, *Suffering as Divine Discipline*, 117f; cp. *Mekilta Bahodesh* 10; *Sifre Deut.* 32; *b.Yoma* 5:6ff.
40. Van der Loos, *Miracles*, 257.
41. "Abimelech king of Gerar took Sarah the wife of Abraham as his. Abraham prayed when Abimelech repented and he was healed and also his wife.." [Gen 20:17]. These other references implied that sickness was a direct consequence of sin and therefore, the victims pleaded healing from God whom they believed was behind their suffering. e.g. Ps.30:2; 41:4; Is 19:22; 38:1-8; Jer 17:14; see also Kgs 8:37-40; 2Chron 6:28-31; Van der Loos, *Miracles*, 260.
42. Forgiving and healing: 2Chron 7:14; 30:18-20; Pss 41:4; 103:3; Is 19:22; 38:17; 57:18,19; Jer 3:22; Hos 14:4; Van der Loos, *Miracles*, 260.
43. Suffering serves to root out evil [4Ezra 4:29-40]. Similar views are expressed in *b.Ber* 5a, *Mekilta Badohesh* 7, Ps of Sol 13:9; see: J.A. Sanders, *Suffering as Divine Discipline*, 107.
44. Cp. *b.Pes* 118a; *Eccl. R.* 4:13; J.A. Sanders, *Suffering as Divine Discipline*, 107.
45. "The Lord created physicians.." [Ecclus 38:1]; "The Lord created medicines" [38:4]. "With them, God healed man and takes away his pain" [38:7]. See also G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, 61; H.C. Kee, *Medicine*, 20.
46. H.W. Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, [London:SCM Press, 1974], 147.
47. *Genesis Apocryphon* 20:16-19; see also Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* II [Munchen:1956], 193-197. The cause is also confirmed by J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke* i-ix, 580; idem. *Luke x-xxiv*, 1007; H. Marshall, *Luke*, 553.
48. *4Q Prayer of Nabonidus* 1-4; see: G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scroll in English*, [London:Penguin Books, 1987], 274; idem. *Jesus and the World of Judaism*, 8, 83.
49. Philo, *Life* 2 [Vita] and *Hypothetica* 2.11-13. Another description of the Essenes appears in *Quod Omni Probus* 75-91.
50. "For God brought me a disease of the liver, [the liver was regarded as the seat of anger and strong emotions] and if it had not been for the prayers of Jacob, my father, he would shortly have summoned my spirit. For whatever human capacity anyone transgresses, by that he is also chastised". T.Gad, Book 5.9-11. Charlesworth dates the T.Gad around 250 BC however, others would like to see the

date much later than what Charlesworth suggests. See "Review": R.H. Charlesworth [ed] *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha Vol 1, Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* by Sebastian Brock *JJS* Vol XXXV No 2, [Autumn, 1984], 200-209.

51. Ἰερεμίας δὲ ἄρας τὰ σῦκα διέδωκε τοῖς νοσοῦσι τοῦ λαοῦ, καὶ ἔμεινε διδάσκων αὐτοὺς τοῦ ἀπέχεσθαι ἐκ τῶν ἀλισγημάτων τῶν ἐθνῶν τῆς Βαβυλῶνος. NB: αὐτοὺς could refer to νοσοῦσι. Τα Παραλειπομενα Ιερεμιου του Προφητου, 7:37, cp. Is 38:21.

52. "But reward [*zekuth*] is brought about through a person of merit [*zakkai*], and punishment [*hobah*] through a person of guilt" [*b Shab* 32a]. "There are seven forms of punishments for seven kinds of transgression. eg. pestilence comes to the world on account of the death penalties which are listed in the Torah" [*b Abot* 5:8].

53. Jer 31:29 cp. *b Shab* 32b; *b Pes* 112b cp. Tob 3:3f; Jas 1:15; see Bultmann, R. *John*, 330; O. Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, [London:SCM, 1967], 167ff; E.E. Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke*, 2nd ed., [London:Oliphants, 1981], 104.

54. J.W. Etheridge, *The Targums of Onkelos & Jonathan Ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch with Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum - Leviticus, Numbers, & Deuteronomy*, [London:William Nichols, 1865], 621; cp. B. Grossfeld, *The Targum Onkelos to Deuteronomy*, [Edinburgh:T&T Clark, 1988], 61-64. Beasley-Murray quoted the same reference as, "We had transgressed the *Memra*[word] of Yahweh, therefore, this our son has been born to us, who is unruly and rebellious." Beasley-Murray, *John*, [Texas:Word Books Publisher, 1987], 154.

55. See also E.E. Ellis, *Luke*, 104; G. Vermes, *Jesus and the World of Judaism*, 28.

56. The *Shemoneh Esreh* or *Amidah* are the 18 benedictions or blessings which the Jews used to express their respect for God and submission to his will, beating one's breast while confessing one's sins expresses regret and contrition, kissing the Torah.. *Contemporary Jewish Religious Thought*, [eds] Arthur A. Cohen & Paul Mendes-Flohr, [London:Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1987], 278. In the *Amidah*, the close relationship between repentance and healing is indicated.

"What reason had they for mentioning repentance [in the fifth blessing] after understanding? Because it is written, Lest they, understanding with their heart, return and be healed [Is.6:10]. If that is the reason, healing should be mentioned next to repentance". *b Meg.* 17b.

57. Num 12:9 "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them and he departed". According to R.Akiba's view, this teaches that Aaron too became leprous [*b Shab* 97a] cp. [*b Shebu* 29]. Qimron points out that in *IQH* 1:32 the author thanks God for strengthening the good spirit which fights against the skin disease [caused by the evil spirit]. It appears that sin, evil spirit and skin disease are related concepts in the Dead Sea Scrolls:skin disease is inflicted by an evil spirit which takes hold of the sinner. Qimron, E. "Notes on the 4Q Zadokite Fragment on Skin Disease," *JJS* XLII No 2 [Autumn, 1991], 256-259.

58. R Joshua b Levi said, "He who stands naked in front of a lamp will be an epileptic, and he who cohabits by the light of a lamp will have epileptic children". Our Rabbis taught: "If one cohabits in a bed where an infant is sleeping, the

infant [will be] an epileptic" *b Pes* 112b.

59. *b Shab* 97a; *b Shebu* 29; *Targum*: Deut 21:5; "And the priests the sons of Levi go near - for them the Lord thy God hath chosen to minister to Him, and to bless in the Name of the Lord, and on their word shall every controversy or stroke of leprosy [be adjudged]. Cp. also Num 12:9.

60. S.T. Lachs, "Hebrew Elements in the Gospels and Acts," *JQR* 71 [1980], 36.

61. J. Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20*, 227.

62. I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 213.

63. C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Gospel according to St Mark*, [Cambridge:Cambridge Press, 1959], 98.

64. R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 82.

65. *Ibid.*, 86; see Maisch, *Die Heilung des Gelähmten*. SBS 52, [Stuttgart:Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1971], 86-90; H.J. Klauck, "Die Frage der Sündenvergebung in der Perikope von der Heilung des Gelähmten", *BZ* 15 [1981], 241-242.

66. R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 86, 397-8.

67. R.H. Fuller, *Miracles*, 51.

68. I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 214.

69. R. Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium*, I.156.

70. E.R. Micklem, *Miracles and the New Psychology*, [London:Oxford University Press, 1922], 88-91; V. Taylor, *The Gospel according to Mark*, [London:Macmillan, 1966], 195.

71. J. Pedersen, *Israel its Life and Culture*, I & II, [London:Oxford University Press, 1926] 445.

72. I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 213.

73. R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 95.

74. R. Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium*, I.156.

75. *Targum Isaiah* 53:5-12 indicates that the servant makes intercession for the sins of the guilty, but God alone forgives. "...and before the Lord it was a pleasure to forgive the sins of us all for his sake". *Targum Isaiah* 53:6; *The Aramaic Bible: The Isaiah Targums, Introduction, Translation, Apparatus & Notes*, by Bruce Chilton, [Edinburgh:T & T Clark, 1987], 103-4.

76. G. Bornkamm, *Jesus of Nazareth*, 81; A.E. Harvey, *Jesus and the Constraints of History*, [London:Duckworth, 1982], 171; cp. J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 118 n.1; E. Schweizer, *Jesus*, [London:SCM, 1968], 14.

77. E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 273; J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 114.
78. E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 273.
79. Vermes suggests that there is nothing outstandingly novel or unique in the words of Jesus when put side by side with this incident in the Qumran Fragment. The scribes think that they are blasphemous but for Jesus, as for the author of the Qumran Fragment, the phrase 'to forgive sins' was synonymous with 'to heal', and he clearly used in that sense. G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, 68.
80. E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 274-5; cp. A.E. Harvey, *Jesus and the Constraints of History*, 170f.
81. R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 87; R. Pesch sees vv 6ff as secondary; *Das Markusevangelium* I.156.
82. R. Latourelle, R. *The Miracles of Jesus and the Theology of Miracles*, [New York:Paulist Press, 1988], 93-5.
83. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke i-ix*, 580.
84. G.B. Caird, *The Gospel of St. Luke*, [Harmondsworth:Penguin Books, 1963], 94.
85. A.R.C. Leaney, *A commentary on the Gospel according to St Luke*, 2nd ed., [London:Adam & Charles Black, 1958], 125.
86. E.E. Ellis, *Luke*, 104.
87. G. Vermes, *Jesus and the World of Judaism*, 10.
88. G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, 22-25; 58-82.
89. 1En 5:6f; *b Pes* 149a; see also Perrin, N. *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, [London:SCM, 1967] 91-94. However, Sanders regards the association of forgiveness of sin to the eschaton as erroneous. In fact, he doubts very much that ordinary Jews who brought sacrifices for occasional sins and prayed and fasted on the Day of Atonement felt the need of some further eschatological forgiveness. E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 157, 200.
90. Fuller points out that Jesus as 'son of man' forgives sins and therefore the Christian community derives its authority to remit sins [Lk 10:16; Mt 16:17-19], from the authority of Jesus as son of man. R.H. Fuller, *Miracles*, 52.
91. The son of man's authority to forgive sins becomes the paradigm for the Church's healing and forgiving of sins; however, Pesch sees the association of son of man with forgiveness of sins as secondary. R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 92; cp. R. Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* I.156.
92. R.H. Fuller, *Miracles*, 52.

93. P.M. Casey, M. "Son of Man - General, Generic and Indefinite," *JSNT* 29 [1987], 33ff.
94. O. Betz, *What do we know about Jesus?* [London:SCM, 1968], 62. Bultmann suggested that vv.5b-10 are generally judged to be a later interpolation. i.e. They arose because the church wanted to trace its right to forgive sins back to Jesus. R. Bultmann, *Synoptic Tradition*, 15.
95. O. Betz, *What do we know about Jesus?* 62; *IQS* 4.10-22.
96. H. Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark*, 100.
97. O. Betz, *What do we know about Jesus?* 62.
98. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* v.15,2; "manifestans quoniam propter inobedientiae peccatum subsequuti sunt languores hominibus."
99. R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 82.
100. B. Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, [London:Oliphants, The Marshall & Morgan Scott, 1972], 216-217.
101. R. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, Vol 2 [London:Burn & Oates, 1980], 98.
102. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 253.
103. *BAGD*, μηκέτι with imperative, cp. Lk 8:49; Jn 8:11; Eph 4:28; 1Tim 5:23.
104. E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 385 fn.14.
105. *Ibid.*, 182-3.
106. *Ibid.*
107. *Ibid.*, see also E.P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 179.
108. Lachs suggests that leprosy was seen as the consequence of slander. S.T. Lachs, "Hebrew Elements in the Gospels and Acts," 36; see also J. Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20*, 227.
109. The presence in Mark 1:41 of both ὀργισθεῖς and σπλαγχνισθεῖς offers a genuine textual dilemma. Both expression could be found in Jesus' ministry [ὀργισθεῖς: Mark 7:34; 9:19,23; John 11:33,38; σπλαγχνισθεῖς: Mark 6:34; 9:22]. Though ὀργισθεῖς lacks strong textual support, i.e. only D a ff² r¹ yet it represents the more difficult reading. V. Taylor, *Mark*, 187; cp. S.T. Lachs, "Hebrew Elements in the Gospels and Acts," 33-35. Richardson suggests that ὀργισθεῖς may well have been the original reading later altered to σπλαγχνισθεῖς. A. Richardson, *The Miracle Stories of the Gospels*, [London:SCM, 1941], 60. According to Vincent Taylor, this healing miracle must be approached in the light of the common biblical assumption that disease is evidence of sinfulness, a belief which is nonetheless significant for the tellers of the story on account of Jesus' own explicit repudiation of it in its cruder form. V. Taylor, *The Formation*

of the Gospel Tradition, [London:Macmillan & Co.Ltd, 1933], 22. Others have sought to attribute this expression to the ritual agitation felt by the miracle worker when confronted by the physical need. G. Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, 57-8.

110. Rufus, *Journal*, Case XVII; see: H.C. Kee, *Medicine*, 50-1.

111. R. Bultmann, *Synoptic Tradition*, 210; V. Taylor, *V. Gospel Tradition*, 39.

112. P.J. Achtemeier, "Toward the Isolation of Pre-Markan Miracle Catenae," *JBL* 89 [1970], 276-9.

113. K. Kertelge, K. *Die Wunder Jesu*, 110-111; R. Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium*, I.295; J. Ernst, *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, [Regensburg:Pustet, 1981], 160.

114. J.A. Fitzmyer, J.A. *Luke i-ix*, 743.

115. R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 296-7.

116. *Ibid.*, 296.

117. *b Git* 6b; *b Shab* 31b; bloodshed was regarded as the punishment for perjury; the flow of blood as of a woman was considered unclean and the victim was treated in the same category as a leper, *b.Pes.* 95b. Menstruation bears the notion of uncleanness and defilement, see also *b Shab* 13b.

For the Torah hath said, And thou shalt not approach unto a woman as long as she is impure by her uncleanness [Lev.18:19].

b Shab 64b,

As it was taught: And she that is sick shall be in her impurity, [Lev.15:33].

b Pes 95b,

Zabin [menstruant woman] are classified in the same category as lepers. They were excluded from the temple court and would not participate in a passover offering.

b Pes 111a,

One having an intercourse first with a woman coming out of her statutory *tebillah* [after her period], "a spirit of immorality will inflict him."

See also Str-B. II.193ff; 527ff.

118. R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*; 296.

119. A. Richardson, *The Miracle Stories of the Gospels*, 60-61.

120. *Ibid.*, 62.

121. *BAGD*, 495; Josephus, *War*, 2.306, *Vita* 147; *Barnabas* 5:14; *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 2.2; *Shepherd of Herma: Vision* 3,2,1.

122. *Iliad* 12,37; *Proverbia Aesopi* 105 P.; Ps.38:11; 2 Macc 7:37; 9:11; En.25:6; 100:13; inscr. in Ramsay, *Phrygia=The Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia*, [1895-7], Vol II, 250 no. 361 λήψεται παρὰ τοῦ μάστεργα αἰώνιον; see *BAGD*, 495.

123. Hippocr., *Coac.* 136 Vol 5.612l; *Inscriptiones Graecae* ed.min II and III 1028, 89[1BC]; Wilcken, *Chrest.* 68, 32 [132BC]: god brings healing, see *BAGD*, 798.

124. Ael Aristid. 33, 9K.=51, 573D; Mt 9:21, 22b; Mk 5:23, 28; 6:56; Lk 8:36; Acts 4:9; 14:9; see BAGD, 798.

125. BAGD 798.

126. God: 1Cor 1:21; 2Tim 1:9; Tit 3:5; Christ: Mt 18:11; Lk 19:10; Jn 12:47; 1Tim 1:15; 2Tim 4:18; Heb 7:25. BAGD 797.

127. The force of the word would carry the meaning of both physical and spiritual healing. It involves being cured of physical ailment, and also being forgiven and put in the right relationship with God.

128. Sanders questions the authenticity of Jesus' sayings which convey the promise of salvation to sinners, like this saying in Mark 2:17; and Matthew 15:24. However, at the same time, he maintains that "it is unlikely that the Church created from nothing the charge that Jesus associated himself with sinners." E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 175-176. Therefore, there must be a historical core upon which the early church generated such sayings. Whether they be creations of the church, the sayings would still reflect to some extent the interest and the mind of the historical Jesus.

129. E.g. "Why did you [Pausanias] not stay in Sparta instead of going into exile? And he said, Because physicians, too, are wont to spend their time, not among the healthy, but where the sick are." "ὅτι οὐδ' οἱ ἰατροί," ἔφη, "παρὰ τοῖς ὑγιαίνουσιν, ὅπου δέ οἱ νοσοῦντες, διατρίβειν εἰώθασιν." Plutarch, *Apophthegmata Laconica* 230 F2; see also Diogenes Laertius, *Antisth.* 6.1.6. [c.3rd century AD].

130. That the sins of the parents could lead to physical defects in their children is attested in passages cited in Str-B II.529, and ante-natal sin was regarded as possible. See interpretations [though of much later date] of Genesis 25:22 in *Gen R* 63.6 and also of *Song of Songs R* 1.41. i.e. it was believed that when a pregnant woman worships in a heathen temple, the foetus also commits idolatry. For further discussion see: B. Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 342f; R.H. Fuller, *Miracles*, 94-5; C.K. Barrett, *St John*, 294-5; R.E. Brown, *John i-xii*, 371.

131. R.E. Brown, *John i-xii*, 208, 371.

132. B. Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 339; R. Schnackenburg, *St John Vol 2*, chs.5-12, 244. Bultmann suggests that there is no strict literary dependence of the healing of the blind man in John 9 upon the stories in Mark 8:22-26; 10:46-52; for the Johannine account produces its own independent variant motif in those stories such as theodicy. The question of theodicy occasioned by people who are blind from birth is dealt with in Jewish legend. R. Bultmann, *John*, 330. Bultmann however attributes not only the miracle story but also the following discussion to the 'signs' source, with expansions by the evangelist in vv.22-23; 29-30; 39-41. Dodd in his book *The Historical Tradition* discusses the history of the tradition without adducing any such source. Fortna attributes the miracle to the 'signs' source. R.T. Fortna, *The Gospel of Signs, SNTSMS II*, [Cambridge:Cambridge University Press, 1970], 71-2. Schnackenburg suggests that "if the evangelist did find the disciples' question in his source, he was quite happy to retain it in order to show by this example, that an ancient and oppressive question had been given a new answer by Jesus." R. Schnackenburg, *St John*, Vol 2, 240-1.

133. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 151.
134. R. Schnackenburg, R. *St John*, 240; Dodd suggests that the vocabulary is Johannine but the idea of theodicy is not. *The Historical Tradition*, 187; cp. R. Bultmann, *John*, 330.
135. R.T. Fortna, *The Fourth Gospel and its Predecessors*, [Edinburgh:T&T Clark, 1989], 109-110.
136. *Ibid.*
137. C.H. Dodd, *The Historical Tradition*, 228, 322.
138. "In other healing narratives, there are discussions of questions such as the legitimacy of healing on the Sabbath [Mk 3:1-6; and in particular [Lk 13:10-17; 14:1-6], the propriety of extending the benefits of Christ's work to gentiles [Mk 7:27-29; Mat 15:24-28], the nature and power of faith [Mk 5:35-36; 9:22-24; Mat 8:5-10; 9:28-29; Jn 4:46-54], and the forgiveness of sins [Mk 2:5-11]". C.H. Dodd, *The Historical Tradition*, 186-7.
139. C.H. Dodd, *The Historical Tradition*, 187.
140. Cp. "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Forgiveness of sins is God's work alone, and this provides the lynchpin between John 9 and the healing of the paralytic. C.H. Dodd, *The Historical Tradition*, 187.
141. J. Bligh, "The Man Born Blind," *HeyJ*, [1966], 132-3; see also Beasley-Murray, *John*, 152.
142. E. Haenchen, *A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, Chs 7-21, [Philadelphia:Fortress Press, 1984], 41; see also Beasley-Murray, *John*, 152.
143. J. Painter, "John 9 and the Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel," *JSNT* 28 [1986], 32.
144. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 152f.
145. R. Schnackenburg, *St John*, Vol 2. 241.
146. Sanders and Mastin, *John*, 237; cp. also with John 11:4; B. Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 342; C.K. Barrett, *St John*, 295; E. Haenchen, *The Gospel of John*, 37.
147. B.F. Westcott, *The Gospel according to St John I & II*, [London:John Murray, 1908], 144; J. Marsh, *John*, 377.
148. B.F. Westcott, *St John*, 144.
149. Cp. John 11:4; and also 2:11. see R. Bultmann, *John*, 331.
150. R. Kysar, *John*, [Minneapolis:Augsburg Publishing House, 1986], 148ff.

151. Van der Loos, *Miracles*, 259.
152. Van der Loos, *Miracles*, 259.
153. K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics: The doctrine of Reconciliation*, IV. ii [Edinburgh:T & T Clark, 1958], 223.
154. *Ibid.*
155. "If the sufferer accepted them willingly, long life, confirmation of his knowledge of Torah, and forgiveness of all sins were his reward". C.K. Barrett, *St John*, 295; Str-B II.193.
156. J.A. Sanders, *Suffering as Discipline*, 107ff.
157. See list of 'L' passages in J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke i-ix*, 84.
158. R. Bultmann, *Synoptic Tradition*, 21, 54f.
159. This is unlikely because Josephus speaks of some Samaritans who were massacred at Pilate's command on their way to the sanctuary, but that was after Jesus' death. The collapse of the tower is also unattested outside the gospels, however, the fact that nothing like that is reported to have happened during the building of the sanctuary does not prove that it could not have happened. See E. Schweizer, *Luke*, 219.
160. J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 156f.
161. E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 109.
162. *Ibid.*, see also fn 58.
163. *Ibid.*, 110.
164. J. Blinzler, J. "Die Niedermetzelung von Galilaern durch Pilatus," *NovT* 2 [1957-8], 24-49.
165. V. Taylor, *Fourth Gospel Tradition*, 69.
166. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke x-xxiv*, 1004.
167. *Ibid.*, 1007.
168. Job 4:7; 8:20; 22:4f; Str-B II.193-7.
169. I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 554.
170. Van der Loos, *Miracles*, 258.
171. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke x-xxiv*, 1005.
172. E.C. Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, 353.

173. A. Richardson, *The Miracle Stories of the Gospels*, 44, 63.
174. E.S.C. Handy, *Polynesian Religion*, 43-50; W.H.R. Rivers, *Medicine, Magic and Religion*, 36-7,40,71,73; M. Shirres, "Tapu" *JPS* 91 no.1 [1982], 29-51; J. Parratt, *Papuan Belief and Ritual*, [New York:Vantage Press, 1976], 38-42.
175. W.H.R. Rivers, *Medicine, Magic and Religions*, 32.
176. *Ibid.*, 70-71.
177. G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, 278.
178. For a list of these numerous *taboos* practised by the Samoans see G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, 281-282. A few of these *taboos* [the Samoan word is *tapui* meaning 'to fence round' or 'to protect'], include the plaiting of the coconuts which forbade the use of such trees by the ordinary public, the *tapui* of the family deities which prohibits the eating of the various incarnations of the family deities, the *tapui* of the chiefs which regulates the right form of behaviour towards chiefs [*matai*], the *tapui* which helps protect family relationships between children and parents and especially between brothers and sisters, and also the many different *tapui* which enforce certain ethical and moral standards of behaviour within the Samoan community. George Turner, an earlier missionary also wrote concerning these numerous *taboos*, *tapui*, or *sā* as they were known to the Samoans. A brief list of these *taboos* includes,
- i. the sea-spike *taboo*: plaiting the trees with coconut leaves indicated that the trees were forbidden to be picked of its fruits. The breaking of the *taboo* could lead to one being mortally wounded in the sea.
 - ii. the cross-stick *taboo*: stick being suspended from object protected. The violation would lead to victim being overcome by a disease.
 - iii. ulcer-*taboo*: burying in the ground of clam shells which made the land and property *taboo*. Transgression of property could bring ulcerous sores and swellings upon one's body. Upon confession and presentations to the offended party could lead to forgiveness and recovery.
 - iv. the tic-doloureux *taboo*: fixing a spear in the ground close to the tree which needed protection. Violation could cause swellings of the head.
 - v. death-*taboo*: pouring oil into a small calabash and burying in the ground marked by a mound of sand. No one would dare break such *taboo*.
- From these few illustrations, one can see the remarkable widespread of such system within ancient Samoa. G. Turner, *Samoa*, 185-188.
179. M. Mead, "Tabu" *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol VII, 502-505.
180. M. Shirres, "Tapu" 46.
181. *Ibid.*, 48.
182. E.S.C. Handy, *Polynesian Religion*, 234.
183. E. Tregear, *The Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, [Wellington:nd], 49; cp. *Reed's Concise Maori Dictionary* which defines *hara* as sin or the violation of *tapu* [3rd ed., London:Allen & Unwin, 1951], 20. See also B. Biggs, *Complete English-Maori Dictionary*, [New Zealand:Auckland University Press, 1981], 176.

184. E.S.C. Handy, *Polynesian Religion*, 234.
185. G. Pratt, *Samoa Dictionary*; G. Milner, *Samoa Dictionary*; *sala*=fine or punishment, *sala*=to do wrong, incorrect.
186. See the controversy between Freeman and Shore on the meaning of *aga* and *amio*: *Oceania* 54, [1983-4], 247-254; "Reply to Derek Freeman," *Oceania* 55 [1985], 218-223; "Reply to Shore," *Oceania* 55 [1985], 214-218.
187. C. Macpherson, "Samoa Medicine," 3.
188. *Ibid.*, 4.
189. E.S.C. Handy, *Polynesian Religion*, 233,241.
190. E. Best, "Maori Religion and Mythology," *Dominion Mus.Bull.* no.10 sec.i, [Wellington:1924], 198-9.
191. E.S.C. Handy, *Polynesian Religion*, 242.
192. C.D. Parsons, "Notes on Maori Sickness Knowledge and Healing Practices," *Healing Practices in the South Pacific*, ed by C.D. Parsons, [Hawaii:University of Hawaii Press, 1985], 216.
193. C.D. Parsons, "Notes on Maori Sickness," 217.
194. P. Buck, *The Coming of the Maori*, [2nd ed., Wellington:Whitcombe & Tombs, 1950], 405; J. Metge, *The Maoris of New Zealand*, [London:Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967], 81; C.D. Parsons, "Notes on Maori Sickness," 217; cp. C.D. Parsons, "Idioms of Distress: Kinship and Sickness Among the People of the Kingdom of Tonga," *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 8[1]:71-93.
195. R.A. Goodman, "Aitu Beliefs," 469ff.
196. C. Mcpherson, "Samoa Medicine," 12.
197. Through contact with the West as well as with the impact of Christianity, the distinction of sickness emerged. Instead of just one paradigm we have two, the indigenous and the introduced. The indigenous was and still is known as the *ma'i Samoa* [Samoa sickness] and the introduced as *ma'i Papalagi* [European sickness]. For the *ma'i Papalagi*, Samoa healers cannot treat many because they do not have access to the necessary information about them. The *ma'i Samoa* on the other hand Western medicine cannot treat successfully because it does not acknowledge the existence of certain elements necessary to effective diagnosis and treatment. C. Macpherson, "Samoa Medicine," 6.
198. C. Macpherson, "Samoa Medicine," 4.
199. G. Turner, *Samoa*, 34; idem. *Nineteen Years*, 180ff.
200. C. McPherson, "Samoa Medicine," 2; see also I.M. Lazar, "*Ma'i Aitu*," 161-179; T.F. Lazar, "Indigenous Curing Patterns," 288-302.

201. C. McPherson, "Samoan Medicine," 3.
202. J. Williams, *Missionary Enterprises*, 545ff; G. Turner, *Samoa*, 17.
203. G. Turner, *Samoa*, 17-18, 75; idem. *Nineteen Years*, 238ff.
204. Turner was drawing a comparison of the curse upon an adulterous wife in Numbers 5:21 with the traditional belief in sickness and affliction caused by immoral and unethical behaviour. He wrote,
 Ulcerous sore, dropsy and inflammation of the abdomen were considered special judgements of the gods on concealed thieving, adultery and other crimes; and the effect of the curses invoked by the aggrieved parties. G. Turner, *Nineteen Years*, 313.
205. M. Mead, *Social Organization of Manu'a*, 88f; L.L. & R. Neich, "Pregnancy, Birth, and Infancy," 461-465; P.J. Kinloch, "Midwife and Midwifery," 205ff.
206. Neich and Neich wrote that Krämer recorded the prohibition of eating alone, adding that its purpose was to prevent the woman from eating prohibited food. Margaret Meads noted a general prohibition on the pregnant woman to do anything secret or alone. She suggested that since anything done alone is necessarily shameful or disgraceful, food eaten in private is presumed to be stolen. Neich and Neich, "Pregnancy, Birth, and Infancy", 462. See also P.J. Kinloch, "Midwives and Midwifery," 205.
207. T.F. Lazar, "Indigenous Curing Patterns," 296-7.
208. E.S.C. Handy, *Polynesian Religion*, 50.
209. G. Turner, *Nineteen Years*, 224.
210. *Ibid.*, 313.
211. *Ibid.*, 345.
212. L.A. Filoiali'i & L. Knowles, "Ifoga: The Samoan Practice of seeking Forgiveness for Criminal Behaviour," *Oceania* 53 [1982-3], 384-388.

CHAPTER 5

A. THE HOLISTIC NATURE OF JESUS' HEALING

B. THE CONCEPT OF HEALTH, HEALING AND WHOLENESS IN SAMOA.

1. Introduction

When one speaks of health, healing and wholeness, our immediate thoughts will be directed to the state of well-being in the absence of disease and illness, to the work of doctors and nurses, to institutions like hospitals and health care systems, to all researches in medicine and drugs, and all the various aspects and dimensions of the medical profession. This is rightly so because it would be difficult to rid these terms of the restriction to purely physical health and healing which is common in popular usage. However, in this thesis, these terms are not used in a restrictive way but in a more comprehensive sense and are not confined to only one aspect of one's being. The terms health, healing and wholeness here are used to describe the restoration of a human person to wholeness and well-being in every sphere, whether it be body, mind, spirit or community. K.L. Vaux defines 'health' as a "state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being."¹ This more comprehensive meaning has been suggested to be in line with the biblical concept of health, healing and wholeness.² It is also worth noting that the semantic tendency in modern usage is to extend the meaning of health and healing to include the totality of a human person as we can see from the definition of 'health' by the World Health Organization. In its constitution which was adopted

in September 1948, 'health' is defined as a "state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."³

The main objective of this chapter is to try and show that the healing ministry of Jesus represents an attempt to provide a more holistic approach to health and healing rather than simply to cure a physical ailment. Jesus' healing ministry must not be equated with the bio-medical model of healing which basically seeks to cure the physical symptoms which have been caused from some biological imbalance or physical malfunction, but rather his healing represented an attempt to understand illness and disease within the whole context of the human entity which is not only a unity of the mind, body and soul, but also a social being with all its social and religious relationships and responsibilities to the family, to the community and also to the supernatural world of spirits and divine beings.

The general tendency of the bio-medical model is to think of the individual as being the essential unit of disease. In fact a disease is generally understood as being confined to the common bacteria, virus and parasites which invade the human body. However, the importance of treating a sick person as a whole being in relation to his/her community and environment, as well as to his/her systems of beliefs, has become more and more recognised within the medical profession. The study of social sciences reveal that illness and healing must be seen not in isolation but within a wider social context. Various social and anthropological studies in relation to biblical sickness, diseases and their consequent remedies have enriched our understanding not only of matters relating to health and healing generally, but much more important of the nature and significance of the healing miracles of Jesus as we find in the gospels.⁴

Jesus' miracles of healing and his acts of exorcism in the gospels clearly portrayed his concern not only for the physical cure and remedy of illness, but also for the healing and wholeness of the sick person whom he saw in need of something more than simply the healing of the body. His concern was not only to relieve the sick from pain and suffering, but also to provide freedom and peace of mind to those whose ailments and disabilities were thought to have been caused by supernatural forces, evil spirits and demons. The moral or ethical dimension of sickness and disease was a significant aspect of the healing process in the ministry of Jesus. Those whose sickness were believed to be caused by sin and guilt, he offered both the restoration of their health and the forgiveness of their sins [Mk 2:5; Mt 9:2; Lk 5:20].

Emphasis will be focussed on Jesus' concern for health, healing and wholeness in his miracles and acts of exorcism. In establishing that significant motif, attention will be directed to the traditional Samoan understanding of health, healing and wholeness. The writer believes that the traditional Samoan concept of health and healing is holistic, and this will put it in close parallel with the New Testament understanding of holistic healing represented by Jesus. I find it disturbing that the healing ministry of Jesus has not been given much emphasis and significance in the ministry of the Congregational Christian Church in Samoa, except to understand it in spiritual terms as the healing of the soul from sin and moral failure. This reluctance may have been the result of early mission's scepticism of traditional healing practices and the danger of misunderstanding Jesus' healing ministry within such framework. Traditional Samoan healing has been identified as pagan and un-Christian when Christian mission first came into contact with Samoan culture. This assumption was probably the consequence of 19th century Western discrimination against any belief in healing which have some association with what

was understood as superstition which included beliefs in demons and evil spirits, a discrimination which was not wholly unfounded in the light of the mediaeval abuse of such beliefs in the form of magic, witches and witchcraft. It may also indirectly be a consequence of the Enlightenment period of the 18th and 19th centuries with its greater emphasis on newly acquired knowledge which cast doubt and suspicion on antiquarian beliefs of the world with its spirit beliefs and world-view. As a result of this attitude, traditional healing had not received much positive appreciation within early Christian mission. This is unfortunate for Christianity in Samoa where so much of the healing ministry in the gospels is either spiritualised or demythologised rather than being understood holistically. The traditional healing approach which was communally based and that which understood sickness as more than the physical malfunction of the body would have provided a healthy precedent in understanding Jesus' healing ministry, which is indeed an integral part of his gospel. To say this, is not to claim total identity between Samoan ideas of healing and those of the New Testament. But it is to recognise that these two do have several common elements which have been sadly neglected in much of the 19th and 20th century Western Christianity.

2. Biblical concepts of health, healing and wholeness

Health is a word commonly used today as synonymous with the 'soundness of the body' however, according to Hurding, its meaning can also include the concept of well-being in every aspect of human life.⁵ Because the human person is a social being, whose livelihood and existence lies within his or her relationship to the social group, it is important therefore to understand individual health and well-being within such social framework. The welfare of an individual must never be understood in isolation from all his social and religious responsibilities to the

community that he belongs to. For the traditional Samoan society, the community included not only the living members but also family gods, ancestral spirits and the spirits of the dead whom many believed to be still part of their community. The state of well-being is measured by the harmony and good relationship one maintains with these members of the community. Something very much like this can be found elsewhere also. Even in modern Western society, some would argue that each person is a composite being, and his health and well-being is not simply a matter of physical concern, but one which involves the concern for the whole person. People like Maddock suggest that 'health' can never be simply equated with human wellness and an absence of disease. This might be an over-statement of the case for the wider understanding of health, however, one must not fully ignore the significance of physical welfare in the concept of health and healing. Physical well-being is an integral part of the whole process of health, healing and wholeness and much more. Health is wider than simply the absence of sickness. It is to do with the totality of creation, and with the creator. Health is a matter of being whole and therefore, it must deal with the ultimate objectives of life, rather than simply the absence of physical disharmony.⁶ Maddock makes a significant contribution in the understanding of health by emphasizing the communal dimension and implication of health within our human nature. Wilson makes a helpful distinction between cure and healing when he wrote that 'cure' means a "restoration to function in society" whereas 'healing' involves a "restoration to purposeful living in society."⁷ The communal dimension of an individual's state of health and well-being is indeed a very important aspect.

Wilson defines wholeness as relating more to the quality of living than to 'bodily' health. Although this definition points to the profound significance of the quality of life beyond physical well-being, yet it would be difficult to envisage true

wholeness within a total absence of physical well-being. The state of well-being is not fragmentary, it must be considered in totality of the human entity. True wholeness therefore, must take into consideration a condition in which the human spirit, mind and body are united in accomplishing health and well-being for the individual. It should involve harmony within one's whole being, and this should also extend to the environment, to the community and thence, to the world.⁸ The term wholeness therefore may suggest completeness in every aspect of human existence.

The word 'health' occurs rarely in the Old Testament. Wilkinson points out that the *AV* uses the term fifteen times and the *RSV* only six times.⁹ Even the modern versions do not use it any more often. The most striking feature of the Old Testament is that it presents its teaching not by definition and argument, but by illustration and examples. The Old Testament lays before its readers not a definition of health systematically expounded, but a picture of the characteristics of healthy people illustrated by their life, their character and their deeds.

Another interesting observation is that, the Old Testament lacks a specific term which means 'physical body'. It has many terms which describe different parts of the body, but there is no word for the body as we think of it today as the 'physical body'. Wilkinson suggests that the Hebrew term *g^ewiyyāh* is the closest to meaning physical body. The word itself is rarely used, only thirteen times, of which eight refer to a dead body, three to a being seen in a vision or dream, and on only two occasions does it refer to living bodies [Gen 47:18; Neh 9:37].¹⁰ Stacey suggests that this is the only Hebrew anthropological term which does not have any psychical meaning but only a purely physical one.¹¹ Wilkinson interprets the rarity of the usage of *g^ewiyyāh* as indicating that perhaps Hebrew does not feel

the need of a word for the body regarded as a purely physical object.¹² The Hebrew body functions not simply as something physical but as the medium of the spiritual and personal life of an individual.¹³

The Hebrew language has the word *basar* which refers to the flesh or substance of which the body is made. This material substance is characteristic both of man and animal.¹⁴ *Basar* forms a part of the whole human body. It is mentioned side by side with the bones-'*esem* [Job 2:5]. In this sense, *basar* refers to what is externally visible, as distinct from the bones as the inner structure. It is this external part of the physical substance which makes up the body [Ex 30:32; Lev 14:9; 15:13,16; 16:4; Num 8:7]. *Basar* sometimes translates as 'whole body' not only as its externally visible parts [Ps 38:3a; 119:20; Prov 4:22]; but even here, Wolff indicates that in this sense, "*basar* like *nephes* points toward man *per se*, but now in his bodily aspects."¹⁵ Such will be in line with the Hebrew understanding of the human person. A strict dualism which feels that flesh and spirit, body and soul, are irreconcilable opposites is completely unknown in the Old Testament view of human nature.¹⁶ The great consequence of Old Testament psychology is that it brings the body into organic connection with the psychic or spiritual life. The body is not simply flesh and bones but a body with life and spirit. And as such, it is the medium of the personal and spiritual life of an individual.

The significance of the virtual absence of the word 'body' meaning the physical body from the Old Testament is that 'health' is not presented there in primarily physical terms. Health is the wholeness of one's being and personality. It is not confined to physical well-being, but it also includes the welfare of one's spiritual life which is expressed in one's relationship to God and also to others.

Wilkinson points out that apart from the physical aspect of health, the Old Testament also speaks of its ethical, spiritual and social dimensions.¹⁷ These four aspects of 'health' indicate that the Old Testament understands the human person as a unity of the body-soul and spirit whose well-being must be understood in terms of the welfare of this total entity. These four dimensions of health in the Old Testament can be briefly stated as follows.

i. Health is basically a state of wholeness of one's being or existence which is fully conveyed by the term *shalom*. The Old Testament understands the human person as an undivided entity of body-soul and spirit. Apart from the physical aspect of the human being, the Old Testament writers also give significance to its moral and spiritual dimension. Wilkinson suggests that the term *shalom* "comes nearest to expressing the Old Testament concept of health;" i.e. it occurs about 250 times in the Hebrew Bible, 27 times in the Psalms, 27 times in Isaiah and 31 times in Jeremiah. In the English translations, *shalom* is commonly translated as 'peace' but its essential meaning is not peace in the sense of the absence of war, but it encompass a wider perspective which includes "completeness, soundness, welfare and peace" in its meaning.¹⁸ Von Rad gives the meaning as 'well-being' with a strong emphasis on the material side.¹⁹ There is therefore general agreement that the meaning of *shalom* is that of 'wholeness', of 'completeness', and of 'well-being', and that it may denote the occurrence of these characteristics in every sphere of life, whether physical, mental and spiritual, or individual, social and national.²⁰ True *shalom* comes from God, for man finds his true wholeness and complete fulfilment in God. Although we read of the *shalom* of the wicked in Job 15:21; 21:9; and Psalm 73:3, this is usually a description of their material prosperity. However, it is in God alone that one finds true wholeness in all one's being and in all one's relationships, and this is what the Old Testament means by health.

ii. Health in the Old Testament is closely related to obedience to God's word and law. Such an understanding of health is set out explicitly in passages such as [Ex 15:26; 23:20-26; Lev 26:14-16; 23:26; Deut 7:12-15; 28:27-29; 58-62; Prov 3:7-8]. If the people of Israel listen to the voice of God and do what is right and obey his law, then they will find that he will not bring disease and sickness upon them. We see also this connection between obedience and sickness illustrated in the case of individuals. Miriam spoke against Moses and she was smitten with an unclean skin disease [Num 12:1-15]. Gehazi became the victim of the leprosy of Naaman because of his greed and deceit [2Kgs 5:26-27]; and Jehoram, king of Judah was stricken with a fatal intestinal disease because of his unfaithfulness to God [2Chron 21:11-19]. Disobedience results in disease and illness but health is the product of obedience. The state of health in relation to physical well-being as well as the spiritual and moral condition is closely related to one's relationship to God. Health is much more than the absence of illness and disease. Its positive dimension consists of spiritual well-being, of blessing and the consciousness of being in good relationship to God. Obedience and a righteous relationship to God and to others would lead to God's blessing which is the basis of health and well-being. The book of Job struggles with such an understanding in the light of Job's conviction concerning his destiny.

iii. Righteousness is fundamental to the Old Testament concept of health. A right relationship to God produces *shalom* [Is 32:17]. Righteousness and *shalom* flourish together [Pss 72:7; 85:10; Is 48:18; Mal 2:6]. The righteousness of Abraham with his obedience and faith made him a supreme example of health in the Old Testament understanding of that word. This righteousness is also indicative in one's relationship to others and to the community generally. In the writings of the

prophets, the prophetic message emphasized that one's healthy relationship with God is measured by one's relationship to other fellow people.

iv. When the Old Testament speaks of strength, it does not simply mean physical strength, but the strength of a person throughout his whole being which of course includes the strength of the body. Karl Barth defines health in terms of strength. For him, health is "the strength to be as man."²¹ Weakness, illness and disease, are all the opposites of strength. Both strength and weakness affect the whole of the human person and not simply the physical body. Health in the Old Testament is manifested by strength and long life. Strength is sometimes identified with *shalom* [Ps 29:11] and in several places it is regarded as God's gift [Pss 28:7-9; 68:35; 138:3; Is 40:29-31; 41:10; Zech 10:6]. Long life was seen as God's blessing to those who obey him [Deut 6:2; 30:20; 32:46-7; 1Kgs 3:24; Pss 34:12-14; 91:16; Prov 3:1-2; 9:10-11; 10:27]. Abraham was blessed with long life [Gen 15:15], and we are told that he "died in a good old age, an old man full of years" [Gen 25:8].

In the light of these four dimensions of health, it is significant to acknowledge the much wider implications of health than merely the absence of illness and disease. Health is a term which describes the welfare of the whole person which in the Old Testament consists of the indivisible unity of the body-soul and spirit. The welfare of these aspects of human nature reflected in the harmony of their complex relationships to one another and especially to God, helps in establishing health and well-being within each individual.

In the New Testament, the word used for being healthy and sound is ὑγιής. Literally, it means healthy or sound in relation to people [Mt 15:31; Acts 4:10], or

of the individual members of their bodies [Mt 12:13/Mk 3:5/Lk 6:10]. It can also be used to describe the result of a cure or restoration of someone to health [Jn 5:11,15; 7:23]; or healing from some physical affliction and disease [Mk 5:34].²² In the Pastoral Epistles, the participle of the equivalent verb is used mainly in the metaphorical sense to mean sound teaching [τῆ ὑγιαίνουσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ, 1Tim 1:10; 2Tim 4:3; Tit 1:9; 2:1]; and preaching [ὑγιαίνουσιν λόγοις, 1Tim 6:3; 2Tim 1:13]. Wilkinson points out that the New Testament expresses 'health' in a similar sense to that found in the Old Testament. The classical Greek word for health is ὑγίεια which carries the meaning of physical soundness. It is from this Greek term that the New Testament gets its word for 'healthy' and 'sound'. In most cases, the adjective ὑγιής refers to the physical aspect of soundness [Mt 12:13; Jn 5:9]. However, it is interesting to note that words cognate with the word ὑγίεια are used by the LXX to translate the Hebrew *shalom* [Gen 29:6; 37:14; 43:27; 2Sam 20:9]. In most of these cases, the word occurs in an inquiry about the welfare of a person. The emphasis is not so much on the physical well-being as on the general state of the person about whom the inquiry was made. However, the significant point is that, both *shalom* and ὑγιής coincide in expressing the idea of soundness or wholeness of the human person which is the essential aspect of health.²³ Other characteristics of health in the New Testament are indicated by Wilkinson to be closely connected with the concepts of life, blessedness, holiness and maturity. Such senses presuppose the Old Testament understanding of health and wholeness.²⁴

Miracles of healing performed by Jesus displayed an attempt not only to deal with the physical symptoms of illness and disability, but a holistic approach to relieve the patient both of the physical and spiritual problem. Jesus, like many Jews, believed that sickness is more than a physical malfunction of the body, and

therefore healing should involve a complete restoration of not only the physical imbalance in the functioning of the body, but also the restoration of sick people in all their relationships and responsibilities to the world of heavenly powers and spirits,²⁵ to their families, their villages and communities respectively. Jesus and his contemporaries believed that what caused sickness was not limited to natural causes but also included the supernatural influence of demons and evil spirits upon their welfare. They also recognised the influence of sin and guilt on the physical well-being of individuals. All these widened the scope of healing beyond the mere alleviation of physical symptoms and pain to include the concern for the total person, which in Jewish understanding is the unity of the body-soul and spirit. Jesus' miracles of healing bore witness to such concern. His miracles of healing and acts of exorcism reflected a concern which surpassed physical health, pointing the restored victim to a new direction and to a new purpose of life.

We would expect Jesus like many good Jews, to understand the human person in the light of the Old Testament view of humanity in its totality. The Old Testament concept of the human person is ideally portrayed in the creation stories of Genesis. Here the person is understood to be a unity of the body-soul [*nephesh*] and spirit [*rūah*].²⁶ The term *nephesh* denotes the totality which has come about through the combination of the body formed out of earth and the divine breath breathed into it. It contains human impulses and emotions which are closely associated with the life of a person. The *rūah* means the individual spirit, the *mana* or the vital energy dwelling within a person. It is possible for a person to attribute marked deteriorations in one's physical or psychic state to the impairment or diminution of the *rūah*.²⁷ The body is the form in which the psychic life is expressed and a strict separation between body and soul would seem unreal. These two aspects of human nature, the inner spiritual component and the

physical aspect which the Genesis accounts give us, are characteristic of the whole Old Testament view of human nature. This two-sided character of humanity is universal within the Old Testament [Pss 90:3; 146:4; Job 4:19; 10:9; 33:6; 34:14f; Eccles 12:7]; and a Jew would understand a person as a unity of the physical living body and the spirit. A person does not have a body and a soul, but is both of them at once. The body functions as the medium of spiritual and personal life. These components are integrally united and this makes people what they are.

In the light of this close relationship of body-soul and spirit within humanity, it is important therefore to understand the concept of wholeness and well-being in terms of such relationship. This relationship is best conveyed in the words of Jenuval [AD 60-130] when he wrote, "You should pray to have a sound mind in a sound body" [*Orandum est ut sit mens sana in corpore sano*].²⁸ True well-being comes when the soul and body achieve unanimity of health and soundness. A person's welfare would depend not only upon physical well-being but also upon the welfare of his spirit. True and complete healing must be closely related to the maintaining of the harmony of these various components. Each part is integral to the welfare of the whole person. A good, healthy and strong Jew is one who is not only physically well and fit, but one who maintains a good relationship to his community and more important to God.

Another very significant aspect of the Old Testament understanding of people concerns their relationships to the community. The striking fundamental characteristic of all forms of community in the ancient world and in particular Israel, is the strength of their sense of solidarity. This sense of solidarity affects the individual and motivates individual conduct. The solidarity is shown not only in the external structure of the clan, but also in the spiritual and psychical unity in

which each individual is a representative of the whole, and in turn has his entire private life shaped by the whole. The feeling of solidarity in the settled community is directed and expressed within the framework of the family unit. The effect of one's conduct affects the clan and family. This is clearly shown in the sin of Achan which consequently brought punishment upon his clan [Jos 7:24ff]. Similarly, an act of merit of one would bring blessing upon the whole family [Jud 1:24f; Jos 6:22-25]. The solidarity of an individual with the clan and family in ancient Israel, is a bond which is sanctioned by the community. This solidarity is sealed by the rules and obligations which individuals are expected to abide by. The welfare and well-being of individuals and their respective social groups are seen within this communal context. One's health is communally oriented, and his welfare is closely bound up with his respond to these social and moral obligations.

Even in the post-exilic community with its individualistic emphasis, the individuals are still conscious of standing within the community of the pious [Pss 16:3; 40:4,17; 73:15] from which they derive their highest powers. In the Jewish and Hellenistic milieu with its strong sectarian piety and extreme individualism, they still maintain the fundamental principles of the community. The law is fundamental in these sects, and it binds the individuals together and helps maintain a communal orientation. The welfare of an individual is closely linked to solidarity with the community, and departure from the laws and values of the community could lead to misery. The solidarity of individuals with their respective communities means that matters affecting one's health and well-being have significant communal dimensions. By virtue of human nature, one's health is directly related to the community.

In the Old Testament, Yahweh is spoken of not only as the healer but also as the

power which inflicts diseases. He declares his healing power and his ability to inflict the disease of the Egyptians on his own people if they should be disobedient [Ex 15:26]. The substance of the option Yahweh offers here is set forth in terms of obedience and judgement, the standard accompaniments of Old Testament covenant-making in the ancient Near East. The statement reflects the confession of Yahweh's special nature and relationship to his people. Here, it is identified as the confession of special blessing upon those who are in right relationship with Yahweh. The formula no doubt has strong deuteronomic overtones to it. Yahweh provides health and well-being and avoids sickness and affliction from those who obey and follow his will.²⁹ He is the source of all health and strength, and sickness and healing are considered to be within his power and concern. Whether human remedies and techniques also help or not, what is always essential is that the invalid in his sickness and the convalescent in his recovery should encounter Yahweh who directly sends both sickness and healing.³⁰ Saul's outbreak of madness and rage is attributed to an evil spirit from Yahweh [1Sam 16:14; 18:10; 19:9]. The healing of the leprosy of Naaman is attributed to Yahweh through his prophet Elisha [Ezek 5]. Hezekiah's recovery from his death-bed is attributed to God [Is 38:15,17,20]. Unlike other gods who are associated with healing such as Asklepios who had to endure the rivalry of Apollo, and Apollo has to tolerate the competition of *Machaon* and *Podalirius* [Asklepios' two sons];³¹ for Israel, dealing with sickness is Yahweh's exclusive prerogative. For Jews, the process surrounding sickness and healing can never be detached from Yahweh's activity.³² The image of God as 'healer' is developed further in the writings of the prophets. In Jeremiah 3:22, there is both the plea from Yahweh for the repentant to return and be healed as well as the assurance that the penitent will indeed do so. Jeremiah 30:17-22 contains an elaborate set of promises that God will indeed heal his people. Such healing includes the restoration of their communities, the rebuilding

of their city, and the restoration of their fortunes.

Isaiah 19:19-22 speaks of an altar of Yahweh to be erected in the land of Egypt which will result in the Egyptians turning to worship Yahweh. The judgement and the redemption of Egypt are described as Yahweh's 'smiting and healing' of the nation. Ezekiel speaks of the renewal of the people of God in terms of healing [47:8-12]. Two other variations on the theme of God's healing are portrayed in Malachi and Second Isaiah. In Malachi 4:1-3, the prophet speaks of the 'Day of the Lord' which will bring judgement to the 'arrogant and the evildoers' and healing to those who fear him. The servant's song of Isaiah 53:4-5 speaks of God transferring the disobedience and suffering of his people upon his servant thereby effecting healing upon them. God as the healer is acting through his servant to heal and to restore wholeness to his people.

Two other dimensions of healing as depicted by the prophets include the blessing of individual piety; and the promise of renewal of nature.³³ Jeremiah 17:5-18 reads like a psalm which includes such features as divine warning to those who do not trust God and the blessing of those that do [cp. Jer 17:7-8 with Ps 1:1-3; Jer 17:10 with Ps 62:12]. The words of Jeremiah 17:14 convey the relationship of the individual to Yahweh as the true source of healing and wholeness. The renewal of the heart is an important feature of Jeremiah 31:33 where the prophet speaks of the nature of the new covenant that God has initiated for his people. The imagery of God as the healer for both the individual and nation is well expressed in the prophetic tradition.

The idea of Yahweh who forgives and heals is significant in the Old Testament [2Chron 7:14; Ps 103:1-5]. In Psalm 107:17-22, sickness and affliction are

portrayed as the consequences of human sin. The prayer of Ecclesiastes 38:9 is frequently expressed in the psalms of lamentation [Pss 6:1-3; cp. 38:1ff; 88:1ff]. Westermann points out that only in a few of the individual lament psalms does the personal suffering of the lamenter stand so clearly in the forefront that we can recognise the problem.³⁴ In these psalms the individual statements of complaint permit us to recognise sickness as the cause of suffering, but in hardly any psalm can it be definitely stated that sickness is the only reason for the lament. Psalms 22,38, and 102 speak a great deal about sickness; in others, only single statements permit us to infer sickness. The question of whether these psalms are meant in the metaphorical sense or not remains open, and therefore the petition, "Heal me O Lord!" cannot always be assumed to be a petition of a sick person.³⁵

In some of the psalms, the plea for the forgiveness of sins is included in the petition of deliverance either from trouble or from sickness. The association of physical misfortune with moral responsibility either to God or to fellow-people clearly underlies the conviction of the psalmist. These penitential psalms are deeply rooted in the understanding that external well-being and inner relationship to God are here very closely connected, one to the other. When a person commits sin this is evidenced by his outward condition, likewise a blow one receives points to a transgression.³⁶ In some of the psalms, the victims protest their innocence and make a plea for justice. The lament of the victim indicates either a petition of the sufferer against injustice or a plea for mercy because of sin [Pss 5,7,17,26; 38:3-4]. Job was accused of sin, however, his consistent claim of innocence brought recompense from God. Physical distress in the Old Testament is often the occasion of self-examination. The belief that sickness and misfortune follow from moral failure and transgression is not unknown in the Old Testament. It would indicate that all is not well with Yahweh who is the source of all health and

healing. Sickness and misfortune is a sign of separation from Yahweh, the source of all goodness and well-being.

3. Words used for healing and well-being in the gospels

In the light of the various biblical understanding of health, healing, and well-being, it is important to see what the gospel stories mean when they speak of Jesus healing the sick and casting out demons. In the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus' healing ministry is described in various Greek terms. These terms include θεραπεύειν, ἰάομαι, σώζειν, καθαρίζειν, and ἀποκαθίστημι, which all have some bearing on the idea of healing.

θεραπεύειν in secular Greek means 'to serve a divinity', 'to be serviceable'. It has much the same meaning as διακονέω, λατρεύω, λειτουργέω, ὑπηρετέω.³⁷ θεραπεύω also acquires the sense of 'caring for the sick', 'to treat medically', 'to cure', 'to restore'. Metaphorically, θεραπεύω may be used of the healing of body and soul,³⁸ and healing may be divine.³⁹ In the LXX, θεραπεύω apart from the sense of 'serving' we also find the sense 'to heal'.⁴⁰ The facts are much the same in Philo except that his usage includes not only medical healing⁴¹ but also very predominantly the healing of the soul.⁴²

The term θεραπεύειν occurs 33 times in the Synoptic Gospels, and it carries the meaning 'to heal' and 'to restore'. In the gospels, θεραπεύω is used much more often in the sense of 'to heal' and always in such a way that the reference is not to medical treatment which might fail, but to real healing.⁴³ Jesus is portrayed as having the power to heal the sick, and the gospel stories reflect that most of those who sought healing received them, καὶ θεραπεύων πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν

μαλακίαν ἐν τῷ λαῷ [Mt 4:23]; καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· ἐγὼ ἐλθὼν θεραπεύσω αὐτόν [Mt 8:7]; καὶ ἐθεραπεύθη ὁ παῖς ἀπὸ τῆς ὥρας ἐκείνης [Mt 17:18]; very emphatic and full of certainty; [cp. Mk 1:34; Lk 5:15; 9:6].⁴⁴ The basic thought that constantly comes out of Jesus' healing acts is that there is no sickness or weakness or infirmities which he was not able to cure, however, Mark 6:5 tends to dispute such assumption. Through his healing acts, a person is portrayed as fully cured not only physically but much more than that; the person is restored into full and responsible participation in the community, and a communion with God. This aspect of the healing ministry of Jesus is shown earlier in the healing of the lepers, the curing of Peter's mother-in-law, the exorcism of the Gerasene demoniac, and the healing of Jairus' daughter.⁴⁵ Jesus has the power to heal the victims of all their sufferings and problems. As the bringer of the new age of the kingdom of God, he is the one that brings true healing and salvation to all those who suffer and are in pain.

The term *θεραπεύειν* is used within the summary context of the healing ministry of Jesus [Mk 1:34; Mt 8:16; Lk 4:40-41]. The summary indicates the full powers of Jesus to bring healing to those who came to him and others who were brought to be healed. This aspect of his ministry is highlighted in the reading in the synagogue from Isaiah [Lk 4:17-21], which Jesus confirmed to be fulfilled in his ministry. Jesus has the power to bring true healing and salvation to those who are oppressed and are held in bondage by various forces. His ministry is the good news of God bringing wholeness and freedom to those who suffer in one way or another.

The Greek word *ιάομαι* means 'to cure from an illness' [Lk 5:17; 6:19; 9:11,42; 14:4; 22:51; Jn 4:47]. Most uses of *ιάομαι* come from Luke. The term *ιάομαι*

also has a figurative meaning of deliverance from other ills which are of many kinds.⁴⁶ In Matthew 13:15, John 12:40 and Acts 28:27, which are all quotations from Isaiah, *ἰάομαι* implies "deliverance from sin and its consequences."⁴⁷ The relationship of sin to sickness is no strange concept in the ministry of Jesus. The figure of sin as a wound or a disease is also referred to in Hebrews 12:13, *ἵνα μὴ τὸ χῶλον ἐκραπῆ, ἰαθῆ δὲ μᾶλλον*, 1Clement 16:5, and Barnabas 5:2; *τῷ μάλωπι αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς ἰάθημεν*, cp. 1Pet 2:24, *ὅς τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν αὐτός, ἀνήνεγκεν ἐν τῷ σώματι αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον, ἵνα ταῖς ἀμαρτίαις ἀπογενόμενοι τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ ζήσωμεν, οὐ τῷ μάλωπι ἰάθητε*; all three from Isaiah 53:5.⁴⁸ The figurative usage of *ἰάομαι* as deliverance from sin and sickness reflects the wider significance and scope of Jesus' ministry of healing beyond mere physical cure to include deliverance from the consequence of sin and separation from God. The term *ἴατρος* is sometimes used to mean physician both of the body and soul. The term is used of Plato to mean a "physician of the soul."⁴⁹ Lambourne rightly suggests that there is no certain theological or medical distinction between the two terms *θεραπεύειν* and *ἰάομαι*. Both words are predominantly used in the healing narratives rather than in direct speech.⁵⁰

The term *σῶζειν* often has the meaning of "saving someone from an illness." It means 'to cure' of a physician,⁵¹ or of a medicine, *φάρμακον σῶζον*.⁵² The passive form *σῶζομαι* can mean not only "to be cured" but "to be or to stay in good health," *δεῖν δεῖ θεραπευόμενους βοῦν τοὺς σῶζεσθαι μέλλοντας*.⁵³ Religiously, the term could mean to be saved from all perils of life expected from the gods. The word *σῶζειν* is often used in relation to the healing activity of Jesus to mean 'save' or 'free' from disease.⁵⁴

In the narratives of healing performed by Jesus, *σῶζειν* occurs 16 times and

διασώζω twice [Mt 14:36; Lk 7:3]. In the context of the healing of the man with the withered hand in the synagogue [Mk 3:4 ἐξεστὶν τοῖς σάββασιν ...ψυχὴν σώσαι ἢ ἀποκτεῖναι]; σώζειν echoes the two-fold meaning of "to make alive" and "to make healthy." Other healing passages have the phrases, ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε. [Mk 5:34/Mt 9:22a/Lk 8:48]; μὴ φοβοῦ, μόνον πίστευον, καὶ σωθήσεται [Lk 8:50]; to the Samaritan leper who returned to give thanks, Jesus said, ἀναστὰς πορεύου· ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε [Lk 17:19]; and also to the blind man, ἀνέβλεψον· ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε [Lk 18:42]. The summary content of Jesus' ministry in Mark 6:56, ἐν ταῖς ἀγοραῖς ἐτίθεσαν τοὺς ἀσθενοῦντας ...καὶ ὅσοι ἄν ἤψαντο αὐτοῦ ἐσώζοντο, the term σώζειν is used to explain the effect of his presence and contact with the sick. The sick were made whole. Foerster points out that in the healing ministry of Jesus, σώζω never refers to a single member of the body but always to the whole person, and it is especially significant in view of the important phrase, ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε.⁵⁵ The choice of the word σέσωκέν leaves room for the view that the healing power of Jesus and the saving power of faith go beyond the physical life. This would be true especially of the woman with the flow of blood and one of the lepers whom Jesus healed in Luke 17:11-19. Similar words were said to the woman in Luke 7:50 whom Luke points out as a great sinner. In the case of the leper who returned to give thanks, Fitzmyer acknowledges that the story depicts Jesus making use of his power [as in 4:24,36; 5:17] once again to help the unfortunate people afflicted with an evil which ostracized them from normal society. Jesus' healing not only initiates their physical cleansing before the priest but much more important liberates them from being outcasts. The return of one Samaritan leper and Jesus' words ἀναστὰς πορεύου· ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε may suggest the Samaritan's 'seeing' ἰδὼν [17:15] as going beyond his physical cleansing to faith and to salvation. The cure that results from obedience to the words of

Jesus is transformed through the realisation by this one Samaritan leper of something much more than mere cleansing - it is salvation not only of the body but of his whole person, and this is affirmed by Jesus' own words.⁵⁶ Betz also draws attention to this element of salvation within the healing of the lepers. He writes, "though the ten lepers experience a miraculous healing, nine of them miss salvation which is decisive in Jesus' miracle of healing".⁵⁷

The term is also used in relation to the state of being freed or released from the activities of the demons, ἀπήγγειλαν δὲ αὐτοῖς οἱ ἰδόντες πῶς ἐσώθη ὁ δαιμονισθείς [Lk 8:36]. Its passive form means "to be restored to health" or "to get well."⁵⁸ The healing ministry of Jesus in the AV is translated from the Greek word σώζειν as 'made whole' and elsewhere as 'saved'. Thompson and Lambourne both agreed that such translation would best explain the nature of Jesus' healing ministry.⁵⁹ Healing is part of God's kingdom brought forth in the life and ministry of Jesus. Jesus' healing is an integral part of the kingdom of God, and his healing activities are not concerned merely with the removal of the physical symptoms from the sick person, but in saving the person from perhaps a much more serious problem which is manifested in his physical condition. Sickness is the work of evil and a consequence of the reign of Satan. Sickness creates rifts between the victims and their families as well as their communities. Sickness can create a sense of guilt within the person. It can deprive people of their full potential in achieving certain goals and fulfilling their various responsibilities. Jesus' healing activities were no mere bio-medical remedies, but real healing which brought wholeness and salvation to those he came into contact with. Healing is part of God's kingdom present in Jesus. His activities cannot be labelled as outmoded types of treatment or remedies which revealed a lack of knowledge of the modern bio-medical model of diagnosis and remedy, but total healing based on

a more comprehensive understanding of man and woman in their totality. His concern was for salvation which encompassed the whole person, who is the unity of both mind and body and soul.

The use of καθαρίζειν is closely identified with the healing of a disease which makes a person ceremonially unclean. Ceremonial uncleanness was the great fear of the devout Jews, for it excluded them from their religious observances and so from the possibility of fulfilling their religious duties which were very important for their salvation. Being ostracized from their community because of their uncleanness could mean exclusion from the temple and all its ritual and cultic activities, an important part of Jewish religious life and thus would reduce them to mere outcasts within their own social and religious community. A leper was considered ceremonially unclean. They were often prevented from entering the holy city of Jerusalem, and were socially ostracised from everyday life for prophylactic reasons.⁶⁰ Leprosy was identified as a plague. The lepers' contact with things would lead to uncleanness. In the *Mishnah*, a leper who entered the house could make all the utensils which are there unclean, even up to the beams of the house [*m Neg* 13:11]. The lepers were therefore confined within certain barriers, and their access to public places was very much restricted. They were not allowed within the precincts of the Temple [*b Pes* 67a]. Although we do not know how much the rules in the *Mishnah* represent later theory or earlier practices, however, reference to lepers in the Old Testament, the Zadokite document [*CD* 13], as well as the New Testament point to the social and religious restrictions imposed on lepers.

The uncleanness of leprosy in Jewish minds was a potentially powerful image for human defilement in sin. Frequently regarded as a divine punishment for serious

sins, this disease was among the worst evils to afflict one, a living death whose healing was equivalent to being raised from the dead [2Kgs 5:7].⁶¹ Lach notes that leprosy was considered the punishment for slander, one of the most reprehensible sins in rabbinical circles.⁶² In some texts of the Old Testament, [Num 12:10; 2Kgs 15:5/2Chron 26:16; cp. Lev 14:22ff], and in rabbinic theology,⁶³ leprosy is considered as a divine punishment for sins. The lepers were considered sinners and therefore required to perform sin and guilt offerings for their cleansing.⁶⁴ Wojciechowski points out that the word καθαρίζω covered the liberation of sins as in Psalm 51:4.⁶⁵ Jesus' healing of those who suffered from leprosy indicated the nature of the sickness which needed more than the removal of the spots and ulcers from the skin. If leprosy was considered a consequence of sin, then healing required both physical and religious cleansing before one can fully be declared to be well and clean. The term καθαρίζειν can mean "to declare one to be clean" or "to make one to be clean." The tendency of the leper's request is to suggest the latter meaning.⁶⁶ Consequently, the man was requesting healing from his illness, and not simply official recognition of his cleanliness which was to come from the priest. In the LXX, καθαρίζειν is applied both to the healing of the leper [Lev 14:4] and more often to the ritual of cleansing declared by the priest. The use of καθαρίζειν by Jesus in relation to the lepers indicated the restoration of the victim's health, and much more the restoration of their social and religious relationships to their community. After the healing of the leper [Mk 1:40/Mt 8:2/Lk5:12], Jesus sent him to the priest, an act which would confirm the leper's cleansing and bring about a full re-instatement of the sick man back into the community. Total healing involves not only physical cleansing but also the restoration of the victims as full members of the community, with all their responsibilities to others and to God. Within the Jewish setting, it is the restoration of the person cured as a full member of God's community of salvation.

The term καθαρίζειν is used of physical, religious and moral purity. It is a term which conveys the idea of total and complete healing.

The term ἀποκαθίστημι means to restore to a former condition of health. It is used of the restoration to its previous condition of soundness. It is translated 'restored whole' in the RSV and is used eight times in the New Testament. The usage in Hebrews 13:19 seems to have neither medical nor theological significance. It is used three times of the 'man with the withered hand' [Mt 12:13/Mk 3:5/Lk6:10], once of 'blind Bartimaeus' [Mk 10:46-52], and three times of the restoration of Israel [Mk 8:25; Mt 17:11; Acts 1:6]. The suggestion has been made that the gospel writers deliberately used the term to describe Jesus as the new Elijah who came to restore the new Israel.⁶⁷ The use of ἀποκαθίστημι in the narrative of the restoration of the withered man's hand is indeed significant. Luke points out that it was the right hand of the man which was affected [Lk 6:6], and Jerome in his *Commentary on Matthew* 12:13 tells us that according to the *Gospel of the Hebrews*, the man was a stonemason to trade and therefore worked with his hands.⁶⁸ Restoration of the right hand to its wholeness would have significant economic consequences not only for the man himself, but also for those who may depend upon him for their existence. But illness is of course not just a physical and economic problem, but also a social one. The sick would normally fear isolation, helpless and being abandoned by others as well as having the feeling of becoming a burden to those around him. The blind man of Mark 10 seems not to have been blind from birth. The partial restoration of his sight which prompted his response that he could see men walking but that they are like trees may well imply that he had formerly been able to see and then gone blind. It was when his full vision was restored that the word ἀποκαθίστημι was used. The emphasis in the use of the term may be on the full and complete restoration

of the sight.

4. The social and religious dimensions of Jesus' healings

The ministry of Jesus to the sick involved the restoration of their physical and spiritual welfare, restoring those whom he healed to full participation in the life of the community and in their relationship to God. In the healing of Peter's mother-in-law, a social interpretation of the healing incident indicates the social effect of the fever to the person involved and how therapy seeks to restore her wholeness. The fever has somehow deprived the domestic domain of its mistress and the therapy restores the woman to that function. Peter's healed mother-in-law immediately addresses the hospitality that must be shown to house guests.⁶⁹ In the healing of the lepers, Jesus acknowledges the significance of the ritual of showing oneself to the priest as commanded in the law of Moses. In both dealings with the lepers, Jesus commanded them to fulfil the requirements of the law in respect of their cleansing, [Mt 8:4/Mk.1:44/ Lk 5:14; and Lk 17:14]. Physical healing and cleansing can only become meaningful if the person concerned is restored to full participation in the life of the family and community and again resumes his religious duties to God which had been suspended because of his previous state of uncleanness. Both Mark and Luke portray Jesus as freer in his attitude to the law than Matthew who presents Jesus as much more law abiding [Mt 15 cp. Mk 7 on food laws; Mt 19 cp. Mk 10 and Lk 16 on divorce]. The community dimension in the command to the leper "to show oneself to the priest" may prove more significant within the Markan and the Lukan context than the traditional assumption of Jesus' strict adherence to the law. Jesus' healing of the lepers portrayed a significant role in restoring them back to society and to purposeful living within their community.

The command to 'go home' was a standard part of the contemporary healing miracles. The healing activities of Jesus were often accompanied by the injunction to go home [Mk 2:11; 5:19]. This was an indication that the condition of the patient was restored back to normality, and would then be able to resume the responsibility within the family and the community generally. The Gerasene demoniac had lived in the tombs which is no place for those who are well. The lepers were meant to live outside the walls of the city, away from where those who are well would perform their social and religious tasks and responsibilities. True and complete healing should help re-instate the patient back to full participation in the life of the family and the community. They should also be able to resume their social and religious responsibilities within their community and to their God. The offering of forgiveness to the victims who suffered illness because of sin and guilt would help to re-instate them back to a right and a healthy relationship with God and friends. Jesus' healing would not only restore physical health but had also helped to re-establish social and religious relationships within the community.

The sociological approach to an understanding of biblical healing provides a useful tool in establishing various significant dimensions concerning Jesus' healing miracles. The studies by Pilch,⁷⁰ Malina,⁷¹ Hollenbach,⁷² Yamauchi,⁷³ Theissen,⁷⁴ Kraybill and Sweetland,⁷⁵ Lieu,⁷⁶ and Kee,⁷⁷ etc, point to the significance of understanding biblical diseases and healing in the light of the social and cultural realities of the time. The sociological perspectives on illness and its treatment sensitize us to the contextual construction and control of disorder. They make us aware of the ways in which sickness is very differently handled according to different social norms. Anthropological perspectives on illness also bring to our awareness how people in

different cultures and social groups explain the causes of ill-health, the types of treatment they believe in, and to whom they turn if they get ill.⁷⁸

Diseases and their corresponding remedies in Jesus' time provided a reality which had to be understood and interpreted within the framework of reality of the first century AD. Pilch points out that the hermeneutic or cultural model of healing, which holds that sickness becomes a human experience and an object of therapeutic attention when it becomes meaningful, is well suited to analysing human illness across cultures, such as those portrayed in the Bible.⁷⁹ In his case study of Jesus' healing of the leper, Pilch argues that to try and understand the healing incident from a bio-medical model of healing would be to misunderstand Jesus' miracles. The bio-medical model which is often adopted by modern doctors is based upon the belief that the physical symptoms which the patient relates, manifest some underlying biological reality, particularly some disordered somatic or psycho-physiological process. The symptoms signal to both client and doctor that something is wrong outwith or within the body.⁸⁰ Pilch suggests that the suitable model in understanding the healing miracles of Jesus would be the cultural one whereby the healer helps to reconstruct an illness into a meaningful human reality. Illness inevitably affects others, not simply the patient but the family, the neighborhood, as well as the whole community. Theissen rightly indicates these various social, economic and cultural dimensions of sickness and healing. Illness is ofcourse not just a physical and economic problem but a social one. The economic threat of disease especially to the lower and middle class was quite threatening and graver in Jesus' time. Illness meant inability to work and the failure to fulfil responsibility of maintaining the family. The sick fear isolation, being abandoned by others and the prospect of being a continuous burden to the family.⁸¹ Therefore, any real therapeutic activity must incorporate all these social

implications of any sickness.

Pilch indicates that "human sickness is a personal and social reality, and its therapy are inextricably bound to language and signification."⁸² Thus the term leprosy does not necessarily signal the same message and signification within the bio-medical circles as in the biblical communities. The language had to be decoded to provide the significance and reality within the situation. Biblical leprosy [Hebrew=*sara'at*; Greek=λέπρα] represents a skin disease which involves "body swelling or an eruption or a spot, leprous disease" on the "skin of body" [Lev 13:1]. The Hebrew *sara'at* was a patchy skin condition; however, if it spread over the entire body it was not *sara'at* [Lev 13:12-13]. *BAGD* points out that there is abundant evidence that not all *sara'at* and λέπρα of the Bible is true leprosy caused by Hansen's bacillus as known in modern times. In fact many would think that Hansen's disease was unknown in biblical times. Pilch points out that scientific examination of bones exhumed from ancient graves in Egypt and Palestine have yielded only one [post-Christian] case of leprosy in Egypt and none in Palestine.⁸³ Thus biblical leprosy does not necessarily correspond to the modern bio-medical prognosis of leprosy. What then is the disease that Jesus healed or cleansed in Mark 1:40 [par Mt 8:2; Lk 5:12] and Luke 17:12-19)?

Biblical leprosy was always considered an unclean condition. Incidences in the gospels reveal the great desire of lepers to be cleansed or healed, καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς αὐτὸν λεπρὸς παρακαλῶν αὐτὸν [καὶ γονυπετῶν] καὶ λέγων αὐτῷ ὅτι Ἐὰν θέλῃς δύνασαί με καθαρίσαι; [Mk 1:40 cp. Mt 8:2; Lk 5:12]. References in the New Testament text in relation to lepers used 'cleansed' καθαρίζω except for Luke 17:15 which says 'healed' ἰάθη, though some manuscripts report 'cleansed' ἐκαθαρίσθη instead.⁸⁴ Leviticus 13:46 decreed that an 'unclean' person had to

live "alone in a habitation outside the camp." The lepers that Jesus healed were in the village, and Jesus had access to them or vice versa. Their appeal of 'mercy' - καὶ αὐτοὶ ἤραν φωνὴν λέγοντες, Ἰησοῦ ἐπιστάτα, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς [Lk 17:13], may suggest that their condition elicited no compassion nor pity from the community, or possibly, it may be an appeal to the mercy of one who might by mercy be motivated to use the power he possesses.⁸⁵ Pilch points out that

The words and phrases 'clean/unclean', 'showing self to the priest', and 'offering what Moses commanded' after being declared clean, taken together with the fact that the leper-petitioners had easy access to Jesus, strongly suggest that the issue was pollution rather than contagion, an illness construed in a humanly meaningful way rather than a disease based on unseen bacteria.⁸⁶

The cause of the 'uncleanness' in the gospels is not mentioned, however it could be God's punishment for sin [Num 12:6-9; Jn 5:14], though not necessarily so [cp. Jn 9:3], or God's way of drawing people to true fear of the Lord [Job 33:19-33]. Whatever the cause of the lepers' condition, their free and social dealings with their community had been restricted, and this would have prevented them from fulfilling not only their social responsibilities but also their religious obligations. They were indeed social and religious outcasts within their own community.

Jesus, in healing the lepers, was restoring them to their rightful place in the community. An unclean person was deprived of his social intercourse and was therefore separated socially from the community. This was perhaps the greatest fear of a leper, the exclusion from all social and religious activities in the community. Jesus' cleansing reinstated them to full membership in the community. Healing is complete when the person is fully restored physically, socially and spiritually within the society.

5. The contextual dimension of Jesus' healings

In the gospels, Jesus is portrayed as one who respected the contemporary beliefs of his time concerning the causality and remedy of sickness and disease. His acts of healing did not represent any revolutionary technique of healing, however, his miracles of healing and acts of exorcism followed the same pattern and characteristics common during his time. Apart from his identification of the defeat of evil forces and demons with the inbreaking of the kingdom of God, his healing acts resembled closely those performed by contemporary Jewish and Hellenistic healers and exorcists. In this way, it would be fair to say that Jesus is a man of his time, one who acknowledges that the reality of contemporary beliefs and aspirations in the existence of supernatural forces, bears a significant impact upon contemporary questions of health and healing. His attitude is that of understanding healing holistically within the framework of contemporary beliefs and value systems.

The belief in the existence of evil forces and demons constitutes one significant characteristic of Hellenistic and Jewish cultures. Jesus' contemporaries believed in the existence of these forces and their impact upon health and well-being. As previously indicated, Jesus had confronted numerous cases of ailments and disabilities which were ascribed to the influence of these forces. His acts of exorcism reveal his acknowledgement of the reality of these forces and an attempt to deal with them by techniques and remedies appreciated during the time. Jesus' sympathetic approach to the problems of healing within the framework of contemporary beliefs in causality and remedy, represents a more realistic and holistic treatment of the problem. Health and healing can only be true and complete if the sick are diagnosed and healed within the social and religious

framework of the time. Social and anthropological perspectives on illness would value any remedy conducted within the framework of contextual beliefs.⁸⁷

This does however raise the question of the truth or validity of different belief systems. This point could be expressed in another way. It raises the question of whether different symbol systems can be describing the same reality, and if so whether they do so equally well or whether one view or another is preferable. Without making value judgement on the superiority of one system of expressing reality over another, it is important to acknowledge the close relationship of one's sense of reality with the symbol system that it conveys. These symbol systems may vary according to the different ways people understand the world and their relationships to forces natural and supernatural which they believe to be present. This sense of reality does indeed affect their physical, mental and spiritual condition. Therefore, what affects one's physical welfare may not necessarily be accounted for in terms of modern psychological and bio-medical analysis. However, the belief and symbol systems of the afflicted may be helpful in the diagnosis and remedy of the problem. Some of these symbol systems may seem mythical and archaic from the modern Western medical perspectives, however, the belief in the composite nature of our being which is open to various social, cultural, religious and psychological influences makes it difficult for us to assume the total truth of any one view in the remedy of any physical problem.

There are probably very few people in our society who would want to deny completely any physical or organic basis for illness. Many, however, would say that physical explanations and perspectives on sickness and disease are only very partial. There are many other factors which should also be taken into account. In modern medicine, doctors have come to appreciate more and more the influence

of one's system of beliefs and background in achieving a true and lasting cure of patients. The interest in psychiatry and the psychology of healing reflects this growing concern in health beyond the cure of the symptoms. In our everyday life, we refer to such cases as psychosomatic. This indeed is an acknowledgement that sickness and physical disability are more complex. Biblical psychology and anthropology had taught us much earlier of this complex nature of our humanity. This dimension has long been present in the healing activities of Jesus, where the physical symptoms were seen as manifesting serious rifts either between the victim and the community or with the spirit-world. Of course some diseases or conditions might have a much more obvious physical element than others. But it could be argued that even the healing of a bone fracture might be assisted or retarded by a patient's positive or negative outlook.

Modern understanding of sickness has come to acknowledge the necessity of understanding the patient within the framework of his belief systems in order to fully recognise the circumstances of the problem. This would involve the social, religious, spiritual and psychological framework within which the patient operates. The importance of the diagnosis and remedy of an illness within the social and spiritual framework of the patient proves to be more holistic and therapeutic. The human person as biblical belief had initially revealed, is highly complex and therefore any approach to healing must go beyond a mere diagnosis of any biological imbalance. Many Bible interpreters who live in societies where scientific Western medicine predominates accept the insight of bio-medicine as the only valid interpretation of human sickness. However, in the light of Jesus' healing concern, the remedy offered engaged the patient in a more meaningful experience of his situation. In the cultural model, the process of healing involves an attempt to understand the social and cultural realities surrounding the illness and then,

directing therapeutic efforts to transform those realities.⁸⁸

6. The community dimension of Jesus' healings

The community provides the criteria by which one's condition of well-being is measured. The popular saying of John Donne that "no man is an island" is aptly suitable in identifying the attitude of Jesus towards one's condition of wholeness. The community is very important, and the healing of an individual can never be true and complete unless the person's condition is in harmony with the community ideals, values and aspirations. In antiquity, the community in Jewish thinking was not confined within the family and kin, but it also included the wider community, as well the household gods, the land, animals and all the possessions. Each individual is understood within his multiple relationships to all these components of his community, and his welfare and well-being is identified accordingly to the harmony or the disharmony that he would maintain within that community.

There is throughout the Old Testament a steady insistence that families, villages, cities and nations are all under a kind of group contract with God. The action of the individual, more especially if he be acting as a group leader or representative, whether as patriarch, father, king, priest and prophet carries with it the responsibilities of blessing or punishment for the whole group. The action of the group as a group in matters of justice, morals and worship brings blessing or punishment for the whole group. This collective responsibility implies that a person may be held responsible both as an individual and as a member of the community, even if he is not directly guilty personally.⁸⁹ Whilst the importance of the individual and personal relationship of the one soul with God is never wholly excluded, and receives considerable mention in Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the Psalms and

the Wisdom literature, it is fair to say that this individualism is never the only theme. The whole mode of thought of the Hebrew mind tends to be holistic.

The community emphasis during the first century AD existed very strongly in various sectarian Jewish communities and groups. One such group is the Essene community which may be traced to the priestly circles of Jerusalem. The community advocated the careful observance of the law. The members were submitted to strict regulation and strict discipline was enforced upon those who committed offence [*IQS* vi.24-5, vii.9-10, 14-5]. To be excluded from the community meant a painful punishment. The maintaining of purity and proper relationship with God was determined by their strict adherence to the law as practiced and sanctioned by the Covenant Community [*CD* x.14-xi.18]. A person is an individual as well as member of the community. His religious and social status is determined by how well he abides with the community rules and disciplines.

The inter-dependence of individual and community within Jewish understanding is significant in Jesus' approach to healing. Within his healing activities, the individual is an integral part of his community, and one's state of well-being is holistically conceived and therefore cannot be separated from the relationship to the community. In the healing of those who were possessed by evil spirits, Jesus acknowledged the victims' belief in the activities of the supernatural and consequently, healing was conducted within the framework of that world-view. The physical symptoms of the possessed were removed when the demons and evil forces were defeated and exorcised. The healing of the leper demonstrated a community based concern in healing and wholeness. Being ostracized because of the belief in the moral and religious uncleanness of leprosy, the healing approach of Jesus in curing the symptoms and restoring the status of the victims within their social and

religious community, indicates a holistic approach to their troubles. The healed were sent home, a common characteristic of contemporary healing miracles [σοὶ λέγω, ἔγειρε ἄρον τὸν κράβαττόν σου καὶ ὑπάγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου Mk 2:11], and to their respective communities[ἀλλὰ λέγει αὐτῷ· ὑπάγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου πρὸς τοὺς σοὺς καὶ ἀπάγγειλον αὐτοῖς ὅσα ὁ κύριός σοι πεποίηκεν καὶ ἠλέησέν σε Mk 5:19]. The setting was the community and the victims were set to return to responsible living in it. The Gerasene demoniac is portrayed as at variance with his fellow-people through his ordeal, living in the tombs and becoming so violent that no one can get near to bind him up. Jesus' healing and exorcism restored not only his physical and mental condition but he was re-instated back to his friends and people.

A significant dimension of the context of the miracles of Jesus appears in Mark 3:7-12. People who came to Jesus for healing and exorcism, came not only from Galilee, Jerusalem and Judaea, but from the region east of the Jordan and north of Palestine, i.e. from predominantly Gentile territory. Within his healing miracles, Jesus extends the boundaries of his community beyond Jewish limits. The motif of the inclusiveness of the new community is central in Jesus' response to the accusation of the Pharisees [Mk 2:15-16].

Another significant community implication of Jesus' healing is indicated by the claim that healing was indeed a sign of the inbreaking of God's kingdom. His healing activities were seen as part of the transference of the whole of life into a new dimension. He was concerned with the renewal of life through the kingdom of God. Evans sums it up when he wrote,

Jesus brought into the world a very profound conception of healing. It concerned the whole man, body, mind and spirit; it concerned the whole of society, and the reconciliation of man with his existence.⁹⁰

Those who witnessed the healing work of Jesus were not being called to observe only good deeds and moral excellence shown in 'wondrous works', but were being confronted with the claim that he was God's anointed [Lk 4:18-21], and that the rule of God had come 'amongst them' [Lk 11:20]. Therefore healing the sick was not a secondary consequence, but the very means of proclaiming the kingdom of God. His healing ministry was not primarily a private affair between man and God, or an individual spiritual test and reward for a sick person, but an 'effective sign'. The community was challenged through Jesus' miracles of healing and acts of exorcism. As Lambourne puts it, "the sickness-healing situation was a crisis situation for the whole community group in which it occurred."⁹¹ Through the victim, the community is judged, and a response is required not only from the victim, but also from those who bear witness. The healing acts are cooperative effective signs. They are done ἐν ὑμῖν and they would both heal and confront the community. The inter-dependence of an individual with the community within the Jewish concept of wholeness and totality, makes an individual plight not simply a private affair but the concern of all who belong to the community. This belief in communal responsibility in sickness is best conveyed in the question of the disciples [Jn 9:2]. The physical disability of a person is sometimes a representation of the short-coming of a community, and those who bear witness to the healing ministry are all challenged to respond. Jesus healed those who came to him seeking help, including those who were either brought or being reported to him. His healing activities were not confined to those at hand but he also healed those at a distance. The faith and the responsibility of some had led to the healing and restoration of others like Jairus' daughter and the paralysed man. This to some extent indicates communal commitment and communal responsibility which helps bring about Jesus' gift of healing and forgiveness [Mk 2:5]. The question of the disciples [Jn 9:2] points to the possibility of a communal responsibility in the

causality of blindness.

In situation where sin and guilt are believed to be involved, holistic healing does not come easily, however, Jesus' offer of forgiveness and the responses of the patients, relatives and friends paved the way for forgiveness and restoration. The assurance of pardon is a tremendous force in the renewal of physical, mental and spiritual health, leading to a consequent restoration of broken relationships within the family, the community and more importantly, to God.

7. Health, healing and wholeness in Samoa

It is not easy to dismiss the importance of traditional beliefs on the question of health, healing and wholeness in Samoa today. Much of these concepts in relation to health and well-being are deeply rooted in the social and religious beliefs of the people in the past which still have significant influence upon their understanding of matters which relate to their health today. Social scientists and anthropologists have acknowledged the closer links between sickness and healing with the social, cultural and religious realities of a community. The growing awareness of the reality of these social and cultural-bound illness and disorder have helped open up the question of the relevance and significance of the traditional view of the world and reality, the existence of various forces physical and spiritual, the concept of an individual in relation to the community, the place and significance of religion within the lives of the people in issues relating to sickness and healing of individuals.⁹²

Parsons wrote in the preface of the book which he edited that

During the 1970s, worldwide interest developed in traditional healing practices.

In 1978 the World Health Organization held a conference on "Traditional Medicine" which concluded by acknowledging the considerable contribution traditional medicine has to offer in the management of sickness. Traditional healing practices, in general, were brought out of disrepute and acknowledged as credible and effective by World Health Organization members.⁹³

Culture-bound sickness or disorder is a reality among many ethnic nationalities and traditional healing practices present several valuable solutions to their management. The success of traditional diagnosis and remedy of illness may be attributed to the nature of the healing process that is carried out within the community. Sickness is understood as more than simply a physical malfunction of the body. It has other dimensions which are closely related to the life of the family and community, as well as to their belief system.

Hallam Rivers was the first to try and relate systematically traditional medicine to other aspects of culture and social organization. He had recognised a causal relationship between medical beliefs and practices. He argues that native medical patterns are "not a medley of disconnected and meaningless customs, but rather inspired by definite ideas concerning the causation of disease."⁹⁴ Such ^a/causal approach reflects the traditional belief in the existence of supernatural forces that constantly influence life and human welfare. This non-medical approach to illness archaic ^{as}/it may be, provides another aspect of understanding illness and remedy which may be significant when combined with the medical approach, in providing a more holistic understanding of healing. The progress in medical science has provided a scientific explanation to almost every ailment that affects people. This progress is indeed a blessing for many traditional societies which had developed medical health care systems based upon the medical profession. However, the spiritual dimension which tends to view illness as more than physical and organic helps to restore a more rounded and holistic view of our humanity. The Samoans are a very religious people. They have in the past believed in the existence of

many gods and spirits in the form of ancestral spirits and the spirits of the dead. They also believed in the high god *Tagaloa*. Their family gods and spirits constantly influence everyday life and activities. Their religion was an active religion, expressed and understood more in concrete rituals and activities than sets of abstract beliefs and dogmas. Christianity is conceived in a similar fashion, a religion which is lived-out and the material and physical aspects of religion are significant expressions of spiritual life. Illness is often conceived as having a spiritual or supernatural dimension. God is consistently viewed as being involved in whatever people experience during their everyday life. This spiritual dimension provides a significant notion of how people conceive matters relating to their health and well-being. An emphasis upon a good relationship with God and with other supernatural forces and spirits as well as with the family and community, all provide a framework within which health and complete healing may be conducted.

A positive appreciation of the traditional understanding of health and healing may be made possible by an indiscriminate evaluation of the respective beliefs in the light of their own understanding of reality, their concept of illness and causality and the relationship of an individual to the family and the community. Very often, traditional concepts of health and healing have been criticised in the light of the modern and scientific approach to medicine so that little credit is given to the traditional attempts to relate such matters to their own social and religious setting. The impact of medical science which provided successful remedies to many of the sickness that Samoans suffer from is widely practised and very much appreciated, however, there is always the occasional reaching back to the traditional paradigm of healing in areas where medical science fails to achieve a long and lasting cure. Despite the belief in the natural explanation of sickness and diseases, however, the acknowledgement of the spiritual and social dimension of illness is still very much a

part of the illness-reality in Samoa today. The significant belief that physical activities are expressions of the spiritual condition makes it difficult to separate the causality of illness and misfortune from its spiritual counterpart. In sickness which is believed to be supernaturally caused, the remedy is often sought within the framework of the traditional model. The emphasis focussed upon the social and religious aspects of the sickness provides a realistic setting which may contribute to the search for a holistic form of healing of the sick. The science of medical psychology and psychiatry had rightly pointed out the significance of guilt and other related psychological and mental problems which could affect the physical health of many. Such sciences would imply the complexity of our human nature that matters affecting health are not restricted to physical disorder and organic malfunction, but social, religious and mental problems also may have significant impact upon our well-being. The traditional model tends to emphasize the social and religious dimensions almost to the extent that the organic aspect is being overlooked. Medical science had taught the Samoans to appreciate the organic malfunction of the body as significant and the consequent medical remedy as necessary. On the other hand, traditional emphasis points to the social and religious motifs as significant in presenting a more holistic approach to health and well-being. The lack of emphasis in early mission teaching about the wider framework into which sickness and healing operates may have been a reaction against the background of the abuse in Europe of associating sickness and remedy with the supernatural, with demons, evil spirits, sorcery and witchcraft. Despite the early mission separation of sickness and healing from the sphere of supernatural which consequently undermined the social and religious dimensions of health, and ascribing the causality only to physical disorder and their management to the activities of people, yet the traditional concept of sickness, healing and well-being continued to exist within Christian Samoa.

The traditional concept understands the welfare of an individual within the social and religious framework of that person. This understanding is based upon the view that the sickness is not simply caused by a physical malfunction of the body but may also be caused by a sense of fear and guilt because of broken relationships to the community, to the family and more important to God. Healing and wholeness can only be achieved when conducted within the framework of the physical, spiritual and social context of the person concerned.

The concept of health and wholeness in traditional Samoa was a community based one. It was unreal in traditional Samoa to speak of a condition of an individual in relation to health and well-being without reference to the family and community. The extended family was the most significant social unit. The health and well-being of individual members were very much bound up within the framework of the family. The condition of the family in its relationship to other families, to the village community and more importantly to the deities, ancestral spirits and spirits of the dead [*aitu*] was an important dimension in maintaining the welfare of the family and its members. Violation of family rules and taboos and the failure to fulfil certain responsibilities to family members, alive and departed, were often considered as possible causes for illness.

When an individual member is sick, it is important that the diagnosis is not limited to the individual concerned but is extended to members of his family. The solidarity of the individual within the community indicates that sickness may not necessarily be the fault of the victim. Members of the family are also examined in order to identify where the breach of conduct or transgression has been committed. The sickness of an individual in the family is an indication that all is

not well with the family. Brown pointed out that

Each member of the family was called upon to confess as to whether he had committed any injury against other members of the family or village, and especially as to whether he had invoked a curse upon any member of it.⁹⁵

There is a variety of family values and traditions which when violated could bring sickness and misfortune upon individual members. The performance of the various rituals associated with the dead, the fulfilment of responsibilities to the family and the strict adherence of traditional taboos were important in maintaining health within the community and its members. Failure could lead to sickness and physical misfortune. Individual health and well-being was part and parcel of the response of a person to his environment, to his value system and to his community and family. Any holistic form of healing may not be true and genuine unless conducted within the framework of the obligations and responsibilities of an individual to his family and community.

The moral aspect was an important dimension in questions relating to the health and wholeness of individuals. In traditional Samoan religion, right discipline, right moral conduct, right performance of rites and rituals were very important in maintaining the relationship of the worshipper with the spirit-world. The spiritual dimension of religion was not merely contemplative and meditative but active. Health was conveyed in material and physical form. Spiritual well-being must always be expressed in physical and material welfare. The abstract has to be conveyed in concrete terms in order to be real and meaningful. In traditional Samoa, there was a strong materialistic approach and emphasis to things spiritual. Sin was an act of external disobedience to the rules, customs and taboos of the community. Punishment for sin must come not only immediately but also in visible form. Therefore, every misfortune and every sickness implied a violation, a sin, perhaps an unrecognised one or one committed by a close member of the family.

This moral dimension of sickness and misfortune indicated that matters relating to health and wholeness were not simply confined to physical well-being but also the moral and spiritual aspects of human life. The welfare of an individual was not fragmentary but it included the totality of one's being which is not only a unity of the mind, body and spirit, but also harmony with his family, community and with *Atua* and *aitu*.

Samoan ethos remains one of obedience and submissiveness to the rules and traditions of the community and those who are in authority. This ethos is extended to include all Christian rules and taboos. Thus obedience to God who now stands at the apex of the Samoan hierarchy, as well as the moral rules of the new *lotu* is indicative. For many Samoans, there is no escape from the insistent demands of their society. Disobedience of authority and violation of social values must be duly punished. Freeman rightly points out that the "custom of inflicting punishment to maintain social order is .. one of the basic characteristics of the Samoan ethos."⁹⁶ The breach of traditional taboos was considered a serious offence against the community and also against God and the traditional spirits. Taboos provided a social and religious sanction on the various aspects of Samoan cultural and religious life. A breach of a taboo was an offence against the supernatural spirits and therefore, had to be punished in the form of sickness and other physical misfortune. To abide by the taboos of the community, means a good and healthy existence and an absence of sickness and misfortune. Any violation may be seen as the cause of misfortune.

Although the *lotu* speaks of a God who is loving and merciful, however at the same time, the concept of a God who is not only the healer but one who inflicts suffering and disease to those who violates his ordinances is also present. The

gospels associate morality with human well-being, a belief which was popular within Judaism during the time of Jesus. Sometimes, illness and things that afflict us come as the consequence of the way we live our lives. Some may indirectly be affected by the irresponsible behaviour of others or of society generally. Although this may not be true of all cases of illness that affect us, however, the fact still remains that illness and things that affect our health can be caused by irresponsible and immoral activities of ourselves or others.

The ascription of sickness and disabilities to the work of evil spirits and demons and their consequent remedy through the healing ministry of Jesus, provides a framework which identifies illness and physical misfortune as activities from the sphere of evil and spiritual depravation [i.e. realm of Satan and his forces], and Jesus' healing as a significant dimension of spiritual wholeness and well-being. The emphasis upon the social, moral, communal, physical and spiritual aspects of illness and well-being provides a wider and more realistic framework into which holistic healing and lasting cure be achieved.

The emphasis upon these aspects of health and healing does not in any way minimise the importance of medical care and the scientific medical profession. The medical health care provides the most significant healing institution in Samoa today, and thus the church tends to see health and healing as confined within this medical framework. However, in the medical profession, the emphasis tends to be on the physical and the material, with the result that the health of the body takes precedence over the social, religious and spiritual aspects which are also important in our search for a more complete and holistic form of healing. The false separation of physical and spiritual, healing from the realm of religion, has led to a fragmentary treatment of matters relating to our health and well-being. Medical

health which emphasises the organic causality of illness is able to provide successful remedies in alleviating the natural causes of sickness. However, at the same time, healing may not be complete until social and spiritual rifts be fully dealt with.

8. Conclusion

Health, healing and wholeness are a unity. They are not to be identified simply as physical remedy or physical well-being, however, they have a spiritual quality, a supernatural context whereby a person is made whole in spirit, mind and body. They imply the absence of anything which can separate people from God, from their families and from their village and community. Unity and harmony within the spirit-world and within the family and community are essential elements in achieving health and complete well-being. The concept of holistic healing is not fragmentary, just as much as the human person cannot be understood in isolation from his society, his social and religious beliefs and value system.

The use by Jesus of the various techniques of healing which were popular during his time shows the importance of setting his healing miracles within the context of the life and background of the Jewish people. One significant test of the holistic approach to healing is its applicability and relevance to the expectation and needs of the people concerned. Holistic healing must always be conducted within the framework of the cultural and spiritual realities of the sick person. The use of spittle, the significance of the touch, the laying on of hands, the word of command, the forgiveness of sins, were all the contemporary techniques acceptable as effecting healing and exorcism.

The belief in the existence of supernatural forces which affect the welfare of men

and women in the time of Jesus was part of the contemporary understanding of the world. The world-view of first century Christianity acknowledged the reality of supernatural forces in the form of angels, evil spirits and demons. These forces played a significant role in the everyday lives of the people. Physical misfortunes, sicknesses and demonic possessions were ascribed to them, and they were an acceptable component of the world order of the time. In ancient societies, blessing and well-being came from the gods, an indication of favour in the sight of the deities. Jesus' healing motifs and techniques of remedy were set within this world order. His diagnosis of physical misfortunes was set within the cultural and religious framework of first century AD Judaism. This is indeed a true and holistic approach to healing, when the diagnosis and remedy of the well-being of a person is set within his own system of beliefs and values. It reflects a holistic understanding of our being and all that constitutes humanity. Jesus as a healer elevated healing beyond the confinement of the cure of the symptoms. In his ministry, he provided a holistic form of healing which gave credit to people as social and religious beings. His approach to healing was aimed at restoring the social, physical and religious harmony to the life of the sick person. Jesus did not only accept the whole man in his whole situation, but he worked to put man right with the whole of his existence.

The emphasis upon the social, religious and spiritual dimensions of healing in the ministry of Jesus provides a close link with the way health and healing was conceived in traditional and later on in Christian Samoa. The focus on other dimensions of our well-being indicates not so much a denial of the medical profession and system, but a reassertion of the importance of other aspects of our humanity that are also significant in establishing health and genuine well-being.

Endnotes

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7. M. Wilson, *The Church is Healing*, [London:SCM, 1966], 18.
8. J.H. Thompson, *Spiritual Considerations in the Prevention, Treatment, and Care of the Disease*, [London:Oriel Press, 1984], 8.
9. J. Wilkinson, *Health and Healing*, 3.
10. *Ibid.*
11. W.D. Stacey, *The Pauline View of Man*, [London:Macmillan, 1956], 94.
12. J. Wilkinson, *Health and Healing*, 3.
13. W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, [London:SCM Press, 1967], II.124.
14. Of men: Gen 40:19; Ex 4:7; Lev 12:3; of animals: Gen 41:2-19; Ex 21:28; 22:30; see: Brown-Driver-Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew-English Lexicon*, [Peabody, Mass:Hendrickson Publishers, 1979].
15. H.W. Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, 28.
16. W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, II.147.
17. J. Wilkinson, *Health and Healing*, 3-8.
18. Brown-Driver-Briggs, *The Hebrew-English Lexicon*.
19. G. von Rad, "εἰρήνη" *TDNT* II.402; see: Jud 19:20; 1Sam 16:5; 2Sam 18:28; Ezra 5:7. We may prefer not to talk of 'root meaning' as Von Rad suggests, though we may well recognise that the word often has the sense Von Rad suggests.
20. J. Wilkinson, *Health and Healing*, 5.

21. K. Barth, K. *Church Dogmatics* III.4, 357.
22. *BAGD.*, 832.
23. J. Wilkinson, *Health and Healing*, 10.
24. *Ibid.*, 9-16.
25. This more pluralistic way of viewing the divine is confined to the religious world of beyond Judaism. Judaism and Christianity are generally regarded as monotheistic religions, though often we encounter references to the existence of divine beings, of angels and demons. Hayman disagrees with the assumption that Jewish beliefs about God are monotheistic. However, he argues that "God is king of a heavenly court consisting of many other powerful beings, not always under his control. For most Jews, God is the sole object of worship, but he is not the only divine being." P. Hayman, "Monotheism - A Misused Word in Jewish Studies."
26. W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, II.124.
27. *Ibid.*, 131.
28. *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, 3rd edition, [Oxford:Oxford University Press, 1971], JUV.288.4.
29. See also Hab 3:5; J.I. Durham, *Exodus: Word Biblical Commentary*, [Waco:Word Books Publisher, 1987], 213f.
30. "And the Lord will take away from you all sickness; and none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which you knew, will he inflict upon you, but he will lay them upon all who hate you" [Deut 7:15]; cp. Job 5:18; see H.W. Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, 147ff.
31. H.C. Kee, *Medicine*, 60-70.
32. H.W. Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, 167.
33. H.C. Kee, *Medicine*, 14.
34. C. Westermann, *The Psalms*, [Minneapolis:Augsburg Publishing House, 1980], 60.
35. *Ibid.*, 61.
36. *Ibid.*, 67; see Pss 32:3; 38:3; 6:1-2.
37. *BAGD*, 359; H.W. Beyer, "θεραπεύω" *TDNT* III.128.
38. Plato. *Gorgias*, 513d.
39. Strabo, *Geography* VIII.8,15; δια την ἐπιφάνειαν τοῦ Ἀσκληπιοῦ θεραπεύειν νόσους παντοδαπὰς. H.W. Beyer, "θεραπεύω" *TDNT* III.129.
40. Tob 2:10; 12:3; Wis 16:12; Sir 18:19; 38:7.

41. *Vit. cont.*2., ἡ [ἰατρικὴ] μὲν γὰρ σώματα θεραπεύει.
42. Philo, *Alleg Interp* III.118, θεραπεύων [τοῦ θυμον], *Spec Laws* ii.239; ἀφροσύνη δ' οὐκ ἄλλῳ ἢ φόβῳ θεραπεύεται.
43. H.W. Beyer, "θεραπεύω" *TDNT* III.129 cp. Leisegang-θεραπεΐα / θεραπεύω.
44. H.W. Beyer, "θεραπεύω" *TDNT* III.129.
45. E.g. the healing of the lepers reflect strong communal dimension; the healing of Peter's mother-in-law restored her back to her home duties and hospitality; the healing of the right hand of the man with a withered hand enabled him to continue with his trade and provide for him and perhaps also his family; the healing of Jairus' daughter [Mk 5:21ff, Lk 8:40-56], ends with Jesus demanding that she be fed immediately, an indication of communal responsibility in achieving complete healing of the little girl.
46. E.g. *Ael Aristid* 13.273D, i.e. from the evils of ignorance.
47. A. Oepke, "ἰάομαι" *TDNT* III.194-215.
48. *Ibid.*
49. Plato refers to two forms of sickness from which it is equally necessary to be healed from; i.e. outward and inward sickness. Plato, *Resp* x 609cff; *Soph* 228aff.
50. θεραπεύειν: Mt 4:23; 17:18; Mk 1:34; 3:2; Lk 5:15; 9:6; cp. only one use in direct speech in Mt 8:7. ἰάομαι: Mt 8:8; 15:28; Mk 5:29; Lk 5:17; 6:19; 8:47; 17:15; there is no use of ἰάομαι in direct speech of Jesus.
51. πολλοὺς τε σώσαντος ἐγ μεγάλων ἀρρωστιῶν, *Ditt Syll* 11, 620, 13f; as quoted in Foerster, "σῴζω" *TDNT* VII.989ff.
52. Plut. *Adulat* ii [11, 55c] see *TDNT* VII.966.
53. Foerster, "σῴζω" *TDNT* VII.967.
54. *Ibid.*, 990.
55. *Ibid.*
56. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke x-xxiv*, 1149f.
57. H.D. Betz, "The Cleansing of the Ten Lepers, Luke 17:11-19," *JBL* 90 [1971], 325.
58. Mt 9:21,22b; Mk 5:23,28; 6:56; Lk 8:36; Acts 4:9; 14:9.
59. J.H. Thompson, *Prevention, Treatment, and Care of the Disease*, 11; R.A. Lambourne, *Community, Church, and Healing*, 90-1.
60. E.g. *m Neg* 13:11; see also R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 73.

61. The leper is accounted as dead. In *b Ned* 64b, "four are accounted as dead, a poor man, a leper, a blind person, and one who is childless."
62. S.T. Lach, "Hebrew Elements in the Gospels and Acts," 36.
63. Rabbinical literature refer to the purification of leprosy as involving sin offering, and a guilt offering, and a whole offering. *m Neg* 14.7ab, cp. Lev 14:12. "On the eighth day [Lev.14:10], one brings three beasts: a sin offering, and a guilt offering, and a whole offering. The poor person would bring sin offering of fowl, and a whole offering of fowl" [Lev 14:21]. The lepers lack atonement, and therefore must offer a sin offering and guilt offering [*b Ned* 36a also *b Pes* 18b, 59a, *b Shab* 132a. See also Str-B I.228; II.136; III.767,794; IV.747.
64. References in the Mishnah and the Babylonian Talmud about lepers needing to perform sin and guilt offerings for their purification, implied that their condition was an outcome of sin, the lepers need a conversion. For example, *b Shab* 97a; Raba-others state, R Jose b. R Hanina said; "The dispensation of good come more quickly than that of punishment [evil]. For in reference to the dispensation of punishment it is written, and he took it out, and behold his hand was leprous, as white as snow." Also Rabbi Akiba suggests that Aaron too became leprous as a punishment from God [Num 12:9, *b Shab* 97a]. Lepers were also portrayed as "those who lack atonement" and therefore must offer a sacrifice as part of their purification rites [*b Shab* 132a, *b Pes* 18b, 59a, *b Ned* 36a]. In the Talmud, concealing the symptoms of leprosy is regarded as transgression [*b Shab* 94b]. Leprosy is attributed to slander, the shedding of blood, vain oath, incest arrogance, robbery, and envy [*b.'Arakin* 16a].
65. M. Wojciechowski, "The Touching of the Leper [Mark 1:40-45] as a Historical and Symbolic Act of Jesus," *BZ* 33 No.1 [1989], 118.
66. Johann Weiss first suggested that καθαρίζειν does not mean 'to cleanse' i.e. 'to cure' but 'to declare clean' in a levitical sense, and that the original incident consisted in a challenge to Jesus to set aside the Torah and to assume the priest's prerogative. Montefiore commented that "the artificialities of this view needs no proving" [*The Synoptic Gospels*, 1909], 71]. Taylor and Cranfield also dismissed the suggestion. [V. Taylor, *Mark*, 185f; C.E.B. Cranfield, *St Mark*, 92. However, several commentators noted that the characteristic meaning of καθαρίζειν is 'to declare clean' and there is no reference to healing at all, for Judaism "confessed itself powerless in the presence of this living death" [Josephus, *Antiq* 3.264; see also C.H. Cave, "The Leper: Mark 1:40-45," *NTS* 25, 1978-9, 246]. Whatever the sick man meant in his plea, the healing by Jesus relieved him of his problem, making it possible for him to seek the priest's clearance for his sickness. If he had asked for a levitical cleansing, Jesus had offered more.
67. R.A. Lambourne, *Community, Church and Healing*, 96.
68. M.R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, [Oxford:Oxford University Press, 1924], 4-5. Hieronymus wrote in the commentary on Matthew that it is stated in the gospel used by the Nazarenes and Ebionites that the man approached Jesus with the words, "I was a mason, which earned his bread with his hands. I beg thee, Jesus, to restore to me my health so that I need not beg for food in shameful fashion." See also G. Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, 251; J. Wilkinson, *Health and*

Healing, 33; and H. van der Loos, *Miracles*, 438.

69. Mk 1:31; Lk 4:39. See J.J. Pilch, "Healing in Mark: A Social Science Analysis," *BTB* 15 [1985], 146.

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80. *Ibid.*, 61-2.

81. G. Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, 231-264.

82. J.J. Pilch, "Understanding Biblical Healing," 61; "Healing in Mark," 142-3.

83. E. van Hulse, "The Nature of Biblical Leprosy and the Use of Alternative Medical Terms in Modern Translations of the Bible," *PEQ* 107/2 [1975], 89-90; See also J.J. Pilch, "Understanding Biblical Healing," 63.

84. D 892. 1424pc lat sy^S.c.P sa.

85. The cry of the lepers formulates a prayer. It is an implicit request for help. [J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke* x-xxiv, 1154]. It is worth noting that on three occasions, sick people and twice their close relatives approached Jesus with a cry, ἐλεήσον. This

cry for mercy recognised Jesus' power to heal and assumed his willingness to heal. This was an appeal to Jesus' compassion which they have seen that he had towards the sick. The cry of mercy is never used alone by those who seek healing from Jesus. It is always accompanied by a confession of faith in him which is a recognition of his power to heal. The plea is associated with the recognition of Jesus' identity as implied in the use of titles like Lord [Mt 17:15], Son of David [Mt 9:27], Lord, Son of David [Mt 15:22], Jesus, Son of David [Mk 10:47/Lk 18:38].

86. J.J. Pilch, "Understanding Biblical Healing," 63.

87. S. Pattison, *Alive and Kicking*, 28ff.

88. B.J. Good, & M.J. Good, "The Meaning of Symptoms: A Cultural Hermeneutic Model of Clinical Practice," *The Relevance of Social Science for Medicine*, ed. by L. Eisenberg and A. Kleinman, [Dordrecht:D.Reide, 1981], 177; A. Kleinman, *Patients and Healers in the Context of Culture*, [Berkeley:UCLA Press,1980]; J.J. Pilch, "Understanding Biblical Healing," 64.

89. T.C. Vriesen, *Old Testament Theology*, 324.

90. E. Evans, "The Significance of the NT Healing Miracles for the Modern Healer," *Religion and Medicine*, ed. by John Crowlesmith, [London:The Epworth Press, 1962], 87. Kee also rightly emphasizes the communal dimension of Jesus' healing. He points out that "the centre of interest in the healing miracles of Jesus has to do with participation in community, not in medical skills." *Medicine*, 78. In identifying the nature of this new community, Kee further wrote, "Jesus' healings are set with the framework of God's kingdom already ushered through his activities. This new community that God had brought forth, had new boundaries which superseded the existing boundaries of Jewish piety." *Medicine*, 79.

91. R.A. Lambourne, *Community, Church, and Healing*, 36.

92. W.H.R. Rivers, *Medicine, Magic and Religion*, 7ff; I.M. Lazar, *Ma'i Aitu*, 164; R. Moyle, "Samoan Medicinal Incantations," 155-157.

93. C.D. Parsons, [ed], *Healing Practices in the South Pacific*, ix.

94. W.H.R. Rivers, *Medicine, Magic and Religion*, 52.

95. G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, 246.

96. D. Freeman, *Margaret Mead and Samoa*, 274.

CONCLUSION

The healing ministry of Jesus presents significant insights which are invaluable to our understanding on the subject of sickness, health and healing. The emphasis of Jesus on the holistic cure of a sick person which goes beyond the physical remedy of the body, provides an important framework within which all matters relating to health and well-being can be best understood. In the thesis, the healing ministry of Jesus is compared with the traditional and Christian Samoan healing practices in order to highlight the similarities and differences between them. The comparison helps to reaffirm the importance of the healing perspectives of Jesus and traditional and Christian Samoa in the search for true healing and lasting cure for illness. The exercise is focussed on areas where both healing paradigms present significant and valuable perspectives and contributions on matters relating to health and well-being generally.

In our modern and technological society, there is considerable scepticism concerning the significance of Jesus' healing miracles and their relevance to questions relating to health and healing today. This scepticism is not unfounded as many people find it difficult to relate to a world-view which speaks of supernatural spirits, deities and demons as we find in the Synoptic Gospels. Such a world-view is in contrast with our modern and scientific perception of reality. However, the disparity of our modern concept of the world with the world-view of the New Testament should not by any means minimise the contribution the healing miracles of Jesus offer to questions relating to our health and well-being. In fact, the world-view of some

Christians in the non-Western world which sees the reality of the spirit-world alongside the physical, may help recapture the significance of Jesus' ministry to the sick and to those possessed by evil spirits and demons. The framework of sickness and remedy in which Jesus conducts his healing ministry is relevant and intelligible in traditional and Christian Samoa, and it may be easier for Samoan Christians to understand the significance and implications of Jesus' healing ministry directly, than by viewing it within the framework of modern and Western Christianity. There are certainly difficulties for such views in the face of the Enlightenment and the dominance of scientific thinking, however, there is not necessarily in either a rejection of positive benefits of medical science, but there is a protest against the limitation of healing to physical remedies.

Jesus' healing miracles and Samoan healing practices are both conducted within the framework of a world-view which accepts the reality of supernatural spirits and/or deities and their impact on people's lives. Although the nature of the spirits which caused sickness in the gospels may vary from those of the Samoan spirit-world, their existence and influence in the causality and remedy of illness and disease provide an important parallel dimension. This framework presents a more holistic view of life where the spiritual and the physical are closely integrated, so that matters affecting physical well-being are seen not only as having physical but also spiritual implications. This aspect of understanding healing and wholeness is more true to our human nature since it views humanity correctly not only as a physical entity, but a social being and a unity of the mind, body and spirit. The inter-relatedness of all these aspects of our human nature presents sickness and healing as more complex than simply physical well-being and the cure of the body.

The emphasis on conventional Western medical practices tends to separate medicine

from religion, however, in the healing perspectives of Jesus and of traditional and Christian Samoa, the place of God and the supernatural spirits and deities is of central importance. The Samoans ascribe the causality of illness to the activities of *aitu* and family spirits, and healing is achieved by appeasing the spirits and reconciling the victim with the offended party. In Christian Samoa, the *Atua* is seen in terms of family deities and spirits who not only inflict sickness upon those who violate Christian morals and taboos, but is also seen as a God who would provide healing and remedy to those who obey and follow his commandments. In the gospels, illness and possessions are attributed to evil spirits and demons, and healing and acts of exorcism are achieved either by Jesus' word of command or by a stern rebuke and an expulsion of an evil force. The difference in the way of dealing with the spirits comes from the difference in the nature of the spirits involved. In Samoa, the spirits are not necessarily evil but are family spirits whose inflictions are not seen as malicious activities, but acts of discipline against misdemeanours and violations of family rules and taboos. The new *lotu* relegated the Samoan spirits and deities within the order of demons and evil spirits of the gospels, however, though the parallel was drawn, yet it was not seriously adhered to and acknowledged.

The relationship of morality to sickness implicit in Jesus' healing ministry is characteristic of the holistic framework within which health and well-being is understood. The wider perspective of health which incorporates not only physical but social, moral and spiritual implications is true of the Samoan understanding of causality and remedy of illness. The sin-sickness dichotomy which is evident in some of Jesus' healing miracles finds close parallel with the Samoan concept of illness and misfortune caused by the breaking of social and religious taboos. This moral dimension in Jesus' healing ministry and in traditional and Christian Samoa is

not unique, but one which is universal and acceptable even within the modern medical paradigm of sickness and healing. Even some doctors today would agree that a few patients in the hospitals are there because of their own fault or the fault of others. This of course is not true of all sickness and affliction, however, some illness that we and our children suffer from may well be self-inflicted, or they may be attributed to the irresponsible actions and unethical behaviour of other people.

One significant difference between the spirits which Jesus confronts in the gospels and those of traditional Samoa lies in the origin and nature of the supernatural entities involved. The spirits and demons in the gospels are evil and malicious and they are portrayed as in decisive contrast to the realm of God and his kingdom. We may say that the spirit-world of the gospels is dualistic. The spirits are portrayed as originating from the realm of evil and their leader Satan or the Devil presents an opposing front to Jesus' healing ministry. These spiritual entities resemble the nature of Persian dualism between good and evil, light and darkness, or that of Qumran between the spirit of light and that of darkness. The Samoan spirits are not polarised into two contrasting forces of good and evil, neither are they understood as originating from an evil realm, however, they are human spirits, and they are respectable entities within the family and community generally. Their activities may not be seen as malicious inflictions of evil beings, but disciplinary actions of family deities and ancestral spirits. They are a respectable order in the Samoan world-view, and they portray characteristics similar to the Greek *daemons* and deities which are mentioned in the writings of Plato and the Middle Platonists such as Plutarch and Xenocrates. There are evil *aitu* which resemble the nature of evil and malicious spirits of the gospels. These are identified as the spirits of those who have not lived good and moral lives, and their spirits have become

malicious beings which harass and cause harm to people. There are many points of similarities between the Samoan and New Testament understanding of spirits, however, where there are differences, the New Testament is closer to the dualism of Persia and Qumran and the Samoan *aitu* to the *daemons* of Plato and Plutarch.

Satan has a significant place in the healing ministry of Jesus. In the Synoptic Gospels, Satan represents an enemy of God, an independent supernatural being who is not only the leader of demons and evil spirits, but one who opposes the realm of God represented by Jesus. The emergence of Satan as an independent being and an adversary of God falls very much in line within the dualistic framework of spirits and deities in the gospels. [This terminology of 'deities' is unusual in the New Testament though it is mentioned in 2Cor 4:4 cp. Jn 12:31] On the one hand we find Satan and his realm of evil spirits and demons, and on the other, Jesus and the kingdom of God. The two kingdoms wage war against each other, and the lives of people become their battleground. The Samoan world-view does not have an independent devil or a trickster from another realm who invades, corrupts and harms people. However, the concept of evil is understood as inherent in human nature rather than an outside force from an evil realm. The family or community is the seat of evil activity which occasionally manifests itself in human relationships in the family and society generally. The idea of an evil being in the form of Satan is a later adoption into the Samoan world-view; a direct influence of the new *lotu*. However, the adopted Satan unlike that of the New Testament, is seen not as an outside personality but an evil force in human nature which is responsible for evil and corrupt activities of people.

The gospels bear witness to Jesus as the healer and exorcist. His healing activities resemble those of Jewish charismatic healers. He has the authority of God to heal

and to exorcise. His healing practices conformed to the moral and ethical aspirations of the community he served. His ministry of healing and acts of exorcism were conducted not for personal gain but directed for the holistic welfare of those whom he came into contact with. These significant characteristics raised Jesus' healing practices beyond the level of practising magicians of his time. In a similar way, traditional Samoan healers are seen as respectable mediums through which the *mana* of spirits and deities effect healing. Traditional healers are respectable and moral members of families and the community. They are often the heads or *matai* of families. Although Jesus was not a family *matai* in the traditional sense, yet he is presented in the gospels as one endowed with an authority of one who could rightly be identified as the head of the new community.

Jesus' acts of exorcism are seen in the gospels as going beyond the mere expulsion of evil spirits to demonstrate the defeat of evil and the establishment of God's rule. This significance elevates the acts of exorcism in the gospels beyond the confinement of physical remedy and well-being to a more spiritual and cosmic dimension. The phenomenon of possession in Samoa does not anticipate the defeat of traditional spirits, but like Jesus' exorcisms, its significance goes beyond the mere exit of the demon. Possessions function as the way in which the society and family maintain its relationship with the spirit-world. An act of possession of an individual signals a breach in the relationship between family members and spirits which needs to be reconciled. By an act of possession, the Samoans come to acknowledge the problem and immediately seek ways to achieve harmony and peace with its spiritual counterpart.

Jesus' healing ministry represents an attempt to provide a more holistic approach to

health and well-being rather than simply the remedy of the physical symptoms. His healing miracles should not be equated with medical healing but must be seen as an attempt to understand illness and disease within the whole context of the human person who has social, religious and spiritual relationships and responsibilities within the family, the community and also to the world of spirits and supernatural beings. This dimension of Jesus' healing has not been fully appreciated and given its proper due significance in the understanding of his healing miracles. Even Howard Kee and others who were aware of this wider framework within which the healing miracles of Jesus ^{may} be understood, had not significantly highlighted this holistic aspect of Jesus' healing miracles. As pointed out in the healing of the leper [Mk 1:40-45], the man with a withered hand [Mk 3:1-12; Lk 6:6-11], the healing of Peter's mother-in-law [Mk 1:29-31]; the paralysed man [Mk 2:1-12]; etc., the social and religious dimensions of the healing activities of Jesus restored these people not only physically, but reinstated them into more meaningful living within the family, society and also in their relationship to God. Samoan healing beliefs and practices try to understand the patient within the whole context of his social and religious belief systems in the search for the cure of his ailment. The illness reality of a patient goes far beyond the physical problem that he encounters to include social, religious and moral problems. It is only when the remedy is set within the patient's social, religious and moral framework, that holistic healing and genuine well-being may be successfully achieved.

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GLOSSARY

<i>agaga</i>	soul or spirit
<i>agasala</i>	sin or wrong doing
<i>aitu</i>	spirit or deity
<i>ali'i</i>	paramount chief or lord
<i>anamua</i>	past
<i>atua</i>	deity
<i>'ava</i>	ceremonial drink from the root of a plant
<i>fa'a-Samoa</i>	Samoaan culture
<i>fafā</i>	land of the dead
<i>faiife'au</i>	pastor, minister
<i>fale aitu</i>	spirit house
<i>fanua</i>	land or earthly foundation
<i>feagaiiga</i>	covenant
<i>fe'e</i>	a deity in a form of an octopus or a cuttlefish
<i>fofō</i>	to massage
<i>Ieova</i>	Yahweh
<i>ifoga</i>	penance
<i>itumālō</i>	district
<i>lagi</i>	heaven
<i>liutofaga</i>	rite of reburial
<i>lotu</i>	Christianity
<i>ma'i</i>	sickness
<i>malae</i>	open space for worship and social gathering
<i>malumalu</i>	house of refuge, temple, church building
<i>mana</i>	supernatural power
<i>matai</i>	a titled person and head of a family
<i>nu'u</i>	village
<i>papa</i>	rock formation
<i>papālagi</i>	heavenly foundation, a term now used for a European
<i>pili</i>	a traditional deity in the form of a lizard
<i>pou</i>	posts or props
<i>pulotu</i>	land of the spirits
<i>sā</i>	taboo
<i>sala</i>	punishment
<i>satani</i>	satan
<i>sauali'i</i>	deity
<i>Tagaloa</i>	creator god
<i>tapu, tapui</i>	taboo
<i>taulaitu</i>	priest, traditional healer
<i>tiapolo</i>	devil
<i>tua'ā</i>	ancestors
<i>tulafale</i>	orator, talking chief
<i>tupu</i>	to grow, to descend from
<i>tupua</i>	ancestral spirits
<i>vai aitu</i>	spirit medicine