

ADAM'S DEMONIC FAMILY¹

Our teacher Asi said: Adam the protoplast was wholly righteous, and when he saw that death had been decreed (as punishment) through his fault, he gained control over himself with fasting, kept away from his wife, and slept alone.² A *lilītu*-demon named Pīznā³ came across him and became enamored with his handsomeness, for his handsome appearance was comparable to (that of) the solar disc. She slept with him (and eventually) gave birth from him to demons and *lilū*-devils.

The name of the first-born son of Adam the protoplast was Agarīmus. Agarīmus went and married a *lilītu*-demon (named) Imrīt, (and) she bore him 92,000 myriads of demons and *lilū*-devils. The name of the first-born son of Agarīmus was Abelmus. He went and married Gōfrīt the *lilītu*-demon, and she bore him 88,000 myriads of demons and *lilū*-devils. The name of the first-born son of Abelmus was Akrīmus, and he went and [married] Afīznā, the daughter of Pūznā the *lilītu*-demon⁴ who was dwelling ... the mountain, and she bore him 3,000 myriads of demons and *lilū*-devils ... the entire universe became filled with them ... the Angel of Death, and he strikes dead anyone who encounters him.

Methuselah the righteous⁵ sat fasting for three days in the waters of the Euphrates river.⁶ He then said to the Holy One, blessed be He: ‘Master of the Universe! It was Your idea to create humanity in Your

¹ Translated from the fragmentary Hebrew text published by Arthur Marmorstein, “Midrash Avkir,” *Devir* 1 (1923): 137-39. See also Louis Ginzberg, *Hagoren* 9 (1922): 66-68; Oxford Bodl. Ms. 2797, the first section of which was published by Moses Gaster, *The Chronicles of Jerahmeel* (London, 1899; repr., New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1971), 48-49. See now Eli Yassif, ed., *Sefer ha-Zikronot hu’ Divrey ha-Yamim le-Yerahme’el* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 2001), 113.

² Compare *b. ‘Erub.* 18b: ‘R. Yermiyah b. El‘azar said, All those years that Adam the protoplast spent in banishment he was engendering spirits, demons, and *lilū*-devils, for scripture states *and Adam lived for 130 years, and then he engendered one in his image and in his likeness* (Gen 5:3). It follows that up to that point (i.e., year 130) he had not engendered any in his likeness! They (the assembly) objected: R. Meir used to say, Adam the protoplast was a great *ḥasīd*: when he saw that death had been decreed (as punishment) through his fault, he sat fasting for 130 years, kept away from his wife for 130 years, and wore clothes made of fig-leaves for 130 years.’ For another parallel version, see Ḥanokh Albeck, ed., *Midrash Berešit Rabbati* (Jerusalem: Mekize Nirdamim, 1940), 57.12-21.

³ Jerahmeel ms. reads (*apud* Marmorstein, 138 n.4): מצאת אותו חוה הראשונה והיא לילית.

⁴ Note the Mandaic incantation published by James A. Montgomery, *Aramaic Incantation Texts From Nippur* (Philadelphia: University Museum, 1913), text 40.17 (בוזנאי ליליתא); also line 18 (בוזנאי מלאכא).

⁵ Also *t. Soṭah* 10.3, where the forefather is labeled מתושלח הצדיק, and see the further references signaled by Lieberman, *Tosefta ki-feshutah*, 8:718. This epithet derives from the otherwise unexplained seven-day delay for the onset of the Flood that is signaled in Gen 7:4 which become a prescribed period of mourning for the death of Methuselah.

image and Your likeness. But now the one who was created in Your image is ruled by demons and spirits, and evil spirits afflict him!’ Immediately the Holy One, blessed be He, granted power to Methuselah the righteous, and he inscribed the Ineffable Name on his sword and instantly killed 900,000 myriads (of demons. He continued killing) until Agarīmus, the first-born son of Adam the protoplast, approached and stood before Methuselah and implored him (to stop). He contracted an agreement with him, and he (Agarīmus) wrote down and gave to him the names of the demons and the *lilû*-devils. They put them (the demons) in iron restraints and they put them under guard, but the remainder hid themselves among the peaks of the mountains and the abysses of Okeanos. After the removal of Methuselah the righteous, crime was more rampant on the earth than it had been since the days of Enosh, as scripture states: ‘and the earth was corrupt’ (Gen 6:11). A human would go to (sin with) an animal, and an animal⁷ with birds, and demons with humans, and even the ministering angels (sinned with) mortal women, as scripture attests: ‘and the sons of God beheld mortal women ...’ (Gen 6:2). The Holy One, blessed be He, granted power to the demons, evil spirits, and *lilû*-demons, and the angels of destruction, and they began destroying those who engaged in all the deeds of Molech. And when the righteous who lived during that generation sought mercy for them, He commanded the angels of destruction, saying, ‘Attack the righteous so that they will not be able to ask for mercy for them!’ They attacked them until there was left not one of them but Noah the righteous, as scripture says, ‘this one will change it (i.e., My mind)’ (Gen 5:29).

⁶ Reminiscent of the legend found in the *Vita Adae et Evae* 6:1-2, although there the duration is longer (40 days) and the river is the Jordan (Adam) and the Tigris (Eve).

⁷ Marmorstein’s text ends here; the remainder is restored from Ginzberg’s text (available in Marmorstein, 144 appendix 3).