

# The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity

*Encounters between Jewish  
and Christian Exegesis*

Emmanouela Grypeou and Helen Spurling

JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES 24

BRILL

# The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity

# Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series

## *Editorial Board*

David Golinkin – Alberdina Houtman  
Marcel Poorthuis – Joshua Schwartz  
Freek van der Steen

## *Advisory Board*

Yehoyada Amir – David Berger – Shaye Cohen  
Judith Frishman – Martin Goodman  
Clemens Leonhard – Tobias Nicklas – Eyal Regev  
Gerard Rouwhorst – Seth Schwartz – Yossi Turner

VOLUME 24

# The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity

Encounters between Jewish and  
Christian Exegesis

*By*

Emmanouela Grypeou and Helen Spurling



BRILL

LEIDEN • BOSTON  
2013



Bar-Ilan University after the Ingeborg Rennert Center for Jerusalem Studies, Israel



University of Tilburg: Faculty of Catholic Theology, The Netherlands



Protestant Theological University, The Netherlands



Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies, Israel

*The editors gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Ingeborg Rennert Center for Jerusalem Studies.*

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Grypeou, Emmanouela.

The book of Genesis in late antiquity : encounters between Jewish and Christian exegesis / by Emmanouela Grypeou and Helen Spurling.

pages cm. — (Jewish and Christian perspectives series ; volume 24)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-90-04-24552-5 (alk. paper) — ISBN 978-90-04-24555-6 (e-book) (print) 1. Bible. O.T. Genesis—Criticism, interpretation, etc.—History—Early church, ca. 30–600. I. Title.

BS1235.52.G79 2013

222'.110609—dc23

2012049290

This publication has been typeset in the multilingual “Brill” typeface. With over 5,100 characters covering Latin, IPA, Greek, and Cyrillic, this typeface is especially suitable for use in the humanities. For more information, please see [www.brill.com/brill-typeface](http://www.brill.com/brill-typeface).

ISSN 1388-2074

ISBN 978-90-04-24552-5 (hardback)

ISBN 978-90-04-24555-6 (e-book)

Copyright 2013 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill, Global Oriental, Hotei Publishing, IDC Publishers and Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Koninklijke Brill NV provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910, Danvers, MA 01923, USA.

Fees are subject to change.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

## CONTENTS

Acknowledgements .....	ix
Introduction .....	1
Previous Approaches to Jewish-Christian Relations in Late Antiquity .....	2
The Biblical Text and Exegetical Encounters .....	11
Rabbinic Literature and Approach .....	15
Christian Literature and Approach .....	21
The Process of Encounter .....	26
Methodology: The Development and Transmission of Each Exegetical Tradition .....	30
Overview of this Volume .....	38
1. In Paradise: Adam from Creation to Resurrection .....	39
Rabbinic Traditions .....	39
The Creation of Adam: The Hours of Man in Paradise .....	40
The Transgression of Adam and Eve: The Serpent as an Intermediary .....	47
The Burial of Adam: The Temple Mount and the Cave of Machpelah .....	50
The Resurrection of Adam .....	54
Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained: The Christian Tradition .....	59
One (Last) Day in Paradise .....	59
The Devil and the Serpent, or, the Loss of Paradise .....	68
Where does Adam lay? Or, the Promise of Return .....	71
Resurrection from Dust, or, Paradise Regained .....	79
The Exegetical Encounter .....	84
2. Cain and Abel .....	99
Rabbinic Traditions .....	99
Cain was the Son of Sammael or the Devil .....	100
Cain and Abel's Twin Sisters .....	104
Cain killed Abel over a Woman .....	108
Abel was killed by a Stone .....	112
Lamech killed Cain .....	113

The Christian Tradition .....	116
The Birth of Cain and Abel .....	119
The Death of Abel .....	121
The Death of Cain .....	128
The Exegetical Encounter .....	132
3. The Flood Story .....	147
Rabbinic Traditions .....	147
The Descendants of Seth and Cain .....	148
Repentance and the Ark .....	152
Mocking of Noah and the Building of the Ark .....	156
Noah and Chastity .....	160
The Christian Tradition .....	165
The Descendants of Seth and Cain .....	166
Repentance and the Ark .....	175
Mocking of Noah .....	180
Noah and Chastity .....	181
The Exegetical Encounter .....	185
4. Abraham and Melchizedek .....	199
Rabbinic Traditions .....	199
Melchizedek identified with Shem .....	200
Priesthood of Abraham .....	205
Melchizedek and Jerusalem .....	209
Bread and Wine Symbolism .....	211
Melchizedek and Circumcision .....	213
The Christian Tradition .....	215
Melchizedek identified with Shem .....	215
Priesthood of Abraham vs Priesthood of Melchizedek .....	220
Melchizedek and Jerusalem .....	221
Bread and Wine Symbolism .....	225
Melchizedek and Circumcision .....	226
The Exegetical Encounter .....	228
5. Hagar and Ishmael .....	239
Rabbinic Traditions .....	239
Hagar: A Gift from Pharaoh .....	240
Ishmael the Plunderer .....	243
Apocalyptic Ishmaelites .....	246

Ishmael the Rejected .....	249
Idolatry .....	251
Bloodshed and Animosity towards Isaac .....	253
Firstborn Rights and Inheritance .....	255
Abraham's Lack of Generosity .....	256
The Christian Tradition .....	259
Hagar: A Gift from Pharaoh .....	264
Ishmael's Animosity .....	266
Hagar's Expulsion .....	271
Ishmael and the Apocalyptic Understanding of the Muslim Arabs .....	272
The Exegetical Encounter .....	277
 6. Jacob's Ladder .....	 289
Rabbinic Traditions .....	289
The Foundation Stone and the Temple Built, Destroyed and Rebuilt .....	291
The Stone(s) as Nation Israel—Election and Fulfilment of the Promise .....	295
The Messiah as Jacob's Stone or Cornerstone .....	298
The Anointed Stone .....	300
The Christian Tradition .....	301
The Angels on the Ladder and their Symbolism .....	305
The Christological Interpretation of Jacob's Vision .....	307
The Anointing of the Stone .....	310
The Exegetical Encounter .....	314
 7. Joseph and Potiphar .....	 323
Rabbinic Traditions .....	323
The Beauty of Joseph .....	325
Potiphar and Joseph .....	329
Potiphar, Potiphara and Asenath .....	332
The Christian Tradition .....	336
The Beauty of Joseph .....	338
Joseph and Potiphar's Wife .....	340
Potiphar: A Eunuch? .....	345
Potiphar: Joseph's Father-in-Law? .....	350
The Exegetical Encounter .....	351



8. The Blessing on Judah .....	361
Rabbinic Traditions .....	361
Judah is Praised (Genesis 49:8) .....	362
Praise for Judah's Actions .....	362
Praise for Judah's Victories .....	365
The Lion of Judah (Genesis 49:9) .....	367
The Messiah and the Nations (Genesis 49:10) .....	372
The Sceptre and Messiah .....	372
Shiloh and Messiah .....	376
Subjection of the Nations .....	379
The Donkey and the Vine (Genesis 49:11) .....	381
Garments washed in Wine .....	384
The 'Wine' and 'Milk' (Genesis 49:12) .....	387
The Christian Tradition .....	390
Gen 49:8: 'Judah your Brothers will praise you' .....	390
Gen 49:9: 'Judah is a Lion's Whelp' .....	393
Gen 49:10: 'A Ruler will not fail' .....	398
Gen 49:11a: 'He who binds his Foal to a Vine' .....	412
Gen 49:11b: 'He who washes his Garment in Wine' .....	416
Gen 49:12: 'Wine and Milk' .....	419
The Exegetical Encounter .....	421
 Conclusions .....	 437
 Abbreviations .....	 445
Primary Sources: Editions and Translations .....	449
General Bibliography .....	463
Index of Ancient Sources .....	497
Subject, Biblical and Ancient Names Index .....	529

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This volume is the culmination of our joint research on the relationship between rabbinic and Christian exegetical writings of Late Antiquity. This work was initially conducted at the Centre for the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations and the Centre of Advanced Theological and Religious Studies of the Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge. We would like to thank the Leverhulme Trust for their generosity in funding our research through a Research Project Grant.

Dr. Ed Kessler, Executive Director of the Woolf Institute, Cambridge, initiated this research project and our gratitude for his unfailing support and guidance during the completion of the research and writing of this book goes beyond words.

We are grateful to Professor William Horbury (Cambridge) and Professor Nicholas de Lange (Cambridge) for their help and interest in our work from its earliest stages. We would also like to thank Professor Hermann Lichtenberger, PD Dr. Dmitrij Boumazhnov and Dr. Scott Caulley for their generous invitation to present early results of our work at the Colloquium of the Institute for the Study of Christian Origins at the University of Tübingen. Their constructive, critical comments have helped us to shape our methodological approach to the question of 'exegetical encounters'. Many thanks also to the members of the Hebrew, Jewish and Early Christian Studies Seminar at Cambridge for their helpful feedback on aspects of this volume.

We would like to thank the participants of the conference 'The Exegetical Encounter between Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity', which we organized in Cambridge in June 2007. All of the contributors offered valuable thoughts and insights on our own research questions and goals.

We would also like to thank Daniel Avasilichoaie and Yasmine Hou at the Centre for the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations and David Goode at the Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge for their valuable assistance on administration and IT aspects of the research project. Many thanks also to Dr. Philip Matyszak (Maty) who looked after the IT side of the project in its early stages and who was always available for a good laugh.

Emmanouela is very grateful to Professor Robert L. Wilken for his encouragement and inspiration in the study of Patristics in the context of Christian-Jewish relations. Professor Michael E. Stone has been a most

supportive and wise friend during the writing of the book. Dr. Stavros Komineas offered important technical assistance, and has been patient and understanding during the most demanding stages of the work. Finally, Panos Komineas was born during the research for this book and he saw it growing as he was growing up himself; he certainly made the time of writing this volume a happy time.

Helen would like to thank those colleagues in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Southampton, whose encouragement has helped bring this work to completion. Special thanks are due to the members of the Parkes Institute for the Study of Jewish/non-Jewish Relations, who have always been willing to discuss the volume and offer insightful remarks. A number of people have given constant and unwavering support during the research and writing of this book and, for their patience, deserve special mention: James Brown, Susan Spurling, William Spurling, Adam Spurling, Hazel Martin, Andrea Elliot-Smith, Al and Malin Eriksson-James, Chris and Carys Fuller, Cat Louisson and Talia Shaw. Without their support, this volume would have been much harder to write.

This volume represents a true partnership between the authors. In some ways, it is not easy to write a book with another person and this volume is a testament to our working relationship and friendship. It is invaluable to have someone to comment upon and criticize one's work with such honesty yet supportiveness.

Finally, this book is dedicated to Panos Komineas and Ben Spurling, who arrived in the world during the time it has taken for this volume to reach completion.

## INTRODUCTION

At the start of the twentieth century, one of the seminal modern scholars on the relationship between Jewish and Christian exegesis, Louis Ginzberg, stated, 'In the rich literature of the Church Fathers many a Jewish legend lies embalmed which one would seek in vain in Jewish books'.<sup>1</sup> Of course, in the last one hundred years methodologies have been developed and refined to reflect the complexity of the relationship between Jewish and Christian exegetes in Late Antiquity, the formative period of the religions. Today, the history of Jewish-Christian relations in Late Antiquity is approached from a variety of disciplinary perspectives from examination of literary sources to material culture, although the exact nature of any possible relationship remains an enduring question. The focus of this volume is the relationship between rabbinic and Christian exegetical writings of Late Antiquity in the eastern Roman Empire and Mesopotamia. It centres on the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament as a shared context by which a possible relationship between these individuals and communities and their writings can be elucidated. *The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity: Encounters between Jewish and Christian Exegesis* aims to identify and analyze evidence of potential 'encounters' between the rabbinic and Christian traditions in their interpretation of Scripture. In particular, this work endeavours to contribute to a number of key research questions, namely: To what extent was there some form of relationship between rabbinic and Christian exegetical ideas during the formative period of the two religions? What can this tell us about the development of rabbinic and Christian exegetical writings from Late Antiquity? In other words, to what extent was there some form of 'encounter' over the Bible, and what does the material contribute to discussion of a 'parting of the ways' or evidence of a closer relationship between rabbinic Judaism and Eastern Christianity of this period?

---

<sup>1</sup> L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. 1, Philadelphia 1909, 4.

*Previous Approaches to Jewish-Christian Relations in Late Antiquity*

The focus of this book is on potential exegetical encounters as evidenced in the writings of Christian and rabbinic exegetes in Late Antiquity. As the history of scholarship in this field shows, any study involving the comparative examination of Jewish and Christian material has implications for a broader evaluation of Jewish-Christian relations in the specified time period. From its beginnings in the late nineteenth century, modern scholarship on Jewish-Christian relations has concentrated on questions of the plausibility as well as the possibility (or possibilities) of contacts (whether real life or literary) between Christians and Jews in Late Antiquity, the time period that marks the formation and development of Christianity and rabbinic Judaism as religious systems.

The study of possible rabbinic responses to Christian polemics and theological challenges has not received the same extensive treatment as the studies of Christian authors and writings.<sup>2</sup> This situation is highlighted by G. Stemberger, who even remarks that ‘possible reactions of rabbinic exegesis still need further exploration, but it is already very clear that it was mainly the Christian side which learned from and reacted to the Jewish one’.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, rabbinic sources are reticent regarding the religious groups of their environment, and mention of Christians or Christianity by name is rarely found. The identification of cryptic references to ‘minim’ as referring to Christians is a painstaking and often controversial task in scholarship.<sup>4</sup> Related to these studies is a direction in scholarship that

---

<sup>2</sup> For an overview of some of the key debates and bibliography, see S.T. Katz, ‘The rabbinic response to Christianity’, in: S.T. Katz (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Judaism Volume Four: The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period*, Cambridge 2006, 259–298. Remarkably, S. Krauss notes that ‘many instances of the Talmud and Midrash only make sense when they were seen in light of the exegesis and polemics of Christian writers’ (in J. Baskin, ‘Rabbinic-Patristic Exegetical Contacts in Late Antiquity: A Bibliographical Reappraisal’, in: W.S. Green (ed.), *Approaches to Ancient Judaism* 5, Atlanta 1985, 57).

<sup>3</sup> ‘Exegetical Contacts between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire’, in: M. Saebø (ed.), *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: the History of Its Interpretation*. Vol. I, Part 1: Antiquity, Göttingen 1996, 575.

<sup>4</sup> See W. Horbury, ‘The Benediction of the *Minim* and Early Jewish-Christian Controversy’, *JTS* 33 (1982), 19–61; P.S. Alexander, ‘The Parting of the Ways from the Perspective of Rabbinic Judaism’, in: J.D.G. Dunn (ed.), *Jews and Christians: the Parting of the Ways, A.D. 70 to 135*, Tübingen 1992, 1–26, esp. 6f.; L.H. Schiffman, *Who was a Jew? Rabbinic and Halakhic Perspectives on the Jewish-Christian Schism*, Hoboken N.J. 1983, 51ff.; Y.Y. Tepler, *Birkat ha Minim. Jews and Christians in Conflict in the Ancient World*, Tübingen 2007; see also the studies by S.G. Wilson, *Related Strangers: Jews and Christians 70–170 C.E.*, Minneapolis 2004 and C. Setzer, *Jewish Responses to Early Christians: History and Polemics, 30–150 C.E.*,

assesses supposed references to Jesus or Christianity in midrashic and, particularly, Talmudic literature.<sup>5</sup> There are also a number of well known and sometimes controversial studies that have analyzed the potentially apologetic nature of rabbinic works through examination of particular rabbinic texts, exegesis of particular biblical passages or specific exegetical motifs and themes.<sup>6</sup> Ultimately, the lack of explicit references to Christianity has led a number of scholars to question the importance of Christianity for rabbinic Judaism.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, as part of this approach, M. Goodman suggests that the relationship between Jews and Christians was mainly significant for the Christians as ‘part of their self-definition’.<sup>8</sup>

Christian attitudes to Judaism in Late Antiquity are a substantial area of study. Christian authors of Late Antiquity often specifically name Jewish persons and traditions in their works, describe alleged meetings and debates and suggest actual relations and interactions with members of Jewish communities. More specifically, entire treatises, penned by Christian writers, are dedicated to theological confrontations with ‘Judaism’. This particular literary activity even developed into a distinct literary genre, known as ‘Adversus Judaeos’ literature, which flourished during the Late Antique period.<sup>9</sup>

A major direction in scholarship has focused on the Christian attitude towards Judaism based on the most extensive ‘witnesses’ on the Christian

---

Minneapolis 1989, which primarily rely on Christian source evidence with respect to Jewish reactions to Early Christianity.

<sup>5</sup> For example, R. Travers Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash*, London 1903; J. Maier, *Jesus von Nazareth in der talmudischen Überlieferung*, Darmstadt 1978; and P. Schäfer, *Jesus in the Talmud*, Princeton 2009.

<sup>6</sup> See R. Loewe, ‘Apologetic Motifs in the Targum to the Song of Songs’, in: A. Altmann (ed.), *Biblical Motifs: Origins and Transformations*, Cambridge MA 1966, 159–196; I. Kalimi, *Early Jewish Exegesis and Theological Controversy*, Assen 2002; B. Visotzky, ‘Anti-Christian Polemic in Leviticus Rabbah’, in: idem, *Fathers of the World: Essays in Rabbinic and Patristic Literatures*, Tübingen 1995, 93–105. However, in an important article, P.S. Alexander moved away from the idea of rabbinic polemic or apologetic against Christians and argued for ‘pre-emptive exegesis’, which represents an attempt to deal with the possibility of difficult interpretations by emphasizing acceptable readings of the biblical text; P.S. Alexander, ‘Pre-emptive Exegesis: Genesis Rabba’s Reading of the Story of Creation’, *JJS* 43 (1992), 230–45.

<sup>7</sup> See M. Goodman, ‘The Function of Minim in Early Rabbinic Judaism’, in: H. Cancik et al. (eds), *Geschichte—Tradition—Reflexion*, vol. 1, Tübingen 1996, 501–510; S. Stern, *Jewish Identity in Early Rabbinic Writings*, Leiden 1994; cf. J. Maier, *Jesus von Nazareth in der talmudischen Überlieferung*, Darmstadt 1978.

<sup>8</sup> ‘Modelling the “Parting of the Ways”’, in: A.H. Becker – A.Y. Reed (eds), *The Ways that Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages*, Tübingen 2003, 119.

<sup>9</sup> On this body of literature, see the comprehensive overview by H. Schreckenberg, *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos Texte*, 3 vols, Frankfurt a.M. 1982, 1990, 1994.

side, the 'Adversus Judaeos' literature.<sup>10</sup> Interestingly, this literary genre has been seen either as evidence for the lack of any real-life relations between Jews and Christians, or, on the contrary, as proof for active interaction between communities. As A.v. Harnack proposed, after the second century, the only contacts between Christians and Jews were of a literary, 'fictive' nature and were limited to the 'Adversus Judaeos' literature.<sup>11</sup> This methodological approach is also reflected in more recent studies that emphasize the fictional function and content of the 'Adversus Judaeos' literature. M. Taylor underlines that these writings demonstrate that the Church Fathers were concerned with the Jews on a 'symbolic level' rather than on a 'living level'.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, J. Lieu argues that anti-Jewish polemics reflect an 'autonomous Christian discourse', which did and could not connect with a real-life situation.<sup>13</sup>

In contrast, an approach represented by scholars such as J. Juster<sup>14</sup> and J. Parkes<sup>15</sup> has regarded the anti-Jewish writings as witnesses of contemporary Christian-Jewish theological conflict. In accordance with this approach, M. Simon argued that the 'Adversus Judaeos' literature emerged from real theological challenges in which Jews confronted Christians.<sup>16</sup> In more recent scholarship, W. Horbury emphasizes that, although the use of fictional patterns may not reflect actual physical contacts, this does not mean that contacts totally ceased.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, as A.H. Becker summarizes, 'The ire of anti-Jewish literature is attributed to an environment in which Jews and Christians are living in proximity and therefore must compete

---

<sup>10</sup> See J. Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue*, London 1934; M. Simon, *Verus Israel*, Oxford 1986; A.v. Harnack, *Die Altercatio Simonis Iudaei*, Leipzig 1883.

<sup>11</sup> *Die Altercatio Simonis Iudaei*, 57, 73–9; cf. D. Rokeah, *Jews, Pagans and Christians in Conflict*, Leiden 1982 for a similar view.

<sup>12</sup> *Anti-Judaism and Early Christian Identity: A Critique of the Scholarly Consensus*, Leiden 1996.

<sup>13</sup> *Image and Reality: The Jews in the World of the Christians in the Second Century*, Edinburgh 1996. For similar views, see H. Schreckenberg, *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos Texte*, Frankfurt a.M. 1982, 26; see, however, A. Becker, who notes that texts cannot be treated in their entirety as 'disembodied entities outside of real social situations' ('Beyond the Spatial and Temporal Limes: Questioning the 'Parting of the Ways' Outside the Roman Empire', in: idem—A.Y. Reed, *The Ways That Never Parted*, 383).

<sup>14</sup> *Les Juifs dans l'empire romain*, Paris 1914.

<sup>15</sup> *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue*, 90ff. and *passim*.

<sup>16</sup> *Verus Israel*, 271–305.

<sup>17</sup> *Jews and Christians in Contact and Controversy*, Edinburgh 1998, 21–25.

with one another, as well as continually concern themselves with the threat of porous community boundaries'.<sup>18</sup>

However, the 'Adversus Judaeos' literature represents solely Christian views of their relationship and attitude towards Jews. Moreover, it presents only a part of the available literary evidence. In addition, texts may be the most accessible and detailed witnesses, but they do not reflect the entire complexity of the relations between Christians and Jews. A number of studies on material culture, including epigraphical and archaeological material, provide additional evidence for social interaction between Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity.<sup>19</sup>

The diversity and complexity of the source evidence has prompted specific studies on cultural, spatial and social aspects of Jewish-Christian relations. Thus, the relations between Jewish and Christian communities have also been analyzed by focusing on historical studies of particular geographical areas.<sup>20</sup> The study of the interactions between Jews and Christians in particular places reflects where relations are well attested by contemporary source material, such as Antioch or Palestine.

---

<sup>18</sup> 'Beyond the Spatial', 383; cf. D. Boyarin, who stresses that 'there might very well be a gap between the explicit claims of certain texts that groups are different and separate and the actual situation 'on the ground' in which there was much less definition, much more fuzziness at the borders, and thus much more possibility of converging religious and cultural histories than otherwise would seem the case' (*Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism*, Stanford CA 1999, 10). The importance of the use of sociological approaches for the investigation of Christian anti-Jewish polemical writings in their particular social context has been recently stressed by G. Stroumsa, 'From Anti-Judaism to Anti-Semitism in Early Christianity?', in: O. Limor—G. Stroumsa (eds), *Contra Iudaeos. Ancient and Medieval Polemics between Christians and Jews*, Tübingen 1996, 1–26; and D. Satran, 'Anti-Jewish Polemic in the Peri Pascha of Melito of Sardis: The Problem of Social Context', in: op. cit., 49–58.

<sup>19</sup> See J. Lieu, who notes: 'there is evidence of Jews and Christians not only living in the same areas but even being buried in the same cemeteries, if not the same catacombs (...) This picture is confirmed by a range of studies of the cultural interaction between religious groups elsewhere' (*Neither Jew nor Greek?*, London 2002, 27f.); see *ibid.* for further references. See also P. Fredriksen, 'What "Parting of the Ways?" Jews, Gentiles in the Ancient Mediterranean City', in: A. Becker – A.Y. Reed, *The Ways That Never Parted*, 35–64; and esp. note 2 for further bibliography on archaeological evidence; cf. the important studies by L.V. Rutgers, *The Jews in Late Ancient Rome. Evidence of Cultural Interaction in the Roman Diaspora*, Leiden 2000; and *idem*, 'Archaeological Evidence for the Interaction of Jews and non-Jews in Late Antiquity', *AJA* 96 (1992), 101–118; see A.S. Jacobs, 'The Lion and the Lamb', in: A. Becker – A.Y. Reed, *The Ways that Never Parted*, 102; cf. T. Braun, 'The Jews in the Late Roman Empire', *SCI* 27 (1998), 142–171.

<sup>20</sup> See G. Stemberger, *Jews and Christians in the Holy Land: Palestine in the Fourth Century*, London 2000; W.A. Meeks – R.L. Wilken, *Jews and Christians in Antioch in the First Four Centuries of the Common Era*, Atlanta 1979; H.J.W. Drijvers, 'Jews and Christians at Edessa', *JJS* 36 (1985), 88–102.



In addition to the study of the local relations between Jews and Christians, an important objective of a series of studies has been the assessment of the 'separation' of Judaism and Christianity. One approach advocated that this split took place as early as at the end of the first and into the second century. Accordingly, J. Parkes stated in 1934 that 'definite separation into two religions took place towards the end of the first century'.<sup>21</sup> More recent approaches date a 'final' rift between Judaism and Christianity to the fourth century when the Christian Church came into power in the Roman Empire. In particular, D. Boyarin points out that both the birth of the 'hegemonic Catholic Church' and 'the consolidation of rabbinic Judaism as Jewish orthodoxy' took place in the fourth century, and concludes by quoting R. Radford Ruether: 'the fourth century is the first century of Christianity and Judaism'.<sup>22</sup>

However, the Roman Empire was not the only place where Jews and Christians lived and interacted. The complexity of the relations between Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity is highlighted in the case of Mesopotamia, where, under the Persian Empire, Jews and Christians lived as minorities 'on the margins of Greek culture'.<sup>23</sup> In addition, as A.H. Becker suggests, the evidence from both East and West Syrian traditions points to a long interaction between Jews and Christians beyond the fourth century.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue*, 91; cf. J.D.G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways: Between Christianity and Judaism and their Significance for the Character of Christianity*, London 1991.

<sup>22</sup> *Dying for God*, 6; see *ibid.*, 6ff. for an overview of the various opinions on the approximate dating of the rift between Christianity and Judaism; see also A. Becker, 'Beyond the Spatial', 373; S.E. Porter – B.W.R. Pearson, 'Ancient Understanding of the Christian-Jewish Split', in: *idem* (eds), *Christian-Jewish Relations through the Centuries*, Sheffield 2000, 39; cf. S. Krauss: 'The long history of [the] polemic [between Christians and Jews] falls into two periods: that of the persecuted church, and that of the church in power' (*The Jewish-Christian Controversy from the Earliest Times to 1789*, Vol. I, Tübingen 1995, 11).

<sup>23</sup> A. Becker, 'Bringing the Heavenly Academy Down to Earth: Approaches to the Imagery of Divine Pedagogy in the East-Syrian Tradition', in: R. Boustani – A.Y. Reed (eds), *Heavenly Realms and Earthly Realities in Late Antique Religions*, Cambridge 2004, 188; cf. A. Becker, 'Beyond the Spatial', 379; see R. Kalmin, 'Christians and Heretics in Rabbinic Literature of Late Antiquity', *HTR* 87.2 (1994), 166; *idem*, *The Sage in Jewish Society of Late Antiquity*, London 1999, 70; cf. J. Neusner, 'Babylonian Jewry and Shapur II's Persecution of Christianity from 339–379 A.D.', *HUCA* 43 (1972), 77–99.

<sup>24</sup> See P. Hayman, 'The Image of the Jew in the Syriac Anti-Jewish Polemical Literature', in: J. Neusner – E.S. Frerichs (eds), *To See Ourselves as Others See Us*, Chico CA 1985, 423–441; A. Becker, 'Bringing the Heavenly Academy', 189; S. Brock, 'Jewish Traditions in Syriac Sources', *JJS* 30 (1979), 212–32; A. Becker, 'Anti-Judaism and Care of the Poor in Aphrahat's Demonstration 20', *J ECS* 10.3 (2002), 305–327.

As outlined above, a primary focus in scholarship has been on the examination of various aspects of the 'separation' of the two religions. However, more recent approaches challenge the model of 'the parting of the ways', a term coined by J. Parkes,<sup>25</sup> and suggest a more dynamic view of the relationship between Christianity and Judaism. As the title of their volume indicates, A.Y. Reed and A.H. Becker argue in a recent publication that the 'ways never parted'. They further emphasize that 'contrary to the 'Parting' model, our sources suggest that developments in both traditions continued to be shaped by contacts between Jews and Christians, as well as by their shared cultural contexts'.<sup>26</sup>

Furthermore, the source evidence also testifies to a positive attitude to and use of Jewish traditions by Christian authors. As already noted above, Church Fathers often acknowledged their consultation of Jewish sources and individuals. Thus, a number of studies have focused on the works of individual Church Fathers and their relationship to Jewish writings. Studies that examine Christian 'reliance' on Jewish traditions to a large extent concentrate on the use by the Church Fathers of Jewish-Hellenistic sources, such as Philo and Josephus.<sup>27</sup> However, the familiarity of Christian authors with Jewish individuals and traditions in Late Antiquity, and in particular with rabbinic Judaism is a more complex area of study due to the often ambiguous source evidence. Church Fathers, such as Justin, Origen and Jerome, who appear to be, or even acknowledge being, 'in dialogue' with Jewish contemporaries and traditions have received particular scholarly attention and scrutiny as regards their actual contacts with rabbis or other Jewish teachers, and the reliability of the relevant information that they provide.<sup>28</sup> Questions such as the direct or indirect transmission of source material and the extent of their command of Hebrew are central in the investigation of the works of named Church Fathers.

Indeed, debate has continued over the extent of knowledge of actual Jewish individuals or teachings in the writings of these Church Fathers. Notably, O. Skarsaune in his study of Justin's biblical exegesis argues that

---

<sup>25</sup> *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue*, 71.

<sup>26</sup> 'Introduction: Traditional Models and New Directions', in: idem, *The Ways that Never Parted*, 2.

<sup>27</sup> See S. Krauss, 'The Jews in the Works of the Church Fathers', *JQR* 5 (1893), 134f. on Clement of Alexandria, and R.L. Wilken, *Judaism and the Early Christian Mind*, New Haven 1971, on Cyril of Alexandria.

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, M. Hirshman, *A Rivalry of Genius: Jewish and Christian Biblical Interpretation in Late Antiquity*, N.Y. 1996, who discusses Justin, Origen and Jerome specifically.

Justin was in debate with rabbinic exegesis.<sup>29</sup> However, Justin's acquaintance with rabbinic traditions is doubted by G. Stemberger.<sup>30</sup> Other studies have examined Origen's knowledge of contemporary Judaism. Indeed, Origen's frequent reference to Jewish exegesis led S. Krauss, already in 1883, to claim that 'Origen not only had private interviews with Jewish teachers, but also engaged in public disputations in the presence of large audiences'.<sup>31</sup> In particular, Krauss pointed to the extensive amount of haggadic traditions that are preserved in Origen's works.<sup>32</sup> Equally well known is Jerome's use of Jewish exegetical material in his own writings and his direct or indirect knowledge of Jewish traditions.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, Jerome's firsthand knowledge of Judaism has also been questioned by scholars, such as G. Badry and G. Stemberger.<sup>34</sup> Significantly, G. Stemberger attributes the knowledge of rabbinic traditions in Christian writings mainly to the contribution of Jewish-Christians, who acted as 'middle-men' between two communities that in reality had few real contacts.<sup>35</sup>

The Syriac Fathers have been a further focus of scholarly attention. Syriac Fathers often revealed a high degree of familiarity with Jewish traditions in their works, and presented themselves in dialogue with

---

<sup>29</sup> *The Proof from Prophecy: A Study in Justin Martyr's Proof-Text Tradition*, Leiden 1987, 429; cf. R.S. MacLennan, *Early Christian Texts on Jews and Judaism*, Atlanta 1990, 63, who argues that Justin had direct access to Aramaic Jewish sources; cf. D. Rokeah, *Justin and the Jews*, 20ff on Justin's (non-)knowledge of Hebrew.

<sup>30</sup> 'Exegetical Contacts', 578.

<sup>31</sup> 'Jews in the Works of the Church Fathers', 141. However, Origen's real familiarity with Hebrew and Jewish literature has been questioned in more modern scholarship; see R. Brooks, 'Straw Dogs and Scholarly Ecumenism: The Appropriate Jewish Background for the Study of Origen', in: C. Kannengiessen – W.L. Petersen (eds), *Origen of Alexandria: His World and Legacy*, Notre Dame 1988, 94; cf. J. McGuckin, 'Caesarea maritima as Origen knew it', in: R.J. Daly (ed.), *Origeniana quinta*, Leuven 1992, 3–25; see also the discussion *infra*.

<sup>32</sup> G. Stemberger notes that it was 'quite possible that Origen was acquainted with R. Hoshaya who taught in Caesarea at the same time as Origen' ('Exegetical Contacts', 580; cf. G. Bardy, 'Les traditions juives dans l'oeuvre d'Origène', *RB* 34 (1925), 221f.); cf. N. de Lange, who thinks 'that even granted a good deal of scepticism, there is enough evidence to prove that Origen does preserve haggadic material not found in earlier Greek sources' (*Origen and the Jews: Studies in Jewish-Christian Relations in third-century Palestine*, Cambridge 1976, 131f.).

<sup>33</sup> See B. Kedar, 'The Latin Translations', in: M.J. Mulder – H. Sysling (eds), *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, Assen – Philadelphia 1988, 331–334; C.T.R. Hayward, *Jerome's Hebrew Questions on Genesis*, Oxford 1995, 15ff. and the discussion below in our chapter on 'Joseph and Potiphar'.

<sup>34</sup> See G. Bardy, 'Saint-Jérôme et ses maîtres hebreux', *Revue Bénédictine* 46 (1934), 145–164, who has shown that some of Jerome's Jewish traditions derive from the works of earlier Church Fathers, such as Origen and Eusebius; cf. G. Stemberger, 'Exegetical Contacts', 583.

<sup>35</sup> 'Exegetical Contacts', 583; cf. J.G. Gager, 'Jews, Christians and the Dangerous Ones Inbetween', in: S. Bidermann – B.A. Scharfstein (eds), *Interpretation of Religion*, Leiden 1992, 249–258.

Jewish contemporaries.<sup>36</sup> Aphrahat, an early Christian Syriac author, suggests in his work that he had direct and fervent confrontation with the Jewish communities in his environment. Aphrahat's possible encounters with Jews in Babylonia have been investigated at length, but his personal acquaintance with contemporary Jews, and in particular with Babylonian rabbis, remains much debated. While scholars such as W. Funk, and more recently N. Koltun-Fromm, argue for a direct reliance of Aphrahat on rabbinic traditions,<sup>37</sup> others, such as J. Neusner, deny that Aphrahat had personal contacts and knowledge of rabbinic Judaism.<sup>38</sup>

Equally vehement sentiments about Jews can be read in the writings of another major Syriac Church Father, Ephraem the Syrian.<sup>39</sup> Similarly, while certain studies have demonstrated that the work of Ephraem abounds with rabbinic midrashic elements, Ephraem's direct contacts with contemporary Jews remains a controversial issue.<sup>40</sup>

Acquaintance with Jewish traditions by the Syriac Fathers is partly explained through familiarity with Jewish pseudepigraphical literature that was popular in Syriac-speaking Christianity.<sup>41</sup> In addition, the Peshitta

---

<sup>36</sup> See R. Murray's seminal study, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, London 1975; see also the important works of Sebastian Brock.

<sup>37</sup> S. Funk, *Die haggadischen Elemente in den Homilien des Aphraates*, Vienna 1891; N. Koltun-Fromm, 'Aphrahat and the Rabbis on Noah', in: J. Frishman – L. van Rompay (eds), *The Book of Genesis in Jewish and Oriental Christian Interpretation*, Louvain 1997, 57–72; cf. M.D. Koster, 'Aphrahat's Use of his Old Testament', in: B. ter Haar Romeny (ed.), *The Peshitta, its use in Literature and Liturgy*, Leiden 2006, 131–141; J. Oullette, 'Sens et portee de l'argument scripturaire chez Aphraate', in: R.H. Fischer (ed.), *A Tribute to A. Vööbus. Studies in Early Christian Literature and its Environment primarily in the Syrian East*, Chicago 1977, 191–202; J.M. McCullough, 'Aphrahat the Biblical Exegete', *Studia Patristica* 18 (1990), 263–68; S. Muto, 'Interpretation in the Greek Antiochenes and the Syriac Fathers', in: B. ter Haar Romeny, *The Peshitta*, 201–222; see F. Gavin, 'Aphraates and the Jews', *JSOR* 7 (1923), 95–166; cf. J. Childers, *Virtuous Reading: Aphrahat's Approach to Scripture*, Piscataway NJ 2009, 45.

<sup>38</sup> See J. Neusner, who concludes that Aphrahat had little or no direct contact with rabbinical Jews (*Aphrahat and Judaism*, Leiden 1971).

<sup>39</sup> See C. Shephardson, *Anti-Judaism and Christian Orthodoxy. Ephrem's Hymns in Fourth-Century Syria*, Washington DC 2008.

<sup>40</sup> See T. Kronholm, *Motifs from Genesis 1–11 in the Genuine Hymns of Ephrem the Syrian*, Lund 1978; cf. A. Levene, *The Early Syrian Fathers on Genesis*, London 1951; see also idem, 'Pentateuchal Exegesis in Early Syriac and Rabbinic Sources', *TU* 63 (1957), 484–91; A. Kame-sar speaks of 'the completely non-critical and often even 'unconscious' Syriac approach' ('The Evaluation of the Narrative Aggada in Greek and Latin Patristic Literature', *JThS* 45 (1994), 53–56); G. Richer, 'Über die älteste Auseinandersetzung der syrischen Christen mit den Juden', *ZNW* 35 (1936), 101–14; L. van Rompay, 'The Christian Syriac Tradition of Interpretation', in: M. Saebo (ed.), *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament*, 613–641.

<sup>41</sup> See S. Hidal, *Interpretatio Syriaca*, Lund 1974; D. Gerson, 'Die Commentarien des Ephraem Syrus im Verhältniss zur jüdischen Exegese. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der

could have inspired interpretations that were similar to those of rabbis.<sup>42</sup> Thus, P. Bruns argues, 'Die Konvergenzen in der Exegese zwischen den Rabbinen und den syrischen Kirchenvätern resultieren aus dem breiten Strom mündlicher Überlieferung, der in die Peschitta und in die aramäischen Targumim eingeflossen ist'.<sup>43</sup>

Indeed, discussion of Christian awareness of Jewish traditions in Late Antiquity needs to take account of a range of different sources and, as such, move beyond examination of only rabbinic traditions. As is well known, exegetical traditions circulated and were passed on by means of many trajectories. The transmission of biblical interpretations is particularly complex, and it is often impossible to ascertain a direct source of a particular tradition. Furthermore, it would be simplistic to suggest that the development of a tradition has only been motivated by a single factor. Although many exegetical parallels can be found in rabbinic literature, Christian knowledge of these or similar interpretations and awareness of contemporary Judaism cannot be attributed solely to direct familiarity with rabbinic traditions.

One of the pioneers on the relationship of patristic exegesis to rabbinic traditions was L. Ginzberg with his groundbreaking study 'Die Haggadah bei den Kirchenvätern', which was published as a series of articles between 1898 and 1899, followed by his *Legends of the Jews*.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, a number of studies in the past decades have moved beyond the study of the work of individual Church Fathers and their relationship to rabbinic literature. These studies focus on the examination of certain biblical verses, episodes and characters in both rabbinic and patristic literature in comparative analysis.<sup>45</sup>

---

Exegese', *MGWJ* 17 (1868), 15–33, 64–72, 98–109, 141–149; N. Séd, 'Les Hymnes sur le Paradis de Saint Ephrem et les traditions juives', *Le Muséon* 81 (1968), 455–501.

<sup>42</sup> However, the use of the Peshitta by early Syriac Church Fathers remains uncertain; on this issue, see the studies of R.J. Owens, *The Genesis and Exodus Citations of Aphrahat the Persian Sage*, Leiden 1983 and A. Lund, 'Observations on Some Biblical Quotations of Ephraem's Commentary on Genesis', *Aramaic Studies* 4.2 (2006), 205–218; cf. J. Cook, 'The Composition of the Peshitta Version of the Old Testament (Pentateuch)', in: B. Dirksen – M.J. Mulder (eds), *The Peshitta: Its Early Text and History*, Leiden 1988, 147–168.

<sup>43</sup> *Aphrahat. Unterweisungen*, Freiburg 1991, 56.

<sup>44</sup> See 'Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern', *MGWJ* 42 (1898) 537–550; 43 (1899) 17–22, 61–75, 117–125, 149–159, 293–303, 409–416, 46–470, 485–504, 529–547; Ginzberg's monumental work *Legends of the Jews* was published in seven volumes between 1909 and 1938, and includes many examples of parallel exegetical material.

<sup>45</sup> J. Cohen, *Be Fertile and Increase. Fill the Earth and Master It: The Ancient and Medieval Career of a Biblical Text*, Ithaca 1989; G. Larsson, *Bound for Freedom: The Book of Exodus in Jewish and Christian Tradition*, Peabody 1999; A.F.J. Klijn, *Seth in Jewish, Christian and*

Noticing the lack of scholarly consensus in the study of Jewish-Christian exegetical relations in Late Antiquity, E. Kessler has recently contributed to the debate with his book *Bound by the Bible*. Kessler, following R. Loewe's observations on the importance of biblical interpretation for Jewish and Christian theology, emphasizes that 'a study of biblical interpretation can shed light on Jewish-Christian relations because both Jews and Christians lived in a biblically orientated culture'.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, Kessler proposes specific methodological criteria for the establishment of an exegetical encounter. Applying these criteria to the study of the story of Isaac's near sacrifice, Kessler was able to demonstrate a number of significant exegetical encounters.

The present volume examines cases of exegetical encounter between rabbinic and Christian writings in Late Antiquity by applying a rigorous framework for both the analysis of the respective source materials and also the identification of an encounter, as set out below.

### *The Biblical Text and Exegetical Encounters*

This volume aims to elucidate the relationship between rabbinic and Christian writings of Late Antiquity by searching for evidence of encounter over the interpretation of the Bible. It represents a literary and theological analysis of biblical interpretations from both religious traditions, with focus on rabbinic and Christian exegesis of the book of Genesis, a text that is assigned considerable importance by commentators from both traditions.<sup>47</sup>

Jews and Christians of Late Antiquity adhered to different 'canons'. Christians referred to what became known as the Old and New Testaments whereas rabbinic exegetes studied the written and oral Torah. Accordingly, even if Christians and Jews used in part the same collection of biblical

---

*Gnostic Literature*, Leiden 1977; S. Fraade, *Enoch and his Generation*, Chico 1985; J.P. Lewis, *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood in Jewish and Christian Literature*, Leiden 1978; J.S. Siker, *Disinheriting the Jews: Abraham in Early Christian Controversy*, Louisville 1991; F.L. Horton, *The Melchizedek Tradition: a Critical Examination of the Sources to the Fifth Century A.D. and in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Cambridge 1976; J. Baskin, *Pharaoh's Counsellors: Job, Jethro and Balaam in Rabbinic and Patristic Traditions*, Chico 1983; H. Reuling, *After Eden: Church Fathers and Rabbis on Genesis 3:16–21*, Leiden 2006; S. Légasse, 'Exégèse juive ancienne et exégèse patristique. Le cycle biblique de Gédéon', *Liber Annuus* 50 (2000), 181–262.

<sup>46</sup> *Bound by the Bible, Jews, Christians and the Sacrifice of Isaac*, Cambridge 2004, 18–19.

<sup>47</sup> This book builds on the concept of a 'common Bible', namely, a shared biblical tradition. It has been suggested by J.L. Kugel that 'It might be said of Jews and Christians (...) that they are divided by a common Scripture' (*Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible as It Was at the Start of the Common Era*, Cambridge MA – London 1998, 39).

books, in each tradition this was connected to an additional authoritative body of literature. Thus, Christians and Jews possessed biblical books that united their religious traditions, as well as biblical books that distinguished those traditions from each other. Importantly, however, where overlap is found is in the use of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. In particular, certain texts remained vital to the theology of both religious traditions, such as the book of Genesis, and it cannot be denied that the book of Genesis was the focus of much discussion by both rabbinic exegetes and Christian authors. As such, exegesis of Genesis provides an abundant array of sources from which to search for evidence of potential encounters.

Significantly, although Jews and Christians shared the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, the Bible was often read in different versions and languages by the two religious traditions. Rabbinic exegetes primarily read the biblical text in Hebrew and Aramaic. Different Christian groups predominantly used the Septuagint,<sup>48</sup> or the Peshitta or other Syriac translations, as well as Latin versions. Certain Church Fathers (the best known among them, Origen and Jerome) also knew and discussed other available versions, as well as the Hebrew text.<sup>49</sup>

W. Horbury, following Hengel, argues that the LXX may have served as ‘a “common bible” of Jews and Christians, at least in Rome and for a time’.<sup>50</sup> It should be noted that the LXX originally represented an effort

---

<sup>48</sup> N. Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context. Introduction to the Greek Versions of the Bible*, Leiden 2000; M. Hengel, *The Septuagint as Christian Scripture. Its Prehistory and the Problem of its Canon*, London–N.Y. 2002.

<sup>49</sup> See in particular Origen’s monumental philological endeavour, his collection of biblical versions in the *Hexapla*; F. Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum suae supersunt; sive veterum interpretum graecorum in totum vetus testamentum fragmenta*, 2 vols, Oxford 1867, 1874; cf. E.C. Ulrich, ‘Origen’s Old Testament Text: The Transmission History of the Septuagint of the Third Century C.E.’, in: C. Kannengiesser – W.L. Petersen (eds), *Origen of Alexandria: his World and his Legacy*, Notre Dame IN 1988, 3–33; cf. Origen’s letter to Julius Africanus (d. c. 240 CE) as regards the purpose of the compilation of the *Hexapla*: ‘I make it my endeavour of not to be ignorant of their (LXX’s) various readings, lest in my controversies with the Jews I should quote to them what is not found in their copies, even although that I may make some use of what is found there, even although it should not be in our Scriptures. For if we are so prepared for them in our discussions, they will not as is their manner, scornfully laugh at Gentile believers for their ignorance of the true readings as they have them’ (ANF IV, 387).

<sup>50</sup> *Jews and Christians*, 32; on the Christian appropriation of the LXX, see M. Hengel with R. Deines, *The Septuagint as Christian Scripture. Its Prehistory and the Problem of its Canon*, Edinburgh 2002; cf. M. Hengel, ‘Die Septuaginta als von den Christen beanspruchte Schriftensammlung bei Justin und den Vätern vor Origenes’, in: J.D.G. Dunn, *Jews and Christians*, 39–84; cf. S.E. Porter and B.W.R. Pearson, who argue: ‘the particularly Christian interpretations of many passages in the LXX may have formed the basis of the rejection of that translation by Jews in the first few centuries of the Common Era’ (‘Ancient Understanding of the Christian-Jewish Split’, 39).

to make the biblical text accessible to Hellenistic Jews in their vernacular language. Furthermore, G. Stemberger emphasizes that 'Jewish communities in the diaspora and even in Palestine (e.g. Caesarea) did not immediately and completely give up the use of the LXX because of its Christian usurpation'.<sup>51</sup> Indeed, the extensive use of the LXX by Christians led to the production and use of alternative Greek translations of the Bible among contemporary Jews.<sup>52</sup>

Christians and Jews in the Eastern provinces of the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity shared a common historical and cultural and, in specific areas, also a linguistic milieu. Indeed, many Christians and Jews would have been familiar with the vernacular languages where they lived in the Eastern provinces of the Roman Empire, and particularly with Greek, as discussed in a number of key studies.<sup>53</sup> It should further be noted that

<sup>51</sup> 'Exegetical Contacts', 574; cf. K. Treu, 'Die Bedeutung des Griechischen für die Juden im römischen Reich', *Kairos* 15 (1973), 123–144, esp. 138–143.

<sup>52</sup> See N. Fernández Marcos: 'The reason for the new translations by Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion is generally accepted as being the adoption of the LXX by Christians and its consequent rejection by the Jews. (...) However, (...) there are indications of the rejection of the LXX prior to the 2nd century' (*The Septuagint in Context*, 107). Due to its literal character and faithfulness to the original Hebrew, Fernández Marcos describes Aquila's translation as 'a kind of rabbinic Bible in Greek, replacing the LXX already inherited by the Christians' (ibid., 110); cf. K. Hyvärinen, *Die Übersetzung von Aquila*, Uppsala 1977; D. Barthélemy, *Les Devanciers d' Aquila*, Leiden 1963; A. Paul, 'La Bible Grecque d' Aquila et la idéologie du judaïsme ancien', *ANRW* II.20.1 (1987), 221–85; L.L. Grabbe, 'Aquila's Translation and Rabbinic Exegesis', *JJS* 33 (1992), 527–36. On Symmachus' translation, see A. Salvesen, *Symmachus and the Pentateuch*, Manchester 1991; see also E. Tov, *Hebrew Bible, Greek Bible and Qumran*, Tübingen 2008; N. de Lange et al. (eds), *Jewish Reception of Greek Bible Versions*, Tübingen 2009.

<sup>53</sup> As W. Horbury points out, Jews in Caesarea but also in Galilee must have been largely familiar with Greek (*Jews and Christians*, 215); Cf. K. Treu, 'Die Bedeutung des Griechischen', 123–144. There have been a number of important studies on the spread of Greek education and language among the Jews in Palestine, such as by S. Lieberman and B. Lifshitz; see C. Hezser, who notes: 'Lieberman's and Lifshitz's studies have been groundbreaking in their argumentation for a widespread knowledge of Greek among Palestinian Jews and this conclusion has been accepted by most later scholars. (...) While Lieberman's argumentation (amount of Greek loan words) was almost exclusively based on rabbinic sources and concerned with rabbis, Lifshitz argues for a widespread popular knowledge of Greek on the basis of the evidence of Greek Jewish inscriptions from Roman Palestine' (*Jewish Literacy in Roman Palestine*, Tübingen 2001, 231); see S. Lieberman, *Greek in Jewish Palestine*, N.Y. 1942, and among Lifshitz's numerous publications on the subject, see, for example, 'Inscriptions de Césarée', *RB* 74 (1964), 50–59; cf. idem, 'Greek Inscriptions from Eretz Israel', *BIES* (= *Yediots*) 22 (1958), 115–126 [Hebrew]. For further studies on the use of Greek words in rabbinic sources, see S. Krauss, *Griechische und lateinische Lehnwörter in Talmud, Midrasch und Targum*, 2 vols, Leipzig 1897, 1899, and more recently D. Sperber, 'Rabbinic Knowledge of Greek', in: S. Safrai et al. (eds), *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 2, Assen 2006, 627–640; cf. also J.N. Sevenster, *Do you know Greek?*, Leiden 1968, who includes the New Testament as literary evidence for examination of knowledge of Greek among contemporary Jews.



Christian writers in the East of the Empire may have used Greek for their literary activity, but also often had Semitic cultural and/or linguistic roots that influenced their literary activity even when writing in another language.<sup>54</sup>

The common use of Aramaic in regions such as Syria and Mesopotamia would have facilitated the communication between Christian and Jewish communities considerably. In a recent study, N. Koltun-Fromm stresses that ‘in the Syriac speaking East, as opposed to the Greek-speaking West, Christians pursued their biblical studies and theological speculation in a linguistic, literary and cultural milieu more similar to that of the Palestinian, and later, the Babylonian rabbis. Whether or not Aramaic-speaking Jews and Christians exchanged biblical readings, their shared literary heritage and linguistic culture further provoked similar interpretative methods and traditions’.<sup>55</sup>

Overall, the language issue is very central, as interpretations may have been influenced by, and arisen from, the differences between the versions. Moreover, translations of the biblical text may reflect stages in the development of biblical exegesis. Significantly, as has been emphasized by a number of scholars, the shaping of the LXX translation was influenced by Jewish exegesis.<sup>56</sup> Equally, the linguistic affinity between the biblical texts used by Christians and Jews from an Aramaic-speaking background may also have triggered similar exegetical interpretations without the intermediation of actual contact or awareness between the two communities.<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup> See most notably the case of Eusebius of Emesa, as outlined in the study of B. ter Haar Romeny, *A Syrian in Greek Dress*, Louvain 1997.

<sup>55</sup> *Hermeneutics of Holiness*, Oxford 2010, 27.

<sup>56</sup> See Z. Frankel, *Über den Einfluß der palästinischen Exegese*, Leipzig 1851; L. Prijs, *Jüdische Tradition in der LXX*, Leiden 1948; and I.L. Seeligman, ‘Indications of Editorial Alterations and Adaptations in the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint’, *VT* 11 (1961), 201–211; cf. M.H. Goshen-Gottstein, ‘Theory and Practice of Textual Criticism: The Text-critical Use of the Septuagint’, *Textus* 3 (1963), 130–159; and Ch. Rabin, ‘The Translation Process and the Character of the Septuagint’, *Textus* 6 (1968), 1–27; see also N. Fernández Marcos, who states that in a wide sense ‘one can speak of the LXX as a Targum and even as a first Targum’ (*The Septuagint in Context*, 102).

<sup>57</sup> On the various versions of the biblical text and their use in the Syriac tradition, see S.P. Brock, *The Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, Piscataway NJ 2006. The relationship of the Peshitta to Jewish biblical and exegetical traditions has been widely discussed and analyzed; see P.B. Dirksen – A. Van der Kooij (eds), *The Peshitta as a Translation*, Leiden 1995; S.R. Isenberg, ‘On the Jewish-Palestinian Origins of the Peshitta and the Pentateuch’, *JBL* 90 (1971), 69–81; Y. Maori, *The Peshitta Version of the Pentateuch and Early Jewish Exegesis*, Jerusalem 1995 [in Hebrew]. In particular, the dependence of the Peshitta on the Targumim has been thoroughly debated, see P.B. Dirksen, ‘The Old Testament Peshitta’, in: M.J. Mulder – H. Sysling, *Mikra*, 255–297; A. Vööbus, *Peshitta und Targumim des Pentateuchs*, Stockholm 1958; P. Kahle, *The Cairo Geniza*, Oxford 1959, 262–83; A. Baumstark, ‘Pešittā und palästinensisches Targum’, *BZ* 19 (1931), 257–70; P. Wernberg-Møller, ‘Some Observa-

*Rabbinic Literature and Approach*

The focus of the present work is the extant classical rabbinic literature, namely the body of literature transmitted, written and preserved by the rabbinic authorities and their followers. This focus is not meant to imply that the rabbinic materials are solely representative of the possible 'Judaisms' of Late Antiquity, but that rabbinic literature represents the largest collection of literary sources for study of Judaism in this period. As such, the purpose of the present work is to examine the relationship between Christian and rabbinic commentators rather than with other possible forms of Judaism in Late Antiquity.<sup>58</sup>

Furthermore, the diversity within rabbinic Judaism needs to be emphasized; rabbis were not a definitive group of people, but belonged to different communities from vastly different time periods and had different exegetical interests. This is reflected in the diversity of ideas and opinions within the literature. Ultimately, the midrashic sources are viewed in this study as anthologies or composite works that may show evidence of a particular theological position with regard to the selection and arrangement of the material in some cases, but not to the degree that a coherent theological position is presented in one text. The midrashim are primarily collections of sayings and traditions that are presented side by side with many distinct viewpoints expressed. No systematic rabbinic theology is implied in this volume.

Clearly, the Hebrew Bible was considered by rabbinic exegetes to be an authoritative text.<sup>59</sup> As such, the stories of the Hebrew Bible and interpretation of them in midrashic tradition were of great import during the

---

tions on the Relationship of the Peshitta Version of the Book of Genesis to the Palestinian Targum Fragments published by Professor Kahle and to Targum Onkelos', *StTh* 15 (1961), 128–80.

<sup>58</sup> See also P.S. Alexander, 'Using Rabbinic Literature as a Source for the History of Late-Roman Palestine: Problems and Issues', in: M. Goodman – P.S. Alexander (eds), *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late-Roman Palestine*, Oxford 2010, 9–11; on the place of the rabbinic movement in Late Antiquity, see R. Kalmin, *The Sage in Jewish Society*, esp. 27–50; S. Stern, *Jewish Identity*; S.J.D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*, Berkeley-L.A. 1999; R. Kalmin – S. Schwartz (eds), *Jewish Culture and Society under the Christian Roman Empire*, Leuven 2003; and C. Hezser, *The Social Structure of the Rabbinic Movement in Palestine*, Tübingen 1997, esp. part I on 'Who was a Rabbi?', 53–154 and part III on 'Rabbis and Other Jews', 329–489.

<sup>59</sup> This is highlighted in a range of traditions such as BT Qid 30a. The primacy of Torah in rabbinic traditions in general is discussed by M. Hirshman who states, 'It is fair to say that among the rabbinic Sages, Torah study was accorded the highest status as a commandment, first among equals, both as a vehicle for religious knowledge and for religious self-fulfillment' ('Torah in Rabbinic Thought: The Theology of Learning', in: S.T. Katz, *The Cambridge History of Judaism. Vol. 4*, 899).

rabbinic period of Late Antiquity, with midrashic methods allowing for reinterpretations of the biblical text to fit contemporary circumstances.<sup>60</sup> The importance to rabbinic exegetes of the book of Genesis in particular is clear from the volume of interpretation dedicated to this biblical book.<sup>61</sup> Indeed, the book of Genesis was clearly of great theological, historical and cultural significance to rabbinic interpreters.<sup>62</sup> It outlines the origins and early history of Israel from Adam through to Joseph, and illuminates the significance and role of the patriarchs. This allowed rabbinic exegetes to expound and explain the current situation of the Jewish people, with previous historical circumstances often seen as a precursor to, or paradigm for, later events. Similarly, important figures were viewed as role models. In terms of cultural significance, the book of Genesis helped to explain family relationships and language, or aspects of religious practice such as the institution of prayer. Furthermore, the book of Genesis allowed for theological speculation on creation, and the implications of the creation stories for Israel and all humanity, including relationships with God. The election of Israel and role of the Torah were important topics arising from exegesis of Genesis. The biblical book also inspired traditions on hopes for the future of Israel through a number of eschatological teachings. Thus, the book of Genesis allowed for interpretations not only on the beginning of life but the end.

This volume examines the transmission of rabbinic exegetical motifs and provides a literary analysis of rabbinic traditions on Genesis. This

---

<sup>60</sup> On the midrashic process and method, see the seminal work by I. Heinemann, *Darkhei ha-Aggadah*, Jerusalem 1954 [in Hebrew] and more recent works such as G. Stemmerger, *Introduction to Talmud and Midrash*, Edinburgh 1996, 17–34 for lists of rabbinic hermeneutical principles, and 254–268 on midrash; M. Fishbane, *The Midrashic Imagination*, N.Y. 1993; I. Jacobs, *The Midrashic Process*, Cambridge 1995; G. Porton, ‘Exegetical Techniques in Rabbinic Literature’, *RRJ* 7 (2004), 27–51; and R. Kasher, ‘The Interpretation of Scripture in Rabbinic Literature’, in: M.J. Mulder – H. Sysling, *Mikra*, 547–594. See also n.66 in this chapter.

<sup>61</sup> This is highlighted particularly by Genesis Rabbah, an extensive verse by verse commentary on the book of Genesis (see J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vols 1–3, Jerusalem 1965). However, not only are there substantial commentaries on this biblical book, but also numerous examples of exegesis of Genesis scattered throughout homiletic compilations and midrashim dedicated to other biblical books.

<sup>62</sup> This is emphasized by the vast array of secondary literature that discusses rabbinic interpretations of Genesis from Louis Ginzberg’s *Legends of the Jews* (volumes I, II and V) to more modern works such as P. Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen: Untersuchungen zum rabbinischen Engelvorbild*, N.Y. 1975; J.P. Lewis, *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood*; F.L. Horton, *The Melchizedek Tradition*; C. Bakhos, *Ishmael on the Border: Rabbinic Portrayals of the First Arab*, Albany 2006; and M. Niehoff, *The Figure of Joseph in Post-Biblical Jewish Literature*, Leiden 1992.

allows for the understanding of the place and development of an exegetical tradition within its own literary context. Midrashic interpretations can elucidate much about the social and political environment of rabbinic exegetes,<sup>63</sup> but the focus here is primarily on theological exegetical ideas and their variety, nuances and development. As part of this literary analysis of exegetical traditions, the hermeneutical principles by which rabbinic exegetes arrived at a particular interpretation of Genesis are explained,<sup>64</sup> and the theological teachings that may arise from an interpretation are examined and analyzed.

The rabbinic material most relevant for the exegetical encounter is that of the haggadic tradition, and halakhic rulings are not considered except on those occasions where they are relevant to points of haggadah arising from Genesis. Generally, interpretations are considered that specifically use a verse of Genesis in their exegesis. In other words, references to a biblical figure such as Adam or Abraham are not considered in isolation from a biblical citation of Genesis.

As emphasized below, this volume focuses on rabbinic traditions and exegetical ideas rather than textual collections in their entirety, but certain parameters were delineated regarding the literature from which the traditions under consideration were taken. The material analyzed is from both the Palestinian and Babylonian traditions, distinguishing between their different contexts, and, broadly speaking, goes up to the seventh century as the close of Late Antiquity.<sup>65</sup> Despite setting a limit on the timeframe for consideration of materials, this does not ignore the established difficulties in dating rabbinic texts. In this volume, the source literature from

---

<sup>63</sup> For a recent overview of historical approaches to rabbinic sources, see M. Goodman – P.S. Alexander, *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late-Roman Palestine*, and I. Gafni, 'The Modern Study of Rabbinics and Historical Questions: The Tale of the Text', in: R. Bieringer et al. (eds), *The New Testament and Rabbinic Literature*, Leiden 2010, 43–61. There has been extensive discussion on the historical world of rabbis and encounters in specific social and historical contexts, exemplified by the works of S. Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 BCE to 640 CE*, Princeton 2001; L.I. Levine, *The Rabbinic Class of Roman Palestine in Late Antiquity*, Jerusalem 1989; C. Hezser, *The Social Structure of the Rabbinic Movement in Roman Palestine*; H. Lapin, *Economy, Geography, and Provincial History in Later Roman Palestine*, Tübingen 2001; J. Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia*, 5 vols, Leiden 1965–70; I. Gafni, *Land, Centre and Diaspora: Jewish Constructs in Antiquity*, Sheffield 1997; A. Oppenheimer, *Babylonia Judaica in the Talmudic Period*, Wiesbaden 1983.

<sup>64</sup> Broadly speaking, midrash follows a number of defined exegetical principles by which interpretations are constructed, but also incorporate numerous literary forms within the exegetical setting, such as parables, halakhic questions and didactic stories. See n.60 above.

<sup>65</sup> This timeframe was selected to ensure correspondence with the dating of patristic sources, but there are some key exceptions, which are noted below.

which traditions are analyzed was determined by the date of redaction of the texts. The problems with using a 'final' date of redaction for approximate dating are well documented.<sup>66</sup> As rabbinic texts often represent a collection of traditions gathered together and redacted by an editor, the individual traditions within a compilation can have originated centuries earlier than the date of redaction of that text. Motifs and traditions can rarely be dated precisely, and in this volume the use of attributions to date individual traditions is not accepted or utilized.<sup>67</sup> Furthermore, the uncertainty of dates of redaction should be emphasized, as, although rabbinic texts may have taken shape at a particular point, the editing process did not suddenly cease.<sup>68</sup> Even with a broadly accepted date of redaction, the manuscript traditions indicate variations in the texts. However, whilst it is essential to acknowledge these problems, and the ongoing transmission of traditions, it seems that redacted 'texts', or collections of traditions, became identifiable at points in that transmission and so the choice of collections to examine is facilitated.<sup>69</sup> The substantial and often disputed

---

<sup>66</sup> For select studies on the difficulties in dating rabbinic sources and a recent overview of the state of scholarship on methodology in rabbinics, see G. Stemmerger, 'Aktuelle Probleme in der Erforschung der rabbinischen Literatur: Überlegungen zur Abgrenzung von Werk, Redaktion, Textgeschichte', *FJB* 35 (2009), 1–18 and G. Stemmerger, 'Dating Rabbinic Traditions', in: R. Bieringer, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Literature*, 79–96. The different methodological approaches to rabbinics and their problems are outlined by C. Hezser, 'Classical Rabbinic Literature', in: M. Goodman et al. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Studies*, Oxford 2005, 115–140. Methodological difficulties are also assessed by S. Stern, *Jewish Identity*, xxii–xxix. See also the earlier debate over methodology in the study of rabbinics between P. Schäfer and Ch. Milikowsky: P. Schäfer, 'Research into Rabbinic Literature: An Attempt to Define the Status Quaestionis', *JJS* 37 (1986), 139–152; Ch. Milikowsky, 'The Status Quaestionis of Research in Rabbinic Literature', *JJS* 39 (1988), 201–211; P. Schäfer, 'Once Again the Status Quaestionis of Research in Rabbinic Literature: An Answer to Chaim Milikowsky', *JJS* 40 (1989), 89–94; and the recent return to this debate: P. Schäfer – Ch. Milikowsky, 'Current Views on the Editing of Rabbinic Texts of late Antiquity: Reflections on a Debate after Twenty Years', in: M. Goodman – P.S. Alexander, *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late-Roman Palestine*, 79–88. On methodology in the study of midrash, see C. Bakhos (ed.), *Current Trends in the Study of Midrash*, Leiden 2006, esp. 161–187 and bibliography.

<sup>67</sup> On problems with using attributions for dating of rabbinic traditions, see S. Stern, 'Attribution and Authorship in the Babylonian Talmud', *JJS* 45.1 (1994), 28–51 and S. Stern, 'The Concept of Authorship in the Babylonian Talmud', *JJS* 46 (1995), 183–195. For a more positive view of attributions, see G. Stemmerger, 'Dating Rabbinic Traditions', 86–90.

<sup>68</sup> For example, Genesis Rabbah, an important collection for the present volume, originated in Palestine and was for the large part completed by the fifth century, but with some later additions. For a brief outline of the dating and redaction of the work, including discussion of additions from after the fifth century, see G. Stemmerger, *Introduction*, 300–308; esp. 303–305; cf. M. Lerner, 'The Works of Aggadic Midrash and the Esther Midrashim', in: S. Safrai et al. (eds), *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 2, Assen 2006, 149. See discussion on transmission in 'The Process of Encounter', 26–30 in this chapter.

<sup>69</sup> See S. Stern who outlines the difficulties but argues that 'it is fair to assume that at some point in time, redacted works began to emerge and to be treated, if only by name,

work of identifying a final date of redaction of the sources was not undertaken for this volume. Instead, existing work on dating of rabbinic texts has been utilized, following the various editors of and scholarship on the compilations under consideration, and as also outlined in the overviews of G. Stemberger and S. Safrai.<sup>70</sup>

The exegetical traditions discussed in this volume are generally organized according to the approximate date of redaction of the text in which they are found, unless otherwise stated. Three basic divisions in the material based on date of redaction are assumed. These divisions are not meant to imply that the texts were absolutely and finally fixed at these points, but rather that a recognisable form of the text, and therefore the traditions within it, existed. Similarly, this division does also not mean to imply that the traditions within the texts did not continue to be transmitted orally alongside written works, or that one version of a tradition is the source of another. The first division is 'early' and refers to the period of the Mishnah and halakhic midrashim. The second is the fifth to seventh centuries and includes the classical midrashic compilations such as Genesis Rabbah and Leviticus Rabbah, and Talmudic literature. The third category is 'late' and includes post-Talmudic texts such as Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer. These categories are regrettably, but necessarily, broad due to disagreements over dating and redaction of rabbinic sources, but nevertheless, for the purposes of this volume, they allow for some assessment of the transmission of a tradition, motif or exegetical idea. However, there are a number of works where the final date of redaction is so disputed that it is difficult to place them even within these three basic divisions.

Midrashic literature of the period, as to be expected, provides the majority of traditions under consideration, and of primary importance are texts that focus on exegesis of Genesis, in particular Genesis Rabbah.<sup>71</sup> However, Talmudic literature is investigated for the haggadic and midrashic material contained in these works. The Targumic literature is also an important exegetical source due to the large number of interpretative expansions contained especially in Targum Neofiti and Targum

---

as single identifiable entities' (*Jewish Identity*, xxiii). He also goes on to say that 'no one approach to early rabbinic writings can satisfy the critical historian' (*Jewish Identity*, xxix). Although adhering to a different methodological perspective, G. Stemberger also states: 'The rough chronological outline of rabbinic literature possible at present should be taken seriously when dating rabbinic traditions' ('Dating Rabbinic Traditions', 83).

<sup>70</sup> G. Stemberger, *Introduction* and S. Safrai, *The Literature of the Sages*, parts 1 and 2. A full list of editions of rabbinic texts is provided in the bibliography.

<sup>71</sup> Genesis Rabbah is usually assigned a date of redaction in the fifth century, although a number of later additions have been noted. See n.68 above.

Pseudo-Jonathan.<sup>72</sup> As such, a whole range of classical rabbinic literature is assessed where it presents an interpretation of Genesis. The first 'early' division includes the Mishnah, Tosefta and early halakhic midrashim, such as Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael, Sifre Deuteronomy and Sifra.<sup>73</sup> The 'early' division also includes Targum Onqelos and Targum Neofiti.<sup>74</sup> The second division includes works redacted in the fifth to seventh centuries, acknowledging the possibility of continued editing, including the Palestinian Talmud, Leviticus Rabbah, Lamentations Rabbah and Pesiqta de Rav Kahana.<sup>75</sup> The Babylonian Talmud is one of the latest compilations in this category.<sup>76</sup> The third category is 'late' and includes works just beyond the timeframe set for this book. One certain exception to the broad seventh century timeframe is Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer.<sup>77</sup> Often dated to the

---

<sup>72</sup> The material from the targumim is treated here as 'rabbinic' due to the number of midrashic expansions they contain; cf. Z. Safrai, 'The Targums as Part of Rabbinic Literature', in: S. Safrai, *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 2, 243–278.

<sup>73</sup> The Mishnah is usually dated to the third century; see the overviews in: G. Stemmer, *Introduction*, 119–166; A. Goldberg, 'The Mishna—A Study Book of Halakha', in: S. Safrai, *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 1, 211–262. On the Tosefta, see G. Stemmer, *Introduction*, 167–181 and A. Goldberg, 'The Tosefta—Companion to the Mishna', in: S. Safrai, *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 1, 283–302. Similarly, the midrashic compositions highlighted can be described as 'early' in terms of redaction, frequently assigned to the third century, but with the caveat of subsequent development (G. Stemmer, *Introduction*, 269–299; M. Kahana, 'The Halakhic Midrashim', in: S. Safrai, *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 2, 3–105, esp. 60–64).

<sup>74</sup> B. Grossfeld outlines the extensive debate over the dating of Targum Onqelos, but argues for a third century date of redaction (*The Targum Onqelos to Genesis*, Edinburgh 1988, 30–35; cf. Z. Safrai who states that Tg Onqelos must have been composed no later than by the end of the Amoraic period ('The Targums', in: S. Safrai, *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 2, 263–270). A fourth century date of redaction is frequently posited for Targum Neofiti although this is also a matter of dispute; cf. Z. Safrai who states that 'Tg Neofiti is at earliest fourth century (ibid.). See also the overviews in C.T.R. Hayward, 'Targum', in: M. Goodman – P.S. Alexander, *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late-Roman Palestine*, 235–252; M. McNamara, *Targum Neofiti 1*, Edinburgh 1992; and P.S. Alexander, 'Targum, Targumim', in: D.N. Freedman (ed.), *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, New York 1992, vol. 6, cols 320–31.

<sup>75</sup> These works are also often dated to the fifth or sixth century in terms of redaction (G. Stemmer, *Introduction*, 182–207, esp. 188–189 on the Palestinian Talmud; 308–312 on Lamentations Rabbah; and 313–317 on Leviticus Rabbah). Pesiqta de Rav Kahana is generally also assigned to the fifth century, but, as Stemmer outlines, this has been disputed (G. Stemmer, *Introduction*, 317–322). See also M. Lerner, 'The Works of Aggadic Midrash', in: S. Safrai, *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 2, 149–151, and A. Goldberg, 'The Palestinian Talmud', in: S. Safrai, *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 1, 303–322.

<sup>76</sup> The Babylonian Talmud is often dated to the seventh or eighth century in terms of date of redaction, but has a long and complex textual history, as described by G. Stemmer, *Introduction*, 208–244 and A. Goldberg, 'The Babylonian Talmud', in: S. Safrai, *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 1, 323–366; cf. R. Kalmin, 'The Formation and Character of the Babylonian Talmud', in: S.T. Katz, *The Cambridge History of Judaism. Vol. 4*, 840–876.

<sup>77</sup> Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer is often dated to the eighth century but has a complicated textual history with many different versions of the work preserved, see G. Stemmer, *Introduction*, 356–358. See also the introduction in the edition of D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser: nach der Edition Venedig 1544 unter Berücksichtigung der Edition Warschau*

eighth century, Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer is an important narrative midrash on Genesis that has been noticed for a significant number of parallels with Christian exegesis. Finally, the dating of other writings examined in this volume is particularly uncertain, including the recensions of Tanḥuma and the versions of Abot de Rabbi Natan, which for the purposes of this volume are assigned to the third category.<sup>78</sup> The bibliography contains a complete list of editions referred to in this volume and used as a basis for the translations of rabbinic texts.<sup>79</sup>

In general, this volume focuses on classical exegetical traditions. Liturgical works and piyyutim that refer to Genesis were excluded from the initial search for encounters, but may be included in the discussion if relevant to the transmission of an exegetical idea found in midrashic sources. Furthermore, it is clear that texts which have a date of redaction much later than the seventh century also include earlier material, such as Midrash Ha-Gadol or Yalqut Shimoni. However, as it is often impossible to determine which materials are early and which late in these compositions, they have been excluded as beyond the timeframe set for this volume.

### *Christian Literature and Approach*

In the present study, exegesis of the book of Genesis in patristic literature is the primary focus of investigation. Additionally, a significant number of texts are examined that are not written by the so-called Church Fathers, but by Christian authors, who either remain anonymous or do not belong, strictly speaking, to the category of Church Fathers.<sup>80</sup> In addition, a num-

---

1852, Berlin – New York 2004, xxxix–xlvi. M. Lerner also discusses Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer as part of texts dated between 700–900 ('The Works of Aggadic Midrash', 151–153).

<sup>78</sup> Tanḥuma Yelammedenu is a broad title for a collection of different homiletic midrashim on the Pentateuch, but here Tanḥuma refers to the edition printed in Warsaw in 1875 and Tanḥuma Buber refers to the Wilna 1885 edition of S. Buber. The redaction of these two recensions of Tanḥuma is highly disputed with dates from the fifth to the ninth century posited; the two recensions have been included in this volume as important homiletic collections of traditions on Genesis in contrast to the verse by verse commentary of Genesis Rabbah (see G. Stemmerger, *Introduction*, 329–332, and the important work of M. Bregman, *The Tanhuma-Yelammedenu Literature: Studies in the Evolution of the Versions*, Piscataway NJ 2003). On the versions of Abot de Rabbi Natan and their respective dating, see G. Stemmerger, *Introduction*, 245–247, and M. Lerner, 'The External Tractates', in: S. Safrai, *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 1, 369–379.

<sup>79</sup> Manuscript variations have been taken into account only where they have a direct impact on the evidence for encounter. Translations of sources are my own unless indicated otherwise in footnotes.

<sup>80</sup> On these definitions, see J. Quasten – A. di Berardino, *Patrology: The Beginning of Patristic Literature*, Westminster 1984, 1ff.; O. Bardenweber, *Patrologie*, Freiburg 1894, 1ff.; B. Altaner – A. Stuiber, *Patrologie. Leben, Schriften und Lehre der Kirchenväter*, Freiburg 1966, 1ff.



ber of writings are attributed pseudepigraphically to well known Christian authors.<sup>81</sup>

The immanent diversity of early Christianity is an important parameter in the analysis of Jewish-Christian encounter. Early Christian literature was shaped by a number of geographical, linguistic, cultural and historical factors. Furthermore, it was characterized by internal doctrinal conflicts and by the struggle of the Great Church with a variety of groups that advocated other theological opinions.<sup>82</sup> Christian religious movements, such as the Jewish-Christian groups or the Judaizers, are of particular importance for the analysis in this volume.<sup>83</sup> Significantly, when referring to 'Jewish' customs or even when quoting 'traditions of the Hebrews', Church Fathers would often mean Judaizing Christians or Jewish-Christians.

For the purposes of analysis, Christian works are examined that largely represent mainstream Christianity of the Great Church in Late Antiquity. However, writings that are attributed to particular, often marginal, groups, such as the Gnostics, may be discussed if they are relevant to exegetical traditions under examination.

For Christians, the Old Testament was considered to be an independent collection of books, which was interpreted on the basis of the New Testament and in accordance with christological concepts. It should be noted, however, that some early Christians were not always familiar with the Old Testament text in its entirety. Characteristically, Justin bears witness to the great popularity of the *testimonia* books among Christians.<sup>84</sup>

Furthermore, from the early days of Christianity, Christian authors developed their own methodological approaches to the text of the Bible. The early Christian understanding of the biblical text is particularly manifested in the exegetical method of typology. To the early Christians, the

---

<sup>81</sup> See, for example, the works that circulated under the name of Ephraem Graecus and were allegedly genuine writings by Ephraem the Syrian either composed or translated into Greek.

<sup>82</sup> See W. Bauer, *Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum*, Tübingen 1964; cf. W. Kinzig, "'Non-Separatio': Closeness and Co-operation between Jews and Christians in the Fourth Century', *VC* 45 (1991), 27–53; cf. R. Williams (ed.), *The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick*, Cambridge 1989.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. J. Danielou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, London 1964; A.F.J. Klijn – G.J. Reinink, *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects*, Leiden 1973; H.-J. Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums*, Tübingen 1949; G. Dagron, 'Judaizer', *Travaux et memoires* 11 (1991), 359–380; P.J. Tomson – D. Lambers Petry (eds), *The Image of Judaeo-Christians in Ancient Jewish and Christian Literature*, Tübingen 2003.

<sup>84</sup> See W. Horbury, *Jews and Christians*, 33 and O. Skarsaune, *Proof from Prophecy*, 21f.; see also the extensive overview with discussion in Skarsaune, *ibid.* n.29.

Old Testament was but foreshadowing the mystery of Jesus Christ. The theological intentions of the Christian authors often dictated their selection of biblical passages for exegesis.

The cultural diversity of early Christianity is further manifested in the development of particular schools of exegesis, and most significantly in the school of Alexandria<sup>85</sup> and the school of Antioch.<sup>86</sup> These two major exegetical schools applied their own distinct methodological principles. In many ways, these schools of exegesis reveal the variety of contemporary streams of thought and approaches that influenced Early Christianity, and bear witness to the dependence of the Christian authors on Jewish Hellenistic<sup>87</sup> or other current traditions, such as Hellenistic philosophical streams of thought.<sup>88</sup>

The book of Genesis was particularly central to Christian Bible exegesis, as evidenced in the extensive literature dedicated to Genesis. This literature includes comprehensive homilies and general commentaries on Genesis,<sup>89</sup> as well as selective commentaries that deal with particular

---

<sup>85</sup> C. Blönnigen, *Der griechische Ursprung der jüdisch-hellenischen Allegorie und ihre Rezeption in der alexandrinischen Patristik*, Frankfurt a.M. 1992; Z. Frankel, *Über den Einfluss*; J.N.B. Carleton Paget, 'The Christian Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Alexandrian Tradition', in: M. Saebo, *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament*, 478–542.

<sup>86</sup> A. Viciano, 'Das formale Verfahren der antiochenischen Schriftauslegung: Ein Forschungsüberblick', in: G. Schöllgen – C. Scholten (eds), *Stimuli*, Münster 1996, 370–405; D.S. Wallace-Hadrill, *Christian Antioch. A Study of Early Christian Thought in the East*, Cambridge 1982; C. Schäublin, *Untersuchungen zu Methode und Herkunft der antiochenischen Exegese*, Köln 1974; S. Hidal, 'Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Antiochene School with its Prevalent Literal and Historical Method', in: M. Saebo, *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament*, 544–568.

<sup>87</sup> For the reliance of Christian authors on Jewish-Hellenistic writers, see the discussion below.

<sup>88</sup> See S. Brock, 'Greek and Syriac in Late Antique Syria', in: A.K. Bowman – G. Woolf (eds), *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World*, Cambridge 1994, 149–60; S. Brock, 'From Antagonism to Assimilation: Syriac Attitudes to Greek Learning', in: N.G. Garsoian et al. (eds), *East of Byzantium*, Washington DC 1982, 17–34; F.M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, Cambridge 1995, esp. 161–185; and F.M. Young, 'The Rhetorical Schools and their Influence on Patristic Exegesis', in: R. Williams, *The Making of Orthodoxy*, 182–199.

<sup>89</sup> Origen, *Commentarii in Genesim* (PG 12: 92–145); Origen, *In Genesim Homiliae* (PG 12: 145–253); Didymus of Alexandria, *Sur la Genèse*, ed. P. Nautin – L. Doutreleau, Paris 1976; John Chrysostom, *Homiliae 1–67 in Genesim* (PG 53:21–385; PG 54:385–580); John Chrysostom, *Sermones 1–9 in Genesim* (PG 54:581–630); Jerome, *Quaestiones hebraicae in Genesim*, CCL 72; Cyril of Alexandria, *Glaphyra* (PG 69: 13–678); Ephraem the Syrian, *Commentaries on Genesis*, ed. R.M. Tonneau, CSCO 152/153, Louvain 1953; Ishodad of Merv, *Commentaire sur la Genèse*, ed. J.-M. Vosté – C. van den Eynde, Louvain 1955.

episodes and figures.<sup>90</sup> Moreover, exegesis on the various Genesis episodes and figures can be found scattered in the works of all major Christian authors.<sup>91</sup> The book of Genesis addresses pivotal religious, anthropological, cosmological as well as social, moral and even 'historical' issues. Thus, it exercised a significant influence on Christian theology. The first chapters of Genesis, which cover crucial questions such as the creation and nature of the world, man, sin and mortality, became a major focus of interest for Christian exegetes.<sup>92</sup> The development of a special body of literature known as the *Hexaemeron* writings, which deal exclusively with the first six days of the creation, is illustrative of the importance of the early chapters of Genesis in particular.

Furthermore, Christian exegesis of the book of Genesis is transmitted in a wide variety of literary genres, such as the already mentioned homilies and systematic commentaries, but also epistolography,<sup>93</sup> chronography,<sup>94</sup>

---

<sup>90</sup> Hippolytus of Rome, *Benedictiones Isaac et Jacob*, (Gen 27 et 49), (PO XXVII. 1–2 (1954), 2–115); John Chrysostom, *De Joseph et de castitate* (PG 56:587–590); Severian of Gabala, *De serpente homiliae* (PG 56: 499–516); Hesychius of Jerusalem, *Narratio de Abrahamo*, in: A. Vassiliev, *Anecdota Graeco-Byzantina* I, Moscow 1893, 292–308; et al. See the interesting observation of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the difference between the commentary and the homily: 'We consider it to be the task of the commentator to comment on the words which are difficult for most people; that of the preacher, however, is to reflect on words that are clear and to speak about them' (in: L. van Rompay, 'Antiochene Biblical Interpretation: Greek and Syriac', in: J. Frishman – L. van Rompay, *The Book of Genesis in Jewish and Oriental Christian Tradition*, 104). Van Rompay makes the distinction between: "applied" exegesis as opposed to 'pure' exegesis, whereby the former would apply to works such as the exegetical homilies by John Chrysostom' (op. cit., 107). As van Rompay further observes, selective commentaries, such as the one by Ephraem the Syrian, 'becomes a narrative in its own right that can be read without the biblical text at hand' (ibid., 111).

<sup>91</sup> Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with the Jew Tryphon*, ed. M. Marcovich, Berlin 1997; Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis*, ed. O. Stählin et al., Berlin 1972; Irenaeus of Lyons, *Adversus haereses*, I–IV, ed. N. Brox, FC 8/1–4; Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autolyicum*, ed. R.M. Grant, Oxford 1970; Origen, *De principiis*, ed. P. Koetschau, Berlin 1913; Eusebius of Caesarea, *Demonstratio Evangelica*, GCS 23, Berlin 1913; Aphrahat, *Demonstrations*, ed. J. Parisot, Paris 1894, 1907.

<sup>92</sup> Basil of Caesarea, *Homiliae in Hexaemeron*, ed. S. Giet, Paris 1950; Eustathius of Antioch, *Commentarius in Hexaemeron* (PG 18: 708–793); Gregory of Nyssa, *Apologia in hexaemeron* (PG 44: 61–124); Gregory of Nyssa, *De opificio hominis* (PG 44: 124–256); Macarius Magnes, *Commentarii de mundi creatione*, in: G. Schalkhauser, 'Zu den Schriften des Makarius von Magnesia', TU 31.4, Leipzig 1907, 130–185; George of Pisidia, *Hexaemeron* (PG 92: 1425–1578); John Philoponus, *De opificio mundi* (G. Reichardt (ed.), Lipsia 1857); Anastasius Sinaita, *In Hexaemeron*, ed. Kuhn-Baggary, Rome 2007; Narses of Edessa, *Sur la création*, ed. P. Gignoux, PO 34, Paris 1968; Jacob of Sarug, *Quatres homélies métriques sur la création*, CSCO 508, Louvain 1989; Jacob of Edessa, *Hexaemeron*, ed. A. Vaschalde, Louvain 1932.

<sup>93</sup> See, for example, Jerome, *Lettres*, ed. Labourt, Paris 1949–1963; Basil of Caesarea, *Lettres*, ed. Courtonne, Paris 1957–1966.

<sup>94</sup> John Malalas, *Chronography*, ed. Dindorf, Bonn 1831; George Syncellus, *Chronography*, ed. Dindorf, Bonn 1829; et al.

poetry and hymnography,<sup>95</sup> questions and answers (*erotapokriseis*),<sup>96</sup> legendary, often pseudepigraphical, narratives,<sup>97</sup> dialogues that often form part of the 'Adversus Judaeos' tradition,<sup>98</sup> monastic literature,<sup>99</sup> and *sui generis* works, such as the *Christian Topography* by Cosmas the Indicopleustes. Finally, a large number of important Genesis exegetical commentaries are lost, or only preserved in fragments<sup>100</sup> or in the *Catena* collections.<sup>101</sup> Notably, the *Catena*, with their particular literary form, bear certain similarities to the midrashim.<sup>102</sup> Finally, exegetical reflections expressed in Christian sacred art are also occasionally taken into account in order to illustrate specific exegetical approaches.

This study concentrates on those geographical areas where Jewish-Christian proximity on a local level is more likely and is well documented. Accordingly, the Christian material discussed stems from the Eastern provinces of the Roman Empire and from Persia. Consequently, the main

---

<sup>95</sup> See, for example, the poetical and hymnal works by Ephraem the Syrian, Gregory of Nazianzus, Romanos Melodos, Andrew of Crete, et al.

<sup>96</sup> Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *The Questions on the Octateuch*, J.F. Petruccione (ed.) – R.C. Hill (trans.), Washington 2007; Maximus the Confessor, *Quaestiones et dubia*, ed. J.H. Declerck, Turnhout 1982; Theodore bar Koni, *Liber Scholiorum* 1–5, ed. R. Hespel – R. Draguet, CSCO 430/31, Louvain 1981; see G. Bardy, 'La littérature patristique des quaestiones et responsiones sur l'Écriture Sainte', *RB* 41 (1932), 210–36, 515–37; 42 (1933), 211–229, 328–52.

<sup>97</sup> *Cave of Treasures*, ed. Su-Min Ri, CSCO 486/87, Louvain 1987; *Historia Melchizedek* (PG 28: 525–530).

<sup>98</sup> Origen, *Contra Celsum*, ed. M. Borret, Paris 1967–1976; Anonymous Dialogue of the Bishop Gregentius with the Jew Herbanus (PG 86: 621–784); Anonymus Dialogus Cum Iudaeis, ed. J.H. Declerck, Turnhout 1994; *Doctrina Jacobi nuper baptizati*, ed. G.N. Bonwetsch, *Abhandlungen der königl. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, phil.-hist. Kl.*, Berlin 1909, 123–59; et al.

<sup>99</sup> *Apophthegmata Patrum* (PG 65: 1329–1382); Isaiah of Scetis, *Asketikon* (PG 40: 1105–1206); John Climacus (PG 88: 631–1166).

<sup>100</sup> Hippolytus of Rome, *Fragmenta in Genesim* (PG 10: 584–606); Eusebius of Emesa, *Commentaire de la Genèse*, ed. F. Petit et al., Louvain 2007; Gennadius I. of Constantinople, *Fragments on Genesis* (PG 85: 1624–1666); Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Fragments on Genesis* (PG 66: 633–646).

<sup>101</sup> *La Chaîne sur la Genèse*, ed. F. Petit, 4 vols, Louvain 1991–1996, *Catena Graecae in Genesim et in Exodum*, *Catena Sinaitica*, ed. F. Petit, Louvain 1977; *Catena Graecae in Genesim et in Exodum II*, *Collectio Coisliana in Genesim*, ed. F. Petit, Louvain 1986; R. Devreesse, *Les ancient commentateurs grecs de l'Octateuque et des Rois (fragments tires des chaînes)*, *Studi e Testi* 201, Città del Vaticano 1959; Procopius of Gaza, *Catena in Octateuchum* (PG 87: 22–51; In Genesim); see also K.H. Uthemann, 'Was verraten Katenen über die Exegese ihrer Zeit? Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Exegese in Byzanz', *Stimuli*, 284–96; F. Pétit, 'La chaîne grecque sur la Genèse miroir de l'exégèse ancienne', *Stimuli*, 243–53.

<sup>102</sup> On the correspondence between the literary form of the catena and that of midrash, see W. Horbury, *Jews and Christians*, 219; N. de Lange, 'Midrach et Byzance', *RHR* 206 (1989), 171–181. De Lange underlines that 'il existe une analogie évidente avec le genre littéraire chrétien que l'on appelle les chaînes bibliques. Or, les chaînes elles aussi prennent leurs origine en Palestine byzantine vers la fin du Ve siècle, c'est-à-dire dans le lieu et du moment même où naît le midrach' (op. cit., 174).

focus of this study comprises exegetical works of Christian authors that were originally composed mainly in Greek and in Syriac.<sup>103</sup> Latin writers are excluded with the exception of Jerome, which is due to his prolonged stay in Palestine and intense study of the Hebrew language and of Jewish exegetical traditions.

The earliest collection taken into account for the analysis is the New Testament. The *terminus ante quem* for the examination of material is the seventh century, which marks the close of Late Antiquity. However, exceptionally, a number of later sources are used with necessary caution, as they provide valuable information for the exegetical encounter. The latest exception is the ninth century exegetical commentary on Genesis by Ishodad of Merv. This is a very valuable source for this study, because the work is mainly a compilation of older exegetical material, the source of which is often reliably identified by Ishodad of Merv through explicit citations, and some of which is today lost.<sup>104</sup> The bibliography contains a complete list of Christian sources and editions referred to in this volume.

### *The Process of Encounter*

As a basic definition for this volume, an encounter between rabbinic and Christian interpretations is represented by *an exegetical tradition that appears to show awareness of, or a response to, a tradition from the writings of the other religious group*. Consideration of possible contexts for 'encounter' between rabbinic and Christian exegetical ideas in Late Antiquity raises the obvious problem of comparing traditions from different locations and time periods.<sup>105</sup> In addition, the well documented prob-

---

<sup>103</sup> Literature in Coptic has been taken into consideration, but it has not been very useful for the purposes of our study. It is characteristic that longer exegetical works in Coptic are missing. Works in Armenian, Georgian, Arabic and other Christian languages of the Christian East are only considered where relevant because of their relatively late and often uncertain dating. In general, standard English translations of Christian sources were used where they exist. A detailed list of the translations from which quotations have been taken can be found in the bibliography at the end of this volume.

<sup>104</sup> Among the works used by Ishodad of Merv are important lost commentaries by Henana of Adiabene, Michael Badoqa and Theodore of Mopsuestia; see L. van Rompay, 'The Christian Syriac Tradition of Interpretation', 569f.

<sup>105</sup> For example, G. Stemmerger has highlighted the importance of setting potential encounters against their historical and social situation. If potential encounters can be set in a context where awareness of another's exegetical traditions would be possible, this strengthens the probability of the encounter and gives it foundation, even if the means of awareness is unknown ('Exegetical Contacts', 569–586).

lems in dating rabbinic material impacts on the investigation of exegetical encounters. In general, it is possible to ascertain the historical setting of the writings of the Christian authors, whereas rabbinic literature is dated in terms of the date of redaction of the sources, which can be a subject of much disagreement amongst scholars.<sup>106</sup>

However, although it is important to show where possible that an ‘encounter’ or ‘awareness’ between rabbinic and Christian exegetes could have happened in a particular historical or social context,<sup>107</sup> when it comes to exegetical encounters, which are naturally focused on the written form of the biblical interpretations of rabbinic and Christian exegetes, evidence of actual contact and discussion between the two groups is not essential. This is due to the process of transmission. The process of transmission reveals the fluidity of possible encounters, as traditions, now preserved in written form, originated, developed and circulated to a great extent orally. Oral culture was very important in Late Antiquity and a significant percentage of the population was only partly—if at all—literate.<sup>108</sup> Thus, exegetical activity was expressed in a number of ways and in a variety of literary forms pertinent both to oral and to written culture. Moreover, traditions often went through many stages of adaptation and expansion before being written down in the form in which they are preserved today. Even once preserved in written form, traditions did not cease to be conveyed orally, and so a dual written and oral transmission is in view. This variable transmission of exegetical ideas is reflected in the history of each motif.

On the rabbinic side, the process of transmission of traditions means that, although a tradition may be found in a particular rabbinic text to which is attributed a (often disputed) date of redaction, the various texts simply represent the place where those traditions were collected. For the purposes of this volume, the focus is not on texts, but traditions that are

---

<sup>106</sup> This is discussed more fully in the earlier section on ‘Rabbinic Literature and Approach’.

<sup>107</sup> See n.63 above.

<sup>108</sup> See K. Haines-Eitzen: ‘What we can say for certain is that, throughout that period, literacy continued to remain a skill of the minority and orality and literacy continued to display a dynamic interplay’ (‘Late Antique Christian Textual Communities’, in: P. Rousseau (ed.), *A Companion to Late Antiquity*, Oxford 2009, 250). Also, on the role of the oral tradition for the Desert Fathers, see D. Burton-Christie, ‘Oral Culture and Biblical Interpretation in Early Egyptian Monasticism’, in: E. Livingstone (ed.), *Papers presented at the Twelfth International Conference on Patristics*, Leuven 1997, 144–150; cf. also W. Kelber, *The Oral and Written Gospel*, Philadelphia 1983; W.A. Graham, *Beyond the Written Word: Oral Aspects of Scripture in the History of Religions*, Cambridge 1987; L.H. Silberman (ed.), *Orality, Auralty and Biblical Narrative*, *Semeia* 39 (1987).

found in certain texts. In other words, the culture of orality highlighted above is paramount, with traditions circulating in oral form over a long period of time. These traditions were eventually committed to writing in various texts, but most likely continued to be circulated orally.<sup>109</sup> Such traditions may then have been adapted for the exegetical purpose at hand.<sup>110</sup> As such, the focus of analysis is the transmission history of a particular rabbinic tradition or motif, which often may be found in a variety of texts as demonstrated by parallel traditions. Although specific dating of traditions is usually not possible on the rabbinic side, it is possible to ascertain whether an idea has a long history, such as found in texts from the third century onwards and frequently attested, or is a potentially late idea only found in post-Talmudic texts.<sup>111</sup> Thus, a Christian author could encounter a rabbinic tradition at a particular stage in the long process of the development and transmission of a tradition.

The process of transmission also plays its part in the Christian writings. The transmission and interpretation of the biblical text was an ongoing dynamic procedure, which often took place in the form of sermons or in the context of interpretative retellings. Furthermore, the exegetical work of well known Church Fathers, like Ephraem the Syrian, was influential for

---

<sup>109</sup> On rabbinic oral and written culture, see M. Jaffee, *Torah in the Mouth: Writing and Oral Tradition in Palestinian Judaism 200 BCE–400 CE*, Oxford 2001; E.S. Alexander 'The Orality of Rabbinic Writings', in: C.E. Fonrobert – M.S. Jaffee (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, Cambridge 2007, 38–57; M. Jaffee, 'Writing and Rabbinic Oral Tradition: On Mishnaic Narrative Lists and Mnemonics', *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 4 (1994), 143–144; P. Schäfer, 'Das "Dogma" von der mündlichen Torah in rabbinischen Judentum', in: idem, *Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie des rabbinischen Judentums*, Leiden 1978, 153–197; G. Stemberger, *Introduction*, 31–34. On the social setting of the rabbis and their affiliation to particular institutions, including the *bet ha-midrash* and synagogue, see L. Levine, 'The Sages and the Synagogue in Late Antiquity: The Evidence of the Galilee', in: idem, *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, Cambridge 1992, 201–222 and C. Hezser, *The Social Structure of the Rabbinic Movement*, 195–214.

<sup>110</sup> It must also be acknowledged that differences between versions of a tradition may simply be due to the fact that different versions circulated concurrently. As G. Stemberger states, 'Wherever we have parallel traditions, we should study them in sequence, in order to discern what changes have been introduced in them over the generations and what might be learned from these. We certainly cannot assume that parallels are always conscious reworkings of literary texts which later authors had before them. This might sometimes have been the case, but since this was a society in which written literary texts and their oral representation existed side by side, we have to reckon with more complicated relationships between varying parallel units of tradition' ('Dating Rabbinic Sources', 83).

<sup>111</sup> It also needs to be acknowledged that a tradition may only be found in later redacted texts due to the circumstances of transmission, and that a tradition preserved in a 'late' text could be early.

Christian authors of successive generations. As such, possible encounters in the work of Ephraem were passed on to other authors. This circulation of material attests to its popularity and importance for Christian exegetes. Moreover, 'encounters' may have continued to exist and shape exegetical understanding long after their actual emergence. In addition, certain exegetical traditions that may indicate the existence of an encounter are only found in translations of the works of the Christian authors, or are preserved in a fragmentary form within later compilations where they are often taken out of their original context.

Due to the problems in dating rabbinic sources and the process of transmission described above, it is often difficult to determine a direction of 'influence' in a potential encounter (from rabbinic tradition to Christian authors and vice versa), as often it is not possible to say whether a rabbinic interpretation is earlier or later than that of a Christian author. However, this approach is not only problematic, but assumes a linear one-way reaction to a particular tradition. Rather, it is likely that a particular tradition could be addressed at a number of points in the process of transmission of the idea by different exegetes or different exegetical schools. Furthermore, while a one-way linear awareness can occur in specific instances, a tradition can also be reused to apply to different circumstances and ultimately a more fluid means of encounter should be in view.

As part of this culture of orality and fluidity of traditions, it is highly improbable that Church Fathers or rabbis acquired knowledge of their respective exegetical traditions through reading of each other's writings.<sup>112</sup> But, unavoidably, modern study of the Jewish-Christian encounter is limited to the study of texts. Notably, the cultural context that produced the literature with which this book deals is the intellectual milieu of religious specialists. Accordingly, references to encounters between rabbinic exegetes and Christians in this volume do not address issues that are related to interactions on an everyday life level. Biblical exegesis was the work of learned men, often well versed in languages, and who usually had some institutional or other official function in their communities. Furthermore, written documents emerged in specific cultural and linguistic milieus, and were subject to certain literary conventions, such as, for example, specific exegetical rules. Thus, an encounter is addressed that, regardless of origin, was written down and formalized in scriptoria or the *bet ha-midrash*. In other words, even if the textual evidence reflects actual

---

<sup>112</sup> See on this B. Visotzky, *Fathers of the World*, 4.



historical encounters, this only reaches the modern scholar in the form of an artificial reconstruction that is shaped by the intentions of the respective author(s).<sup>113</sup> This reiterates the definition of encounter based on the *writings* of the respective traditions.

An additional complicating factor is that the textual history of Jewish and Christian sources in Late Antiquity is unavoidably fragmented. The preservation of texts can often have a complex transmission history influenced by internal power struggles or purely random events, such as natural catastrophes. The texts, which are preserved either as part of an authoritative body of literature (such as the patristic and rabbinic writings) or as part of pseudepigrapha and other popular literary forms, were safeguarded because they possessed a certain cultural value for the communities that preserved them through the centuries.<sup>114</sup>

Taking into consideration the above remarks on the process of encounter, a situation is envisaged in which the evidence for exegetical encounters exists as a result of long and elaborate processes, filtered by precise methodological approaches, often also manipulated by specific theological intentions, and perhaps occasionally influenced by other circumstantial factors that remain undisclosed. Thus, exegetical encounters can only be established on a level of analysis that acknowledges the methodological limits imposed by the complex transmission process of exegetical traditions, and accepts the inherent difference between the fluidity of oral communication and the formality that surrounds textuality.

*Methodology: The Development and Transmission of Each  
Exegetical Tradition*

An exegetical encounter is rarely explicitly signposted in the rabbinic and Christian literature of Late Antiquity. First, it is relatively rare that the literature, particularly rabbinic literature, makes reference to a source from another religious tradition. Secondly, in the majority of cases the actual means by which awareness of another group's exegetical tradition has developed is unknown. There are a number of possibilities. An encounter may be represented by evidence of a tradition that is adopted

---

<sup>113</sup> This situation is described on the rabbinic side by C. Hezser, 'Form-Criticism of Rabbinic Literature', in: R. Bieringer, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Literature*, 108–109.

<sup>114</sup> Cf. M.E. Stone, *Rediscovering Ancient Judaism*, Grand Rapids 2011, 6f.

from the 'other' through knowledge of oral traditions (not necessarily consciously), then adapted and integrated, such as evinced by similarities of idea or argument in both rabbinic and Christian traditions. Other possibilities include evidence of similarities in the literary motifs employed in a tradition, or the use of the same scriptural quotations in formation of the respective exegetical arguments. Apologetic and polemic feature as other forms of encounter, which are based on exegesis of a controversial theological nature. There may be examples of dialectic, with evidence of responses from different exegetes and different exegetical schools. Finally, there may also be evidence of awareness whereby an exegete explicitly states knowledge of traditions from the 'other' exegetical writings, which furthermore can be supported from the extant exegesis of the 'other'.

In analysis of an exegetical tradition, the following approach is undertaken in this volume:

First, a tradition is investigated for its relationship to the biblical text, namely, how closely related a motif may be to the biblical account, and, as such, represent a logical conclusion from the biblical text itself. By addressing this question at the forefront of the analysis, the problem of overemphasizing parallel ideas in the rabbinic and Christian literature is avoided.<sup>115</sup> If an interpretation under analysis is found in a similar form in both religious traditions, but *cannot be logically derived from the biblical text*, then it is important to ask how both interpreters arrived at the same idea. As such, the exegetical motifs under analysis in this volume were selected following rigorous assessment of their relationship to the biblical text upon which they comment. Discussion of each tradition begins by reference to the biblical texts of Genesis and the questions left open by them. The biblical texts that are examined as the basis of the analysis of the exegetical traditions are the MT for the rabbinic sources, and the LXX and the Peshitta for the Christian literatures. Other translations of the biblical text, such as the translations by Aquila and Symmachus and the Vulgate, are also taken into consideration in specific contexts of analysis. Exegetical choices that may be reflected in the translations of the biblical text are also examined. In addition, the familiarity of Christian exegetes with Semitic languages, and in particular with Hebrew, is taken into account. At the foreground of the analysis is the question:

---

<sup>115</sup> See S. Sandmel, 'Paralleomania', *JBL* 80 (1961), 1 and E. Kessler, *Bound by the Bible*, 9–10. As P. Schäfer states, 'Interesting as individual parallels may be, it is now widely accepted that isolated parallels are meaningless as long as the status of the parallel in its respective literature cannot be evaluated' ('Research into Rabbinic Literature', 140).

is a tradition simply an extension of the wording, motifs and concepts found in the biblical narrative?

Secondly, each tradition is examined within its own internal literary context: the rabbinic traditions examined first, followed by the patristic traditions.<sup>116</sup> The first stage is to trace alternative approaches to the same question raised by the biblical text. In this way, different exegetical arguments on a given issue can be distinguished. Rabbinic traditions often outline a variety of exegetical approaches, frequently accompanied by rabbinic opinions and/or disputes over meaning; these are delineated for the selected traditions under discussion. A variety of arguments are illustrated by Christian authors depending on their theological position, but these authors also acknowledge different approaches or reveal other points of view, although often to refute them. Thus, the analysis takes account of a variety of approaches to exegesis of a particular concept or motif, and understands the literary and theological place of a tradition within its broader context.

The second stage examines the process of transmission of each tradition discussed. The development of a particular motif is traced within a variety of rabbinic and then Christian sources, in other words, assessed within the framework of the process of transmission. The analysis primarily follows a chronological order. On the rabbinic side, this is mainly arranged according to the date of redaction of a text within which a tradition is found, also taking account of the Palestinian or Babylonian provenance of a tradition. On the Christian side, this is investigated according to the dating of the writings of the Christian authors, also taking account of their geographical and cultural provenance and any exegetical schools they may represent. This allows for the examination of nuances of, or changes in, meaning during the transmission of a motif, and takes account of the fact that traditions are reused to reflect different circumstances. The earliest attested versions of traditions are discussed first and in more detail where they may have impacted on subsequent exegetical understandings. As such, exegetical motifs are analyzed for distinctions in meaning in different versions of a tradition that may also be transmitted in a variety of texts.

---

<sup>116</sup> As C. Hezser notes 'it is especially important not merely to describe the surface structure of the texts but to trace the literary history of the traditions which were integrated into the documents (...). Only on that basis can comparisons with similar Graeco-Roman and early Christian traditions be undertaken' ('Form-Criticism of Rabbinic Literature', 109–110).

An internal analysis of the traditions and motifs in the rabbinic followed by the Christian sources presents an overview of the variety of answers and approaches to exegetical questions on Genesis, and also how the traditions may have developed. In particular, it allows assessment of how widely attested a theological concept or literary motif may be. In other words, for both rabbinic and Christian exegesis, is a tradition frequently found in a number of different sources, or is it a distinctive interpretation not preserved elsewhere?

If an interpretation is widely attested, the theological nuances presented in the range of versions of that tradition are examined, which can cautiously allow some assessment of the possible development of the idea. If an exegetical motif is a distinctive interpretation, then the analysis takes account of where it may fit within the transmission of ideas, and if there are precursors to the motif in question. The internal analysis also takes account of whether the method of exegesis follows standard rabbinic hermeneutical methods or Christian schools of exegesis, and whether the ideas arising from the traditions present an internal issue, reflecting the beliefs and purposes of the respective religious groups. In this way, the internal analysis highlights exegetical traditions that may reflect an internal debate, or demonstrate no awareness of the 'other', or simply pursue a different approach.

Related to this, a necessary consideration is that an interpretation that appears to be a response to, or show awareness of, the 'other' could in fact be addressing an alternative group either internal or external to the religious tradition in question. The focus of this study is 'rabbinic Judaism' and 'Great Church Christianity', but it is important to acknowledge that there were many external groups and internal factions that may be the target of an interpretation. This is sometimes acknowledged by Christian authors, and so it is imperative to establish the specific context of argumentation by the Christian authors under consideration in order to ascertain a case of exegetical encounter with rabbinic traditions.

Thirdly, even if an interpretation is found in both Christian and rabbinic literature, and internal considerations have been taken into account, it is still possible that the commentators may have developed their exegesis from ideas found in an alternative body of literature. In other words, an exposition could have been reached independently by the rabbinic and Christian commentators through knowledge of a tradition that is held in common. For example, the ideas represented in Philo, Josephus or early

pseudepigraphical literature could reflect a common pool of traditions for rabbinic and Christian exegesis.<sup>117</sup>

Evidence for the influence of Philo of Alexandria on early Christian exegesis is compelling and has been widely studied.<sup>118</sup> Similarly, Christian authors have used the works of Josephus extensively as a reliable source of information for the study of the Bible.<sup>119</sup> Certain exegetical ideas held in common between rabbinic exegetes and Christians can sometimes also be found in the Qumran Scrolls, although the degree and nature of a possible relationship, as well as the means of transmission, have not yet been resolved.<sup>120</sup> The relationship of the rabbinic literature to the works of Philo and Josephus is also inconclusive.<sup>121</sup> Notably, in contrast to the common practice of the Church Fathers, rabbinic exegetes often refrained

<sup>117</sup> Cf. N.G. Cohen, *Philo Judaeus*, Frankfurt 1995, 33–37, who discusses a ‘common ancient midrashic pool’ that Philo and rabbinic exegetes all drew upon.

<sup>118</sup> See E. Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity: Canon and Interpretation in the Light of Modern Research*, Grand Rapids 1991, 478ff.; H. Chadwick, ‘Philo and the Beginnings of Christian thought’, in: A.H. Armstrong (ed.), *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, Cambridge 1967, 137–192; H. Wolfson, *Philosophy of the Church Fathers*, Cambridge MA 1970; D.T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature: A Survey*, Assen 1993; D.T. Runia, *Philo and the Church Fathers. A Collection of Papers*, Leiden 1995.

<sup>119</sup> See L.H. Feldman – G. Hata (eds), *Josephus, Judaism and Christianity*, Detroit MI 1978; H. Schreckenberg, ‘The Works of Josephus and the Early Christian Church’, in: op. cit., 315–324; W. Mizugaki, ‘Origen and Josephus’, in: op. cit., 325–337; P.R. Coleman-Norton, ‘St. Chrysostom’s Use of Josephus’, *CP* 26 (1931), 85–89; M.E. Hardwick, *Josephus as an Historical Source in Patristic Literature through Eusebius*, Atlanta 1989; H. Schreckenberg, *Die Flavius Josephus Tradition in Antike und Mittelalter*, Leiden 1977; H. Schreckenberg – K. Schubert (eds), *Jewish Historiography and Iconography in Early Christian and Medieval Christianity. I. Josephus in Early Christian Literature and Medieval Christian Art*, Assen-Minneapolis 1991.

<sup>120</sup> See the numerous works by L. Schiffman, including ‘The Concept of Covenant in the Qumran Scrolls and Rabbinic Literature’, in: H. Najman – J. Newman (eds), *The Idea of Biblical Interpretation*, Leiden 2004, 257–278; idem, ‘The Dead Sea Scrolls and Rabbinic Judaism: Perspectives and Desiderata’, *Henoch* 27.1–2 (2005), 27–33; and idem, ‘The Qumran Scrolls and Rabbinic Judaism’, in: P.W. Flint – J.C. VanderKam (eds), *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years II*, Leiden 1999, 552–571; cf. P. Mandel, ‘Midrashic Exegesis and its Precedents in the Dead Sea Scrolls’, *Dead Sea Discoveries* 8.2 (2001), 149–168, and the various works by S. Fraade, especially *Legal Fictions; Studies of Law and Narrative in the Discursive Worlds of Ancient Jewish Sectarrians and Sages*, Leiden 2011 and idem, ‘Rabbinic Midrash and Ancient Jewish Biblical Interpretation’, in: C.E. Fonrobert – M.S. Jaffee, *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, 99–120.

<sup>121</sup> See N.G. Cohen, *Philo Judaeus*; S. Sandmel, *Philo’s Place in Judaism*, N.Y. 1971; D. Winston, ‘Philo and Rabbinic Literature’, in: A. Kamesar (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, Cambridge 2009, 231–265; L.L. Grabbe, ‘Philo and Aggata: A Response to B.J. Bamberger’, in: D. Runia et al. (eds), *Heirs of the Septuagint*, Atlanta 1991, 153–166; R. Kalmin, *Jewish Babylonia between Persia and Roman Palestine*, Oxford 2006, esp. 61–85 and 149–172; S.J.D. Cohen, ‘Parallel Traditions in Josephus and Rabbinic Literature’, *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies* 2.1 (1986), 7–14.

from acknowledging their sources explicitly. However, a direct or indirect knowledge of Philo and Josephus by rabbinic exegetes cannot be ruled out. As R. Kalmin states, 'we see that rabbinic compilations incorporate much nonrabbinic material, which they subject to varying degrees of editorial manipulation'.<sup>122</sup>

The pseudepigraphical literature is a particularly important consideration in the analysis of encounters, as it often contains a significant amount of biblical exegesis. Popular knowledge of the biblical text circulated in the form of the pseudepigrapha, which were translated into the local languages. Importantly, a substantial number of the extant early pseudepigraphical texts constituted a 'shared literature' between Christians and Jews. However, the Christian or Jewish provenance of these writings is often an unresolved matter of dispute, primarily due to their transmission history. Not only are many of the pseudepigraphical writings preserved today in Christian manuscripts, but were transmitted by Christians and survived within the Church.<sup>123</sup> Consequently, the pseudepigrapha could have served as a common source of exegetical inspiration, with Jewish exegetical approaches found in the pseudepigrapha also endorsed by Christians.

---

<sup>122</sup> *Jewish Babylonia*, 82. Similarly, as J. Carleton Paget observes, 'the rabbinic sources do not explicitly refer to Josephus, (...) but still it seems that some material found its way into Talmudic tradition' ('Some Observations on Josephus and Christianity', in: idem, *Jews, Christians and Jewish Christians in Antiquity*, Tübingen 2010, 185).

<sup>123</sup> See J.R. Davila, *The Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha, Jewish, Christian, or Other?*, Leiden 2005, 3; cf. M.E. Stone, *Rediscovering Ancient Judaism*, 31; M. de Jonge, *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament as part of the Christian Literature*, Leiden 2003; D.C. Harlow, 'The Christianization of Early Jewish Pseudepigrapha. The Case of 3 Baruch', *JSJ* 32 (2001), 416–444; R. Kraft, 'The Pseudepigrapha in Christianity', in: J. Reeves (ed.), *Tracing the Threads: Studies in the Vitality of Jewish Pseudepigrapha*, Atlanta 1994, 55–86; R. Kraft, 'The Pseudepigrapha and Christianity Revisited; Setting the Stage and Framing Some Central Questions', *JSJ* 32 (2001), 371–95; S. Aalen, 'St. Luke's Gospel and the Last Chapters of 1 Enoch', *NTS* 13 (1967), 1–13; M. Barker, *The Lost Prophet: The Book of Enoch and Its Influence on Christianity*, Nashville 1989. On the influence of 'Jewish' pseudepigrapha on patristic literature specifically, see J.C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, Sheffield 2001, 148; W. Adler, 'Abraham and the Burning of Idols: Jubilees Traditions in Christian Chronography', *JQR* 77 (1986/87), 95–117; J.C. VanderKam – W. Adler (eds), *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity*, Assen 1996; W. Adler, 'The Pseudepigrapha in Early Christianity', in: J. Sanders – L. MacDonald (eds), *The Canon Debate*, Peabody MA 2002, 211–228; W. Adler, 'Jacob of Edessa and the Jewish Pseudepigrapha in Syriac Chronography', in: J. Reeves, *Tracing the Threads*, 143–171; W. Adler, 'Jewish Pseudepigrapha in Jacob of Edessa's Letters and Historical Writings', in: B. ter Haar Romeny (ed.), *Jacob of Edessa*, Leiden 2009, 49–65; L. van Beek, '1 Enoch among Jews and Christians: A Fringe Connection?', in: S.E. Porter et al. (eds), *Christian-Jewish Relations Through the Centuries*, Sheffield 2000, 93–115; A.Y. Reed, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: the Reception of Enochic Literature*, Cambridge 2005, 147ff.

As such, when an exegetical tradition that is 'shared' in rabbinic and Christian literature is identified, but which is also present in older Jewish writings, a possible exegetical encounter needs to be examined very carefully; the 'shared' tradition could have developed independently in both the rabbinic and Christian material as a result of a common literary background. Thus, an exegetical tradition that is found in rabbinic and Christian but also pseudepigraphical writings cannot prove a direct exegetical encounter in rabbinic and Christian writings. However, such a development reveals the shared literary culture that facilitated encounters and exchanges, and which may have shaped the respective exegetical approaches. In other words, rabbinic exegetes and Christians could have used a shared array of popular texts that served as an inspiration for their respective understanding of scriptural passages. In this way, their writings would not have been produced in a literary universe totally isolated from each other. In fact, the pseudepigrapha bear witness to the common scriptural discourse of Jews and Christians. Thus, even if a tradition is found in both rabbinic and Christian materials, and also in a third source, the fact that the writings reflect a shared parabiblical literature points to a common literary background that facilitated exegetical encounters.

Importantly, this volume does not assume that there is only ever a single aspect to the development of a tradition. The complex reality is that a number of factors may affect the development of an exegetical motif, only one of which may suggest awareness of a Christian or rabbinic approach. It would be too simplistic and inaccurate to suggest that the evolution of ideas and motifs are due to only one impetus or motivation.<sup>124</sup> Furthermore, this study not only considers ideas held in common in rabbinic and Christian traditions, but also when opposing arguments are made, and also when rabbinic and Christian exegetes are interested in very different subjects in their interpretations of Scripture.

Overall, this methodology avoids the risk of finding encounters where a tradition simply represents a logical development from the biblical text. The internal analysis allows for the understanding of the place and development of an exegetical motif within its own tradition, which in turn allows for a proper comparative study with exegesis of the 'other', as the literary and theological context of a motif is understood. This also

---

<sup>124</sup> For example, and not exclusively, influences from pseudepigrapha, Gnostic sources, internal debates, earlier or related rabbinic or patristic traditions, and traditions that arise from internal hermeneutical methods are taken into account where appropriate.

avoids the dangers of overreliance on parallels. As such, the methodology helps to establish whether concepts and theological ideas arising from the traditions represent an 'internal' idea based on rabbinic midrashic principles or patristic theological doctrines, or to what extent they can also represent an encounter with the 'other' tradition or indeed alternative literary influences.

On this basis and where applicable, certain terms are used in this volume to indicate the level of encounter. The first is 'direct' encounter. This indicates specific evidence of encounter between particular exegetical traditions on a verse or verses of Genesis. Importantly, this volume does not claim the direct dependence of a rabbinic text on a Christian work or vice versa, but a direct relationship between traditions and ideas that are found in certain texts.<sup>125</sup> The second term is 'indirect' encounter. This refers to traditions that are expounded in both rabbinic and Christian writings, but may primarily be focused on internal arguments or are reflected in a 'third' source, such as Philo or Josephus. Finally, this volume also uses the term 'explicit' encounter. This refers to explicit acknowledgement of a source or knowledge of the 'other', which is mainly found in traditions in the Christian writings.

The framework for investigation of exegetical traditions outlined above allows for a full comparative analysis to establish possible encounters, and proper assessment of the extent of encounter. It helps to ascertain whether an exegetical tradition can be identified as evidence of direct, indirect or explicit encounter through dialectic, apologetic, polemic or acknowledgement of the exegesis of the 'other'. Such encounters are further determined based on the use of the same scriptural quotations on the same subject in the same context, use of the same literary motifs, or whether the subject of interpretation is a controversial theme within rabbinic and Christian exegesis. Thus, the outcome of the research illuminates the possibility not only of the encounter of rabbinic traditions with Christian ideas, but also the possibility of Christian encounter with rabbinic exegesis. The analysis presented in this volume does not solely examine the literature of one group for evidence of awareness of interpretations of the 'other', but rather both sets of traditions are treated in comparative analysis.

---

<sup>125</sup> It is widely accepted that the search for direct influences of one text on another is problematic; see, for example, D. Biale (ed.), *Cultures of the Jews*, N.Y. 2002. Importantly, the conclusions in this volume would only claim the direct dependence of a Christian text on a rabbinic tradition where this is explicitly acknowledged.



*Overview of this Volume*

In the course of research, exegetical materials from the rabbinic and Christian traditions were sourced for the entire book of Genesis, but this volume focuses on a detailed analysis of eight key episodes that demonstrate strong evidence of encounter. Focused investigation of key traditions and exegetical motifs allows for presentation of detailed analysis of new evidence of encounter, going beyond mere parallels.

The nature of an exegetical encounter varies depending on the point of encounter under discussion, and it is not possible to set out a template for the way an encounter may form. The literature is too varied in theological aim, reflects too great a time period, is diverse in geographical provenance, is written in different languages and produced in too many different literary genres and exegetical styles to expect a consistent manner by which an encounter may have occurred. As such, each chapter discusses a key biblical episode, and, following the methodology outlined above, presents the arguments for an exegetical encounter on a case by case basis. In this way, the volume provides evidence of the different ways awareness can be manifested.

The key episodes examined are: Adam in Paradise; Cain and Abel; the Flood Story; Abraham and Melchizedek; Hagar and Ishmael; Jacob's Ladder; Joseph and Potiphar; and the Blessing on Judah. The method of treating episodes of Genesis was adopted as analysis on a verse by verse basis often imposes a false division on the material of both the Christian authors, who, with a few exceptions, tend to discuss the episodes as a whole, and also rabbinic exegetes, who often bring together an array of verses from the Hebrew Bible in their interpretation of passages of Genesis. The discussion in each chapter begins with an outline of the rabbinic traditions, then the Christian traditions, followed by a section on potential exegetical encounters. This volume by no means represents the only evidence available, but rather it investigates, in the authors' judgement, the strongest and most interesting evidence of encounter.

## CHAPTER ONE

### IN PARADISE: ADAM FROM CREATION TO RESURRECTION

*The Lord God took the man and set him in the Garden of Eden to work it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying 'You may eat from any tree of the garden; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you may not eat, for on the day that you eat from it you will die.'* (MT Gen 2:15–17)

#### *Rabbinic Traditions*

The story of Adam in Paradise in Genesis 2–3 is one of the most discussed sections of the book of Genesis in rabbinic traditions, and the biblical text raised a vast number of different questions, such as on the character, role and exploits of the main actors in the story (God, Adam, Eve and the serpent), the method of creation, and the meaning, significance and consequences of the first transgression of God's command.<sup>1</sup> The richness of the biblical story allowed rabbinic exegetes to explore the origins of humanity, the reasons for life as they knew it and the extent to which Adam could provide a model for current generations. The implications of the actions of the first man for the future of both Israel and the world were explored. For rabbinic exegetes, the narrative also set the tone for the relationship between God and humanity, and, ultimately, God and Israel. The examples of rabbinic traditions relevant to the question of exegetical encounter discussed in this chapter follow the life cycle of Adam beginning with his creation, transgression, death and finally resurrection, based on exegesis of Genesis 2–3.

---

<sup>1</sup> Clearly, scholarship on rabbinic exegesis of the Paradise story is extensive, focusing on a variety of different details and their theological import. Key works include G.P. Luttikhuisen (ed.), *Paradise Interpreted: Representations of Biblical Paradise in Judaism and Christianity*, Leiden 1999; G.P. Luttikhuisen (ed.), *The Creation of Man and Woman: Interpretations of the Biblical Narratives in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, Leiden 2000; G.A. Anderson, *The Genesis of Perfection: Adam and Eve in Jewish and Christian Imagination*, London 2001; H. Reuling, *After Eden: Church Fathers and Rabbis on Genesis 3:16–21*, Leiden 2006; and M. Bockmuehl – G. Stroumsa (eds), *Paradise in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Views*, Cambridge 2010.

*The Creation of Adam: The Hours of Man in Paradise*

The first examples of rabbinic exegesis discussed here are focused on the description of the first day of Adam's life. Found in a variety of sources, rabbinic exegetes preserved a tradition of Adam's life in Paradise summarized in twelve episodes, with each episode occurring in one hour.<sup>2</sup> This famous midrash varies in details with its transmission in different sources, but touches on all the key points of the biblical Paradise story—the creation of Adam from dust, his naming of the animals, his relationship to Eve, his sin and expulsion. One of the earliest forms of the tradition of the twelve hours in Paradise is found in LevR 29:1:

בחדש השביעי באחד לחדש (ויקרא כג, כד). לעולם י"י דברך נצב בשמים (תהלים קיט, פט). תני בש' ר' ליעזר בעשרים וחמשה באלול נברא העולם. אתיא דרב כהדא דר' אליעזר דתאני בתקיעתא דרב זה היום תחלת מעשיך זכרון ליום ראשון, כי חק לישראל הוא משפט לאלהי יעקב (שם פא, ה). ועל המדינות בו יאמר איזו לחרב ואיזו לשלום, איזו לרעב ואיזו לשובע, ובריות בו יפקדו להזכירם לחיים ולמות. את מוצא באחד בתשרי נברא אדם הראשון. שעה ראשונה עלה במחשבה, שנייה נמלך במלאכי השרת, שלישית גיבלו, רביעית ריקמו, חמישית עשאו גולם, ששית נפח בו נשמה, שביעית העמידו על רגליו, שמינית הכניסו לגן עדן, תשיעית צוהו, עשירית עבר על ציוויו, אחת עשרה דנו, שתים עשרה נתן לו דימיס. אמ' לו הקב"ה אדם הרי את סימן לבניך, מה אתה נכנסת לפני בדין ונתתי לך דימיס אף בניך נכנסין לפני בדין ואני נותן להם דימיס. אימתי בראש השנה, בחדש השביעי באחד לחדש.

(ed. M. Margulies, *Midrash Wayyikra Rabbah*, vol. 3, 668-669)

*In the seventh month, on the first day of the month* (Lev 23:24). This relates to: *Forever, O Lord, your word stands firm in heaven* (Ps 119:89). It was taught in the name of R. Eliezer: On the twenty-fifth of Elul, the world was created. The view of Rav is in accordance with the opinion of R. Eliezer. For we have learned in the New Year's prayers composed by Rav: 'This day (which marks) the beginning of your work, is a memorial of the first day, for it is a statute for Israel, a law of the God of Jacob' (Ps 81:5). And concerning the countries, it is pronounced on it (i.e. that day) which is destined for the sword and which is for peace, which for famine and which for plenty. And humankind is visited on it (i.e. that day) to record them for life or for death'. Thus you find that on the first day of Tishri the first man was created. In the first hour, the plan was formed. In the second, He took counsel with the Ministering Angels. In the third, He kneaded him. In the fourth, He shaped him. In the fifth, He made him into a lifeless body. In the sixth, He blew breath into him. In the seventh, He made him stand up. In the eighth, He brought him into the Garden of Eden. In the ninth, He commanded him. In the tenth, he transgressed His command. In the eleventh, He judged him. In the twelfth, He granted him

<sup>2</sup> E.g. LevR 29:1, PRK 23:1, PR 46:2, BT Sanh 38b, ARN A 1, ARN B 1, 42, PRE 11, TanB *Bereshit* 25, TanB *Shemini* 13, Tan *Shemini* 8 and MidrPss 92:3.

pardon. The Holy One, blessed be He, said to Adam: 'Behold, you will be a sign for your children. Just as you entered into judgement before Me and I granted you pardon, so your children will enter into judgement before Me and I will grant them pardon'. When will that be? At Rosh ha-Shanah, *in the seventh month, on the first day of the month* (Lev 23:24).

The tradition begins with exposition of Lev 23:24, which prescribes for 'a day of complete rest, a holy assembly commemorated with trumpet blasts', namely Rosh ha-Shanah or New Year's Day.<sup>3</sup> LevR 29:1 describes how New Year's Day is a day of judgement not only for 'the countries' (הַמְּדִינֹת) but all humanity (בְּרִיּוֹת), and the midrash goes on to explain why New Year's Day is associated with judgement.<sup>4</sup> This is based on connecting the date of New Year's Day with the date of the creation of Adam. LevR 29:1 reports the view of R. Eliezer, also confirmed by Rav in his blessing for the additional New Year's Day service, that the world was created on the 25th of Elul, namely six days before New Year's Day. Thus, with these calendrical calculations, the creation of Adam is said to be on New Year's Day, six days after the 25th of Elul on the 1st of Tishri.

Having established that Adam was created on New Year's Day, the day of judgement, the midrash goes on to describe the events of Adam's first twelve hours in Paradise. God planned to create Adam in the first hour, but God consulted with the ministering angels in the second hour. This aspect of the tradition alludes to rabbinic discussion on the question of who was involved in creation. In LevR 29:1, the angels are consulted over the creation of Adam, but the midrash does not mention if they are given a deciding role, or whether God proceeded in his creation of Adam without their consent as described in other traditions on the subject.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> As J.J. Slotki notes, this is 'the day on which God sits in judgment upon the world' and 'the exposition that follows is intended to explain why the first day of the year was chosen as the day of judgment' (in: H. Freedman – M. Simon (eds), *Midrash Rabbah: Leviticus Rabbah*, London 1939, 369).

<sup>4</sup> According to M RH 1:2, the world is judged four times, including New Year's Day when the entire world will pass before God for judgement; cf. BT RH 10b-11a, 16a and 27a, PT RH 1:1 and PR 7:4.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. BT Sanh 38b states that God may consult his heavenly court, but evidence that God ultimately acted alone can always be found. Discussion on whether God acted alone in creation in rabbinic sources is usually based on the use of the plural in reference to actions of God (e.g. Gen 1:26). The polemical nature of the tendency in rabbinic thought to emphasize that God acts alone is noted by P. Schäfer, who sees the motivation behind the polemic as the threat to God's sovereignty (*Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen*, 74). J. Fossum argues of rabbinic interpretation of the plural in Gen 1:26 that this has an anti-heretical motivation and states that 'the "erring" of the minim [in San 38b] apparently consists in the idea that the angels were summoned as God's co-creators'. He thus

Hours three to seven describe the physical creation of Adam, based on the biblical text of Gen 2:7: ‘*And the Lord God created the man out of dust from the earth, and he blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living person*’, but expanded upon in the details. This motif contributes to the diversity of ideas on the nature of the body and soul in rabbinic sources. In particular, LevR 29:1 portrays Adam as a lifeless shell or a golem (גולם) before the ‘soul’ enters. In addition, the identification of ‘breath’ with ‘spirit’ or ‘soul’ is alluded to through the ambiguous word נשמה. The tradition also contributes to discussion on the order of the creation of the body and soul, with the implication here that the ‘soul’ is created after the body, or at least is infused only after the body is created.<sup>6</sup>

The eighth hour describes Adam’s entry into Eden, which alludes to Gen 2:8: ‘*And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed*’, and is reiterated in Gen 2:15. In the ninth hour, Adam was commanded not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, as in Gen 2:16–17. In the tenth hour, he transgressed the command regarding the tree, as in Gen 3:6. Finally, in the eleventh hour Adam was judged, as in Gen 3:17–24, but the midrash ends by saying that in the twelfth hour Adam was pardoned, which indicates the ultimate redemption of Adam.<sup>7</sup>

The fact that Adam is pardoned by God is a significant theological statement, especially as it is not found in Genesis 2–3, which merely refers to the expulsion of Adam from Eden in Gen 3:24. The tradition teaches that the events of Adam’s life in Paradise are a sign for future generations. Just as Adam was judged and yet pardoned, so will future generations

---

draws attention to an apparent anti-angelic approach in rabbinic sources, which he argues is aimed at Hellenistic Jews or proselytes (*The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord*, Tübingen 1985, 204ff; cf. A.F. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports about Christianity and Gnosticism*, Leiden 1977).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. GenR 8:1, 14:8, ARN A 1, PRE 12, 13, TanB *Wayiqra* 11, TanB *Shemini* 13. For an overview of this theme and bibliography, see R. Kimelman, ‘The Rabbinic Theology of the Physical: Blessings, Body and Soul, Resurrection and Covenant and Election’, in: S.T. Katz, *The Cambridge History of Judaism. Vol. 4*, 946–976.

<sup>7</sup> The tradition does not explicitly refer to expulsion, but this punishment would be understood from the fact that Adam was judged. However, God granted pardon. The word used here is דימוס (דימוס) a Greek loanword (δήμος), which according to M. Jastrow is connected to the amnesty given by Emperors or high officials (*Dictionary*, London – N.Y. 1903, 300); cf. L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. 5, 106; A.J. Saldarini, *The Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan [Abot de Rabbi Nathan] version B: a translation and commentary*, Leiden 1975, 303–305; and B. Visotzky, *Golden Bells and Pomegranates: Studies in Midrash Leviticus Rabbah*, Tübingen 2003, esp. 101–102.

be judged and forgiven, and, to link back into the original verse for comment—Lev 23:24—the day of that judgement is New Year's Day. In other words, New Year's Day is the day of judgement for the Jewish people, because Adam was also judged on that day. This midrash teaches that Adam is a typical example of the behaviour of a human being, and future generations should look to him as a model of someone who sinned but was forgiven, as illustrated in the statement: 'Just as you entered into judgement before Me and I granted you pardon, so your children will enter into judgement before Me and I will grant them pardon'.<sup>8</sup> The midrash addresses an important question on the fate of future generations: the possibility of ultimate forgiveness.<sup>9</sup>

Finally, what is the significance of the twelve hours? One aim of the interpretation is to show how Adam was created, he transgressed and was expelled from Eden all on the same day. There are traditionally twelve hours in the day in rabbinic sources,<sup>10</sup> and L. Ginzberg notes that 'Although according to the Jewish calendar, the day follows the night, nevertheless the twelve hours mentioned in the different versions of the legend are to be understood as a part of the sixth day, since nothing was created at night'.<sup>11</sup> Thus, through the use of the twelve hour motif, LevR 29:1 emphasizes that Adam sinned on the very first day of his creation. This highlights the inability of Adam to follow God's commands.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, the creation and judgement of Adam in twelve hours, or one day, provides an explanation for New Year's Day as a day of judgement. Just as Adam was judged on the 1st Tishri, so will the Jewish people be judged on this day

---

<sup>8</sup> For discussion on the sin of Adam, its nature and consequences in Genesis Rabbah, see H. Reuling, *After Eden*, 261–277.

<sup>9</sup> Interestingly, there is no discussion of the acts of merit that Adam or a person of the future generations should do to gain forgiveness. H. Reuling discusses how Paradise traditions in Genesis Rabbah illustrate that although 'sin brings about alienation, merit can restore the relationship with God' (*After Eden*, 266–268). B. Visotzky states of this midrash: 'The view of humanity seems almost fatalistic and certainly pessimistic; humanity will sin and be judged. In the end, however, they will be pardoned' (*Golden Bells and Pomegranates*, 102). However, the fact that Adam and future generations are ultimately forgiven makes this midrash one of optimism rather than pessimism.

<sup>10</sup> E.g. BT Qid 71a; cf. Ps 104:22–23.

<sup>11</sup> *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. 5, 106 n.97.

<sup>12</sup> Indeed, Visotzky states that 'the idea of humanity as creatures who sin' is summed up in this midrash (*Golden Bells and Pomegranates*, 101). He also states: 'LR offers a vision of humanity that is totally dependant upon God. Note that the actor in eleven of the twelve hours is God not Adam. Only when Adam sins does he himself act. Or, one may say, when Adam acts, he sins. Nevertheless God immediately judges Adam and pardons him' (op. cit., 102).

every year. In this way, the midrash also connects Rosh ha-Shanah with creation and judgement, the beginning and the end.

This tradition is represented in Palestinian and Babylonian sources with some variation in the details of the events of each hour, although all the versions adopt the same literary format by listing the hours of the day and what happened to Adam at each hour.<sup>13</sup> The tradition in Leviticus Rabbah is closely paralleled in PRK 23:1, including the link between New Year's Day and the day that Adam was created and judged. PRK 23:1 also concludes the interpretation with the pardon of Adam in the twelfth hour: a positive sign for future generations. The fact that this tradition is found in both LevR 29:1 and PRK 23:1 suggests that the interpretation was well established by the fifth or sixth century.

The second group of traditions, as found in Pesiqta Rabbati and the later Midrash on Psalms, follows a similar pattern in the division of hours to that in LevR 29:1 and PRK 23:1, but the consequences of Adam's sin are developed differently. In particular, Adam receives the mitigated punishment of expulsion (rather than death) due to the advocacy of Shabbat. In PR 46:2, Adam is sentenced with expulsion in the twelfth hour, but he did not receive a sentence of death because Shabbat intervened on his behalf, delivered him from judgement and gained pardon for him.<sup>14</sup> The advocacy of Shabbat on Adam's behalf is also found in MidrPss 92:3. In this tradition, it says of Adam that God was about to decree his verdict, but Shabbat brought about his expulsion instead. More details on the advocacy of Shabbat are given, including the protest that the first punishment should not begin on the day of rest, and, as a result, Adam was saved from Gehinnom.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> Cf. A.J. Saldarini, *Fathers*, 303–305 for an outline of similarities and differences between the different versions of the traditions. Saldarini describes two main groups: a 'tighter' group of LevR 29:1, PR 46:2, Tan *Shemini* 8, TanB *Bereshit* 25, TanB *Shemini* 13 and a 'looser' group of ARN A 1, BT Sanh 38b and PRE 11 (*Fathers*, 37). He also groups together ARN B 1, ARN B 42 and Tan *Shemini* 8 on the basis of the use of the 'on one and the same day' pattern. Saldarini notes that ARN A 1 is closest to BT Sanh 38b. He also notes that PRE 11 and ARN B 1 and 42 have features of both groups, but overall are closer to ARN A 1 and BT Sanh 38b. However, the traditions are grouped together differently in the following analysis based on their teachings rather than linguistic structure in order to highlight different theological approaches.

<sup>14</sup> PR 46:2 includes some additional proof texts, namely, in the fifth hour God gave shape to Adam based on Ps 139:15, and, in the sixth hour, Adam is not a lifeless mass but rather is said to stand from heaven to earth based on Deut 4:32.

<sup>15</sup> This approach links the timing of the creation of man in Gen 1:26–31 with Gen 2:7.

An alternative form of the tradition is found in BT Sanh 38b, and paralleled in ARN A 1 and PRE 11. BT Sanh 38b outlines a different pattern of episodes for the twelve hours, and in its broader context emphasizes the superiority of Adam over the angels.<sup>16</sup> The focus is on Adam and his activities. His creation is described in hours one to five. Then, Adam's naming of the animals is included at the sixth hour: a sign of his wisdom.<sup>17</sup> Adam's relationship with Eve is outlined in the seventh and eighth hours, including the fact that they were married and had children in Paradise.<sup>18</sup> The tradition concludes with Adam's command not to eat of the tree, his sin, judgement and expulsion in the ninth to twelfth hours. In this version of the tradition, the focus is on the activities and punishment of Adam and the interpretation ends with the expulsion of Adam, which is emphasized by the proof text Ps 49:13: '*Man does not remain in honour*'. In other words, Adam was not able to follow God's commands, or abide in honour, for even one day. This structure of the twelve hours and the emphasis on Adam's punishment is found similarly in ARN A 1 and PRE 11, although PRE 11 uses Gen 3:24: '*And he drove out the man*', as the proof text for Adam's punishment.

Another version of the tradition is found in later sources, which also emphasize the punishment of Adam, as similarly outlined in BT Sanh 38b and parallel traditions. However, a pattern of hours similar to LevR 29:1 and PRK 23:1 is found, including the consultation with the ministering angels in the second hour and the absence of the relationship between Adam and Eve. This approach is found in ARN B 1 and 42 and TanB *Bereshit* 25,

---

<sup>16</sup> The idea of the creation of Adam and God's consultation with the ministering angels is omitted. This is in line with the perspective, also in BT Sanh 38b, that the involvement of angels in creation is the view of the 'minim'.

<sup>17</sup> The idea that the intelligence of Adam is emphasized by his ability to name all the animals is very common in rabbinic traditions (e.g. GenR 17:4, PR 14:9, MidrPss 8:2, NumR 19:3). In this tradition, God reveals the extent of Adam's wisdom to the angels, who are considered to be beneath Adam in intelligence. The superiority of Adam over the angels is thus emphasized. However, the expected diversity in rabbinic traditions ensures alternative interpretations that place Adam and the angels on a more equal footing, such as found in PRE 12.

<sup>18</sup> For the birth of the children, see GenR 22:3 and Tg PsJm Gen 4:1. The marriage of Adam and Eve in Paradise before the expulsion is a widely transmitted tradition in rabbinic sources (e.g. GenR 18:1, EcclR 7:6 and 9:8, BT Shab 94b–95a, BT Erub 18a–b, ARN A 4, PRE 12, TanB *Ḥayye Sarah* 2, MidrPss 25:11 and 68:4). God is often portrayed as groomsman during the marriage of Adam and Eve, as found in the majority of the above-mentioned traditions (but see also GenR 8:13 where Michael and Gabriel act as groomsman).



TanB *Shemini* 13 and Tan *Shemini* 8.<sup>19</sup> Saldarini noted a connection between these texts on the basis of an ‘on one and the same day’ (בו ביום) phrase introducing each hour. ARN B 1 (cf. 42) emphasizes that ‘on one and the same day Adam was created, on one and the same day He commanded him, on one and the same day he ate, on one and the same day he was driven out’ with Gen 3:24 as the proof text for the punishment. This is also found in TanB *Bereshit* 25. Interestingly, the tradition in TanB *Bereshit* 25 is followed by another interpretation that Adam was driven out and because of him the Temple was destroyed, implying future consequences for Adam’s actions. TanB *Shemini* 13 also follows the pattern described, but this version draws a contrast between Adam and Israel: Israel received a large number of commandments on Sinai in order to gain reward, but Adam was expelled from Paradise because he did not endure his commandment for even a single hour. As such, Israel is greater than Adam as the Jewish people keep all the commandments that were given to them and persevere in them.<sup>20</sup>

In summary, all versions of the tradition of the hours of man in Paradise describe Adam as experiencing a single day, consisting of twelve hours, in which time Adam went from creation to sin and sentencing. However, the traditions present varying emphases in the portrayal of the basic message on the process of Adam’s creation and the consequences of his transgression, ranging from forgiveness to punishment and the implications of this for the Jewish people. LevR 29:1 and PRK 23:1 emphasize the pardon of Adam for his transgression. The use of the twelve hours in itself enables rabbinic exegetes to make calendrical calculations linking the judgement and forgiveness of Adam on this one day of creation, with the judgement and forgiveness of Israel on New Year’s Day. PR 46:2 and also MidrPss 92:3 bring in the advocacy of Shabbat on behalf of Adam to mitigate his punishment from death to expulsion, and so suggest leniency towards Adam for a transgression that deserved harsher punishment. BT Sanh 38b, ARN A 1 and PRE 11 emphasize Adam’s punishment, but also Adam’s superiority over the angels and discuss his relationship with Eve

---

<sup>19</sup> Cf. TanB *Pequde* 3, which describes some of the hours, but with the aim of outlining Adam’s glory.

<sup>20</sup> H. Reuling has discussed in relation to Genesis Rabbah how ‘Adam’s fate is also taken as a mirror of Israel’s situation’ with particular reference to the theme of expulsion, but also how ‘Israel accepted the Torah and changed the world for the better’ (*After Eden*, 268–271). Namely, as also evidenced in the traditions highlighted here, there are hopes for restoration in Israel’s acceptance of and ability to keep the Torah.

in Paradise. Finally, ARN B 1 and 42, TanB *Bereshit* 25 and TanB *Shemini* 13 focus on the actions of Adam, especially as in contrast to the future Israel. The twelve hours motif also facilitates discussion on the inability of Adam to follow a command for even one day, particularly in contrast to the Jewish people and the 613 commandments in the Torah.

*The Transgression of Adam and Eve: The Serpent as an Intermediary*

Discussion now turns to rabbinic exegesis of the sin of Adam and Eve in Gen 3:iff and the role of the serpent in that sin. The story of the transgression of the first couple is introduced by the appearance of the serpent in Gen 3:1a:

והנחש היה ערום מכל חית השדה אשר עשה י' אלהים

*Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field that the Lord God had made.*

In the following analysis, the focus is on the tradition of the use of the serpent as an intermediary by the fallen angel Sammael in order to bring about the first sin.<sup>21</sup> This particular tradition is found for the first time in rabbinic sources, according to date of redaction, in Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer. PRE 13 and 14 describe the actions of the serpent in Paradise and the subsequent sin of Adam and Eve, and these events are outlined with particular reference to the role of Sammael in the demise of humanity.

PRE 13 opens by describing the contest between the ministering angels and Adam over the naming of the creatures of the world, which is a sign of wisdom.<sup>22</sup> Only Adam has the ability to name the creatures, and so the angels are envious and desire to take steps against him. Sammael takes the lead in this action. He recognizes that the serpent was skilled at doing evil, and so uses the serpent as his agent to bring about the downfall of humanity. In PRE 14, the serpent is said to receive nine curses and then death for his actions, and God's first punishment or curse of the serpent is to cast Sammael and his company from heaven, thus emphasizing the connection between the two. Sammael is, therefore, portrayed as an envious angel, who, because of his jealousy of Adam, used the serpent to

<sup>21</sup> An earlier version of this discussion was published in H. Spurling – E. Grypeou, 'Pirke-de Rabbi Eliezer and Eastern Christian Exegesis', *CCO* 4 (2007), 217–243. See also the discussion on Sammael in PRE 13 in R. Adelman, *The Return of the Repressed: Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer and the Pseudepigrapha*, Leiden 2009, 71–108.

<sup>22</sup> This contest is well known in rabbinic sources, e.g. GenR 17:4, PR 14:9, MidrPss 8:2, NumR 19:3.

tempt Eve, which led to him being cast from heaven.<sup>23</sup> PRE 13 describes Sammael's use of the serpent as an intermediary:

והיה סמאל השר הגדול שבשמים וחיות [מארבע כנפים] ושרפים משש כנפים  
 וסמאל משתים עשרה כנפים לקח את הכת שלו וירד וראה כל הבריות שברא  
 הקב"ה ולא מצא [בהם] חכם להרע כנחש שנאמר והנחש [היה] ערום מכל  
 חית השדה (בראשית ג א) והיה דמותו כמין גמל ועלה ורכב עליו והתורה  
 היתה צוחת ואומרת סמאל עכשו נברא העולם ועת למרוד במקום כעת  
 במרום תמריא (איוב לט יח) רבון העולמים תשחק לסוס ולרכבו (איוב לט  
 יח) משל למה הדבר דומה לאדם שיש בו רוח רעה וכל המעשים שהוא עושה  
 מדעתו הוא עושה וכל הדברים שהוא מדבר מדעתו הוא מדבר והלא אינו  
 עושה אלא מדעת רוח רעה שיש עליו כך הנחש כל מעשיו שעשה וכל דבריו  
 שדבר לא דבר ולא עשה אלא מדעתו של סמאל ועליו הכתוב אומר ברעתו  
 (ed. D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, 135 [67]) ידחה רשע

Sammael was the great prince, who was in heaven. The Living Creatures [had four wings] and the Seraphim had six wings, but Sammael had twelve wings. He took his company and descended and saw all the creatures which the Holy One, Blessed be He, had created, and he found [among them] none so clever to do evil as the serpent, as it is said, *Now the serpent [was] more subtle than any beast of the field* (Gen 3:1). Its likeness was like a kind of camel, and he mounted and rode upon it. The Torah was crying out and saying: O Sammael! Now that the world is created, is it really the time to rebel against God? *At that time she flapped away on high* (Job 39:18). Lord of the World, *she will laugh at the horse and at its rider* (Job 39:18). A parable: to what may the matter be compared? To a man in whom there was an evil spirit. All the deeds that he does, does he do through his own reasoning? All the words that he speaks, does he speak by his own reasoning? Does he not act only according to the reasoning of the evil spirit which is upon him? Thus it was with the serpent. All the deeds which it did, and all the words which it spoke, it did not speak and it did not do except by the intention of Sammael. Concerning him, Scripture says, *The wicked is cast down in his evil-doing* (Prov 14:32).

The central role of Sammael in the transgression of Adam and Eve is clear in PRE 13.<sup>24</sup> First, Sammael is explicitly named as the leader of the angels

<sup>23</sup> As R. Adelman notes, 'PRE, uniquely, detaches the story of Satan's fall from the creation of Man, and links it, instead, to the drama of the Garden of Eden and the seduction of Eve' (*Return of the Repressed*, 72).

<sup>24</sup> A wide number of traditions are attached to Sammael in later Jewish literature. He was originally one of the chief angels, but he fell from heaven and became the prince of demons. His name is often identified with that of the Satan or the angel of death. For example, see DeutR 11:10: 'Sammael the wicked angel, the chief of all the accusing angels' and 'the angel of death'; also 3 Enoch 14:2 and 26:12 describe Sammael as 'prince of the accusers'; Tg PsJon Gen 3:6 also describes Sammael as 'the angel of death'. His primary role is to be the prince of Rome, who brings accusations against Israel. See G. Stemberger, 'Samael und Uzza: Zur Rolle der Dämonen im späten Midrasch', in: A. Lange et al. (eds.), *Die Dämonen*, Tübingen 2004, 636–661 for analysis of Sammael traditions.

and presented as the instigator of Eve's corruption. He is the 'great prince in heaven' (השר הגדול שבשמים) in charge of 'his company' and his prominence is indicated by his large number of wings in contrast to the other angelic beings. Secondly, Sammael recognizes the cleverness of the serpent, based on Gen 3:1, and the relationship between them is indicated by the fact that Sammael is said to ride the serpent (ועלה ורכב עליו), which is a motif for his dominance over the creature. This provokes a rebuke from the Torah over Sammael's rebellion. Job 39:18 is used to describe the Torah's response: כעת במרום תמריא 'At that time she flapped away on high' is understood to refer to the agitation of the Torah.<sup>25</sup> In support of Sammael's use of the serpent, it is described as 'like a kind of camel' (כמין גמל). In other words the serpent is like a pack animal to be used by Sammael.<sup>26</sup> Finally, the use of the serpent as an intermediary is emphasized, and the fact that, with regard to the serpent, 'all the deeds which it did, and all the words which it spoke, it did not speak and it did not do except by the intention of Sammael'. The tradition closes with the use of Prov 14:32 to indicate the rejection of Sammael by God.

The agency of the serpent for Sammael is not a common idea in rabbinic literature, where the focus of exegesis is primarily the clever or wicked nature of the serpent and its superiority over other creatures,<sup>27</sup> its prolific use of slander against God,<sup>28</sup> and passion for Eve.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, the role of Sammael in the sin of Adam and Eve is found at the earliest in rabbinic literature, in terms of date of redaction, in Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer. G. Stemmer says of the tradition of Sammael in Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer: 'Diese Linie nimmt in der nachtalmudischen Tradition allein der Targum Pseudojonathan auf'.<sup>30</sup> However, despite the close similarities between

<sup>25</sup> רבון העולמים תשחק לסוס ולרכבו could translate either: Lord of the World 'she will laugh at the horse and at its rider', which follows the original biblical quote, or: Lord of the World 'you will laugh at the horse and at its rider', which understands תשחק to be a 2nd masc.sing. rather than a 3rd fem.sing. The first translation understands the Torah to be mocking Sammael's use of the serpent, whilst the second understands the Torah to declare that God will mock Sammael.

<sup>26</sup> The earlier GenR 19:1 also describes the serpent as being like a camel that could have been used to carry merchandise if he had not been punished for his role in the first sin. This interpretation is reported alongside the tradition that the snake stood erect and had feet, and that he was an unbeliever; cf. ARN A 1 and BT Sanh 59b. On the serpent in early Jewish writings, see esp. Philo, Quaest.Gen. 1.32.

<sup>27</sup> E.g. GenR 20:5, BT Sanh 59b, ARN A 1.

<sup>28</sup> E.g. GenR 20:1, 20:2, Kallah Rabbati 3:22, DeutR 5:10, Tg PsJon Gen 3:4 and MidrPs 1:9.

<sup>29</sup> E.g. GenR 18:6, BT Shab 146a, BT Yeb 103b, BT AZ 22b, ARN A 1, Tg PsJon Gen 4:1.

<sup>30</sup> 'Samael und Uzza: Zur Rolle der Dämonen im späten Midrasch', 641.

Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, the tradition in the Targum does not explicitly refer to the agency of the serpent. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan describes the actions of the serpent in Gen 3:1–5, with Sammael appearing as the angel of death in Gen 3:6.<sup>31</sup> This points to the exceptional nature of the motif of Sammael as the instigator of Adam and Eve's transgression in PRE 13.<sup>32</sup> The biblical narrative does not, of course, mention the intervention of an angelic adversary in the events in Paradise, and, by introducing the involvement of Sammael, PRE 13 provides an explanation for the origin and causes of the transgression of Adam and Eve.

*The Burial of Adam: The Temple Mount and the Cave of Machpelah*

The sin of Adam ultimately led to his expulsion from Eden, and he lived the rest of his life outside of Paradise. The next tradition under discussion is an elaboration on what happened to Adam at the end of his life. Genesis 4 describes Adam's life with Eve and their children, and the death of Adam is eventually mentioned in the genealogy of Genesis 5, with Gen 5:5 stating:

ויהיו כל ימי אדם אשר חי תשע מאות שנה ושלשים שנה וימת

*Thus all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.*

No further details are given on the death of Adam in the biblical narrative, which led rabbinic exegetes to speculate on the circumstances surrounding his demise and, in particular, the site of his burial. Of particular interest for the exegetical encounter is the answer to this disputed question provided in Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer. In PRE 20, Adam is described as

---

<sup>31</sup> The literary relationship between Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer is much debated. There are a large number of apparently parallel and related traditions in both texts, although Hayward disputes the extent of any dependence. See C.T.R. Hayward, 'Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan', *JJS* 42 (1991), 222ff for an outline of the evidence and debate.

<sup>32</sup> Other later texts also contain a similar tradition to that in PRE 13, but again the intermediary role of the serpent is missing. For example, the Chronicle of Yerahmeel 22:2 describes how Sammael the angel of death falls from heaven after the contest with Adam over the naming of the creatures. He recognizes the serpent's ability, but the serpent acts alone. The Zohar I, 35b describes Sammael riding on the serpent and states that the ideal form of the serpent is the Satan. However, the text states that the two of them talk with Eve and bring death into the world.

building a tomb for himself—the Cave of Machpelah—in the region of the site of the Temple.<sup>33</sup>

The association between Adam and the Temple Mount begins in PRE 12, which describes how Adam was created on the site of the Temple before he was brought into Eden to study the Torah and commandments.<sup>34</sup> Gen 2:4–8 attests to the time of the creation of Adam, namely ‘*in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens*’, and describes the material from which he was made, that is ‘*from the dust of the ground*’, which is followed by a description of the creation of Eden into which God placed Adam. However, the biblical story prompted the question of *where* exactly Adam was created. He was placed in Eden after he was formed, but the exact location of the ‘*dust of the ground*’ is never mentioned in the biblical narrative. The creation of Adam on the Temple site is reiterated in PRE 20, where Adam is thrown out of Eden and driven to Mount Moriah, which is identified as the site of the Temple, the place from which he was originally taken.<sup>35</sup> In *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, the site of the Temple is also identified as the centre of the earth.<sup>36</sup> The tradition in PRE 20 builds on widely attested concepts. Mount Moriah is identified with the site of the Temple as early as 2 Chron 3:1 and repeated throughout Jewish tradition.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>33</sup> An earlier version of this discussion was published in H. Spurling – E. Grypeou, ‘*Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer and Eastern Christian Exegesis*’.

<sup>34</sup> On study of the Torah as Adam’s work in Eden, see *Sifre Deut* 41, *Midrash Tannaim* 22, *GenR* 16:5 and *Tg PsJm* Gen 2:15. See I. Gafni, ‘*Rabbinic Historiography and Representations of the Past*’, in: C.E. Fonrobert – M.S. Jaffee, *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, 295–312, who discusses this motif as an example of ‘the tendency to ‘rabinize’ the past’ (ibid. 307–308).

<sup>35</sup> An interpretation that combines Gen 3:19 (*‘In the sweat of your face you will eat bread, until you return to the ground, for from it you were taken. For dust you are and to dust you will return’*) and the tradition of the creation of Adam on the Temple site; cf. pseudepigraphic sources that discuss the burial of Adam based on exegesis of Gen 3:19. For example, the Greek *Life of Adam and Eve* 40:1–42:2 describes the creation and burial of Adam in the same place, but this is on the site in Paradise where God had taken the dust to make Adam. Alternatively, *Jubilees* 3:32 states that when Adam and his wife were expelled from the Garden, they went to the land of ‘Elda, which is identified as the land of their creation. In *Jubilees* 4:29, Adam is also said to be buried in the land of his creation. Thus, in *Jubilees*, Adam was created and buried in the land of ‘Elda, a place separate from Paradise, from which he was taken at creation, returned after his expulsion and where he died.

<sup>36</sup> PRE 11 describes the creation of Adam: *היה במקום טהור היה בטבור הארץ היה* ‘it was in a pure place, it was at the navel of the earth’ (ed. D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, 113 [56]). Then PRE 12 identifies the *טהור מקום* ‘pure place’ with *מקום בית המקדש* ‘the place of the Temple’ (ed. D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, 123 [61]); cf. *Ezek* 38:12; *Jubilees* 8:12, 19; 1 *Enoch* 26:1. See P.S. Alexander, ‘*Jerusalem as Omphalos*’, in: L.I. Levine (ed.), *Jerusalem: Its Sanctity and Centrality to Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, N.Y. 1999, 104–119.

<sup>37</sup> E.g. *Josephus*, *Ant.* 1.225–227, *GenR* 56:10, *BT Erub* 19a, *MidrPss* 92:6.

Similarly, the creation of Adam on the site of the Temple is also a widely attested tradition in rabbinic sources.<sup>38</sup>

The tradition in PRE 20 then takes an unexpected turn. Whilst on Mount Moriah, Adam reflects on the fact of his future death and decides to build a tomb for himself, which is identified as the Cave of Machpelah:

ישב אדם ודרש בלבו ואמר כי ידעתי מות תשיבני ובית מועד לכל חי (איוב ל כג)  
 אמר אדם עד שאני בעולם אבנה לי בית מלון לרבצי חוץ להר המוריה וחצב  
 ובנה לו בית מלון לרבצו אמר אדם מה הלוחות שהן עתידין להכתב באצבעו של  
 הקב"ה ועתידין מימי הירדן לברוח מפניהם וגופי שגבל בשתי ידיו ורוח נשמת  
 פיו נפח באפי [על אחת כמה וכמה] ולאחר מותי יקחו את עצמותי ויעשו להם  
 עבודה זרה אלא אעמיק אני את ארוני למטה מן המערה ולפנים מן המערה לפיכך  
 נקראת מערת המכפלה שהיא כפולה ושם הוא נתון אדם וחווה אברהם ושרה  
 יצחק ורבקה יעקב ולאח ולפיכך נקראת קרית ארבע שנקברו בה ארבע זוגות  
 ועליהם הכתוב אומר יבוא שלום ינוחו על משכבותם הלך נכחו  
 (ed. D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, 219–221 [109–110])

Adam sat and searched in his heart, and said: '*For I know that you will bring me to death and to the house appointed for all living*' (Job 30:23). Adam said: 'While I am still in the world, I will build a lodging for myself as my resting place (in death) outside Mount Moriah'. So he hewed and built a lodging for himself as his resting place. Adam said: 'If regarding the tablets, which in the future will be written by the finger of the Holy One, blessed be He, the waters of the Jordan will flee before them, how much more so will this be the case with my body which He kneaded with His two hands, and the spirit of the breath of His mouth He blew into my nostrils. After my death they will take my bones, and they will make for themselves an image for idolatry; but I will put my coffin deep down within the cave and forwards within the cave'. Therefore it is called the Cave of Machpelah, because it is doubled (in number of chambers). Adam was put there, and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah. Therefore it is called 'the city of four', because four pairs were buried in it, and concerning them Scripture says, *He enters into peace; they rest upon their beds, each one that walks in his uprightness* (Isa 57:2).

In Gen 23:1ff, Abraham purchases the Cave of Machpelah, located near Mamre or Hebron, for a tomb and Gen 49:29–32 records that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were buried there with their wives.<sup>39</sup> A number of

<sup>38</sup> E.g. PT Naz 7:2 states that God took a spoonful of dirt from the place of the altar, and used it to create the first man. See also GenR 14:8, SEZ 173 and MidrPss 92:6. Indeed, P.S. Alexander states that rabbinic tradition is based on the idea that 'it was appropriate that Adam should be formed from the place where later atonement should be made for his sins' ('Jerusalem as *Omphalos*', 114).

<sup>39</sup> In discussing the location of the Cave, Gen 23:19 situated Mamre and Hebron close to each other, and Kiriath Arba is identified with Hebron a number of times in the Hebrew Bible at Gen 23:2, 35:27, Josh 14:15, 15:13, 15:54, 20:7, 21:11 and Judg 1:10.

rabbinic traditions teach that Adam and Eve were also buried in Machpelah. GenR 58:4 reports that the patriarchs and their wives were buried at Kiriath Arba, and GenR 58:9 states that the name Machpelah signifies that God bent Adam double and buried him within it.<sup>40</sup> BT Erub 53a teaches that Mamre was called Kiriath Arba, 'city of four', because four couples were buried there, namely Adam and Eve and the patriarchs (Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah). This tradition in BT Erub 53a also refers to two views on the nature of the Cave, again based on exegesis of its name.<sup>41</sup> In one approach, the Cave consisted of two chambers, one within the other, and, in another view, the Cave consisted of a lower and an upper chamber. BT Sot 13a describes the burial of Jacob in the Cave of Machpelah. In this tradition, Mamre and Hebron are identified with Kiriath Arba, which is again so named because Adam and Eve and the patriarchs are buried there. Whilst in BT BB 58a, R. Bana'ah was marking out graves where there were dead bodies, so unclean areas were identified. He goes to the cave of Abraham and also to the cave of Adam. This is identified as either the inner and outer cave of Machpelah, or the upper and lower cave, but the location of the Cave is not mentioned in this particular tradition.

Thus, PRE 20 builds on rabbinic traditions to describe the tomb of Adam at Machpelah, including exegesis of the name Machpelah, the double nature of the Cave and the fact that four couples were buried there. However, the tradition of Adam and the Cave in PRE 20 contains some significant developments.<sup>42</sup>

First, Adam is said to have built the tomb himself. The Hebrew states: *והצב ובנה לו בית מלון לרבצו* 'so he hewed and built a lodging for himself as his resting place'. It is ambiguous whether Adam has actually hollowed out the cave himself or merely a place within the cave for his body to rest, but either way this is a significant development within rabbinic tradition.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>40</sup> This is based on exegesis of the name *מכפלה*, which means 'doubling' or 'coupling' from the root *כפל* 'double' or 'double over'. The need to be bent over may allude to the tradition of the great height of Adam; cf. GenR 12:6, BT BB 75a and Pirque Mashiah *BHM* 3:76–77. L. Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, vol. 3, 428 notes that Adam forfeited his tall stature at the fall.

<sup>41</sup> See n.40 above.

<sup>42</sup> See also PRE 36, where Abraham enters the Cave of Machpelah to find Adam and Eve surrounded by candles and a sweet smell. In this tradition, the burial of Adam and Eve in the Cave of Machpelah is the reason why Abraham chooses this site for a burial place; cf. Zohar I, 127a.

<sup>43</sup> The edition of M. Higger gives: *והשב ובנה לו בית מלון לרבצו* 'and he considered and built a lodging for his resting place' (Pirque Rabbi Eliezer, *Horeb* 8 (1946), 82–119; 9 (1947), 94–166; 10 (1948), 185–294).



Secondly, Adam reflects on the special nature of his body, as it is created by God's own hands. As such, he is concerned that his bones will become an object of idolatry, and, to avoid this, he will ensure that his coffin is buried deep in the Cave of Machpelah. The Cave of Machpelah is a double cave, as indicated by the name, and so was particularly appropriate for hiding Adam's body, as it could be placed in the inner cave.<sup>44</sup>

Finally, in PRE 20 the Cave of Machpelah is located *חוץ להר המוריה* 'outside of Mount Moriah', that is, in the region of the site of the Temple. Thus, Adam was created and buried in the same area, which was the centre of the earth. This follows the same argumentation as the pseudepigraphic sources mentioned above, based on exegesis of Gen 3:19, except with differing conclusions, as the location of the creation and burial site is not the Temple mount in those pseudepigraphic texts. This motif in PRE 20 also provides a direct contrast to the other rabbinic sources discussed, which retain the location of the Cave as identified in Genesis 23.

These three points in PRE 20 demonstrate a considerable development within rabbinic tradition. PRE 20 reflects the rabbinic motifs of the creation of Adam on the Temple site at the centre of the earth and his burial in the Cave of Machpelah, and also exegesis of Gen 3:19 that the creation and burial of Adam was in the same place. As such, the motif of Adam's burial is developed to locate the Cave at Mount Moriah, thus moving the location of the Cave from Mamre and Hebron/Kiriath Arba to the region of the site of the Temple.

### *The Resurrection of Adam*

Gen 3:17–19 is the section of the Paradise story describing the punishment of Adam after his transgression. Adam is cursed to work the ground for his food. This will be a great labour which will continue until the day he dies. The mortality of Adam is proclaimed by Gen 3:19:

בזעת אפיך תאכל לחם עד שובך אל האדמה כי ממנה לקחת כי עפר אתה ואל  
עפר תשוב

*By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you will return.*

<sup>44</sup> The idea that Adam's bones would become an object of idolatry can be compared with Jacob's fear that incense would be burned before his coffin in GenR 96. See also TanB *Wayehi* 5 and Tan *Wayehi* 3.

This verse is interpreted literally as referring to the (eventual) death of Adam in a number of rabbinic sources. For example, GenR 12:6 (cf. NumR 13:12) describes the six things that were taken away from Adam in punishment for his transgression: his lustre, his life, his height, the fruit of the earth, the fruit of trees, and the luminaries. The proof text for Adam's loss of life or immortality is Gen 3:19: 'Where does it teach regarding his life? *For you are dust*, etc'. The literal interpretation of Adam's mortality is also found in GenR 20:10, which states: '*Until you return to the ground, [for out of it you were taken]*. He said to him: 'Is not the handful of dust of the ground from which you were created illegitimate gain in your hand (גזולה בידך)?' In other words, Adam was created from dust, but the 'dust' does not belong to him and must eventually be returned through death.<sup>45</sup>

However, of particular interest for discussion here is the interpretation of Gen 3:19 to refer not to the death of Adam but to his resurrection.<sup>46</sup> The fact that Adam is said to be resurrected is an indication of the finite nature of his punishment of mortality. The earliest rabbinic source, in terms of redaction, to connect the mortality of Gen 3:19 and the resurrection of Adam is Tg Neofiti Gen 3:19:

<sup>45</sup> The interpretation of Gen 3:19 to refer to the death of Adam is also found in other sources. LevR 11:1 does not give a plain understanding of the verse, but relates it to Prov 9:1–4 on wisdom, and particularly compares Adam to 'those without sense'. Gen 3:19 is an indication of the loss of Adam's original glorious state in LevR 20:2. Similarly, EcclR 8:2 also understands Gen 3:19 to be the sentence passed upon Adam, who loses his glory as proven by Eccl 8:1. Adam's death, despite his glory, is also the theme in PRK 4:4, 26:3 and PR 14:10. PR 42:8 understands Gen 3:19 to refer to the decree of death, based on Gen 5:5, whereas PR 14:2 directly connects the death of Adam, based on Gen 3:19, to his punishment for listening to Eve's suggestion regarding the tree in Gen 3:17. In NumR 16:24, in interpretation of Num 14:11, is the tradition that Adam was given one commandment, which he was to do and live and endure forever, as Adam was immortal in the image of God based on Gen 1:27 and 3:22. However, because Adam sinned he brought death upon himself, as indicated by Gen 3:19; cf. also MidrPss 92:2 and ExodR 28:4.

<sup>46</sup> The theme of resurrection within the Hebrew Bible is a disputed topic, with much disagreement on the possibility or not of a resurrection and variations on the nature and timing of such an event; cf. Job 14, 19:25–29, Ps 49, 88:10 and 115:17. Specifically in relation to Gen 3:19, the biblical text does not allude to resurrection, although 'dust' (עפר) is sometimes connected to the possibility of resurrection, as in Dan 12:2, which states: '*And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth (ישני אדמת עפר) will wake up: these ones to everlasting life, and these ones to shame and to everlasting contempt*', and Isa 26:19: '*your dead will live, their corpses will arise. Wake up and sing for joy, O dwellers in the dust (שכני עפר)*'. See A.J. Avery-Peck – J. Neusner (eds), *Judaism in Late Antiquity Part Four: Death, Life-After-Death, Resurrection and the World-to-Come in the Judaisms of Antiquity*, Leiden 2000, and H. Sysling, *Tehiyat Ha-Metim: The Resurrection of the Dead in the Palestinian Targums of the Pentateuch and Parallel Traditions in Classical Rabbinic Literature*, Tübingen 1996.

בדעתה מן קדם אפיך תאכל לחם עד מחזורך לארעא ארום מנה אתברית ארום  
 עפר את ולעפרא את עתיד חזר ומן עפרא את עתיד חזר וקאם ויהב דין וחושבן  
 על כל מה דעבדת

(ed. A. Díez Macho, *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis, 22*)

In the sweat from before your face you will eat bread, until you return to the earth, because from it you were created, because you are dust and to the dust you will return. However, from the dust you will return and rise and give an account and a calculation concerning all that you have done.

The expansion in Targum Neofiti<sup>47</sup> predicts a future resurrection for Adam when he will be required to give an account of his deeds. This is a particularly interesting interpretation of Gen 3:19, as it turns the meaning of the biblical text on its head to introduce the concept of resurrection at a point in the narrative where Adam is punished with mortality. Such an interpretation offers the possibility of redemption to Adam as he may be punished, but will live again at the resurrection for final judgement on his deeds. According to P.V.M. Flesher, Tg Neofiti Gen 3:19 promotes the idea that resurrection is for judgement, and ‘God will decide whether Adam will spend his eternal life in the Garden of Eden or Gehenna’.<sup>48</sup> Tg PsJon Gen 3:19 also follows this line of interpretation. In particular, the text translates Gen 3:19 and expands with ‘from the dust you will arise to give the account and the calculation of all that you have done, on the day of great judgement (ביום דינא רבא)’. This is similar to Tg Neofiti Gen 3:19, but explicitly connects Adam’s resurrection to the Day of Judgement. As H. Sysling notes, ‘In the PTs of Gen 3:19, a connection is made between mortality, resurrection, and judgment, most explicitly in PsYon’.<sup>49</sup>

The specific time of Adam’s future resurrection in the apocalyptic drama and its aftermath is not explicitly stated in Tg Neofiti Gen 3:19, although is understood in connection with the Day of Judgement and rabbinic teachings on reward and punishment.<sup>50</sup> Indeed, Flesher argues that Targum Neofiti and the Fragmentary Targums ‘make it clear

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Fragment Targum on Gen 3:19. Tg Onqelos Gen 3:19 adopts a more literal approach.

<sup>48</sup> ‘The Resurrection of the Dead and the Sources of the Palestinian Targums to the Pentateuch’, in: A.J. Avery-Peck – J. Neusner (eds), *Judaism in Late Antiquity Part Four*, 319.

<sup>49</sup> *Tehiyat Ha-Metim*, 90.

<sup>50</sup> See S.T. Katz, ‘Man, Sin and Redemption in Rabbinic Judaism’, in: S.T. Katz, *The Cambridge History of Judaism. Vol. 4*, 925–945 for discussion of concepts of reward and punishment and bibliography.

that the resurrection of the dead takes place in the world-to-come'.<sup>51</sup> The great Day of Judgement in Tg PsJon Gen 3:19 is certainly considered to be an event belonging to the world-to-come. This is supported by the contrast between the 'Day of Judgement' and 'this world', or the identification of the Day of Judgement with the 'world-to-come' elsewhere in the Targum, as in Tg PsJon Gen 4:7 and Gen 39:10.<sup>52</sup>

The resurrection of Adam based on Gen 3:19 is found in rabbinic sources of varying date and provenance.<sup>53</sup> The earliest midrashic text, in terms of redaction, to explicitly include this interpretation is GenR 20:10:

כי עפר אתה ואל עפר וגו' אמר ר' שמעון בן יוחי מיכן רמז לתחיית המתים מן התורה כי עפר אתה ואל עפר תלך אינו אומר אלא תשוב:  
(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 1, 194)

*For you are dust and to dust, etc.* (Gen 3:19). R. Shimon ben Yoḥai said: This is a hint at resurrection from the Torah, for it does not say, 'For you are dust, and to dust you will go', but 'you will return'.

The interpretation in this tradition rests on the verb תשוב 'you will return'. In other words, Adam will not go to death, but return to life at the resurrection. In this way, GenR 20:10 represents a reversal of the plain meaning of

<sup>51</sup> 'Resurrection of the Dead', 312.

<sup>52</sup> Fleisher notes that 'Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, by contrast, sees God as planning the resurrection of the dead at the apocalyptic end of time. The resurrection will take place in this world, following the messiah's victory over Gog in the final battle' ('Resurrection of the Dead', 312); cf. Tg PsJon Gen 4:7 and Gen 39:10, which explicitly put the Day of Judgement in the 'world-to-come'. For example, the latter refers to: ביום דינא דאתי רבא לעלמא דאתי 'on the great Day of Judgement of the world-to-come' (ed. A. Díez Macho, *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensis Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis*, 289). The time and means of the resurrection in general are important areas of discussion in rabbinic literature; cf. H.-J. Braun, *Das Jenseits: Die Vorstellung der Menschheit über das Leben nach dem Tod*, Zurich 1996; P.N. Levinson, *Einführung in die Rabbinische Theologie*, Darmstadt 1993; A.J. Avery-Peck – J. Neusner, *Judaism in Late Antiquity Part Four*; H. Sysling, *Teḥiyat Ha-Metim*. The nature of Adam's resurrection, whether of the physical body or the soul alone, is also not elaborated upon in the targumim. However, a number of scholars have placed the interpretation of Gen 3:19 in the Palestinian targumim in the wider theological contexts of these texts. In discussion on the nature of the resurrection, H. Sysling has suggested that the Palestinian targumim underline the reunification of body and soul at the resurrection: 'At his death, man returns to the 'dust' that he is made of, but on the day of the resurrection he will again 'return' and his body and soul will be judged together' (*Teḥiyat Ha-Metim*, 260), whereas E. Levine interprets Tg Neofiti Gen 3:19 as referring to the resurrection of the body (*The Aramaic Version of the Bible: Contents and Context*, Berlin 1988, 221).

<sup>53</sup> For discussion of rabbinic sources that allude to the resurrection, in interpretation of Gen 3:19, through use of the word 'dust', see H. Sysling, *Teḥiyat Ha-Metim*, 81–89. For example, M Abot 3:1 describes the Day of Judgement in terms of giving a reckoning and an account before God. Sysling notes of this passage that 'Aqabya makes a direct connection between the fate of man after death ('dust, worms, and maggots') and the Day of Judgement, on which he will have to give account and reckoning' (*Teḥiyat Ha-Metim*, 90).

the biblical text. Sysling argues that ‘the interpretation of the PTs is in harmony with the explanation of the repeated verb **וָשׁוּב** in Gen 3:19 attributed to Rabbi Shim’on ben Yoḥai in *Ber.Rabba* 20:10’.<sup>54</sup> Certainly, GenR 20:10 shares the broad exegetical approach of the targumim in understanding Gen 3:19 to refer to the resurrection. However, GenR 20:10 does not provide any discussion of or allusion to the time or nature of Adam’s resurrection. Indeed, Sysling also notes the absence of reference to judgement in Genesis Rabbah: ‘there is no reference to one’s having to ‘give account and reckoning’ and the ‘Day of Judgement’ such as found in the PTs’.<sup>55</sup> As such, GenR 20:10 leaves open the nature of Adam’s resurrection and what will follow.

This tradition is also transmitted in SER 164, which asserts that Gen 3:19 is a proof for the resurrection of the dead in the Torah. The tradition is included in a passage outlining God’s mercy in his dealings with Adam. Out of mercy, God allowed Adam to eat bread rather than ‘thorns and thistles’ (cf. Gen 3:18), and, out of mercy, God will bring about the resurrection of Adam. God’s mercy is prompted by the trembling of Adam at hearing his sentence. The inclusion of the tradition of resurrection in the context of discussion on God’s mercy implies that Adam will also receive mercy in the future reckoning after his resurrection.

The use of Gen 3:19 in the context of the concept of resurrection is also found in BT Shab 152b. This interpretation is found as part of a wider debate between R. Naḥman and R. Aḥai b. Josiah (who was supposed to be dead but spoke from his grave) on the fate of the righteous. R. Naḥman argues that the righteous will return to dust upon death using Gen 3:19 as proof. However, R. Aḥai retorts that Gen 3:19 means that they will return to dust, but only one hour before the resurrection.

In summary, rabbinic sources discuss Gen 3:19 primarily in terms of the mortality of Adam as part of the punishment he received for his transgression. However, there is a distinct exegetical approach in a range of rabbinic traditions that reinterprets Gen 3:19 as referring not to the death of Adam but his resurrection. This approach, either explicitly or implicitly, depending on the tradition, represents a positive response to the punishment of Adam; it will not be forever, as he will live again at the resurrection and have a chance to be redeemed on the Day of Judgement.

<sup>54</sup> *Teḥiyat Ha-Metim*, 253.

<sup>55</sup> *Teḥiyat Ha-Metim*, 90.

*Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained: The Christian Tradition*

The Paradise story probably represents one of the most important narratives in biblical literature. Accordingly, it was a central and popular episode in Christian exegetical writings. A major focus of the Christian exegetes was on the nature of man with special attention to the connection between the body, the soul and the spirit, the relationship between man and the physical and the spiritual world, and the relationship between the sexes. Man's sojourn in Paradise was discussed against the background of metaphysical concerns. These include the human condition before and after the fall and the relationship between man and God, as well as social and moral questions regarding the command of procreation and ideas concerning chastity and virginity. Moreover, imaginative speculations are found concerning the place of Adam's creation, the description of Paradise and the length and nature of paradisiacal life. In addition, a principal focus of exegetical discussion was on the origin and nature of sin and evil, the consequences of Adam's transgression for future generations, the concepts of justice and mercy as well as of punishment, repentance and redemption. The following analysis investigates Christian exegetical traditions on the chronology of Adam's stay in Paradise, Satanic agency in humanity's fall, Adam's burial site and its relevance for redemption and finally the punishment of death and the promise of resurrection.

*One (Last) Day in Paradise*

In Christian literature, a wide range of speculations on the exact length of man's stay in Paradise are encountered, which are based on the interpretation of the main events of the Paradise story. Certain commentators focus on the events in Genesis 3 as happening in one single day. According to this approach, the command not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the seduction of Eve by the serpent, the transgression of the command and the subsequent punishment of man took place on the same day. This line of interpretation is based on Gen 2:17, which stresses that:

ἢ δ' ἂν ἡμέρα φάγητε ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε (LXX Gen 2:17b)

*in the day that you shall eat, you shall die by death.*

The Christian writers understood that God's threat was fulfilled when the protoplasts ate from the tree and also received the punishment of mortality, which was all on the same day. As Irenaeus of Lyons emphasizes:

Thus, then, in the day that they did eat, in the same did they die, and became death's debtors, since it was one day of creation. For it is said, 'There was made in the evening, and there was made in the morning, one day'. Now in this same day that they did eat, in that also did they die. (Adv.haer. V.23.2, trans. ANF I, 551)

This exegetical approach was probably based on the assumption that every act of creation was completed on a single day in accordance with Gen 1:5b: 'καὶ ἐγένετο ἑσπέρα καὶ ἐγένετο πρωί, ἡμέρα μία' (*and it became evening and it became morning, one day*).

Moreover, the exegesis of the hours of man's stay in Paradise, transgression and fall is placed in a christological context of interpretation, including the perception of Jesus as second Adam. Jesus' redemptive Passion for humanity is reflected and paralleled in a chronological way in the Paradise story. Already Irenaeus of Lyons in the second century CE notes:

But according to the cycle and progress of the days, after which one is termed first, another second, and another third, if anybody seeks diligently to learn upon what day out of the seven it was, that Adam died, he will find it by examining the dispensation of the Lord. For by summing up in Himself the whole human race from the beginning to the end, He has also summed up its death. From this it is clear that the Lord suffered death, in obedience to His Father, upon that day on which Adam died while he disobeyed God. Now he died on the same day in which he did eat. For God said, 'In that day on which ye shall eat of it, ye shall die by death.' The Lord, therefore, recapitulating in Himself this day, underwent His sufferings upon the day preceding the Sabbath, that is, the sixth day of the creation, on which day man was created; thus granting him a second creation by means of His passion, which is that [creation] out of death. And there are some, again, who relegate the death of Adam to the thousandth year; for since 'a day of the Lord is as a thousand years,' (2 Peter 3:8) he did not overstep the thousand years, but died within them, thus bearing out the sentence of his sin. Whether, therefore, with respect to disobedience, which is death; whether [we consider] that, on account of that, they were delivered over to death, and made debtors to it; whether with respect to [the fact that on] one and the same day on which they ate they also died (for it is one day of the creation); whether [we regard this point], that, with respect to this cycle of days, they died on the day in which they did also eat, that is, the day of the preparation, which is termed 'the pure supper,' that is, the sixth day of the feast, which the Lord also exhibited when He suffered on that day; or whether [we reflect] that he (Adam) did not overstep the thousand years, but died within their limit,—it follows that, in regard to all these significations, God is indeed true. (Adv.haer. V.23.2; trans. ANF I, 551)

Thus, Irenaeus argues that Jesus died on the day of the week that corresponds to the day of creation on which Adam became mortal.<sup>56</sup> The analogy from a theological point of view is obvious. Jesus, as second Adam, conquers death and redeems humanity on the same day of the week that Adam lost Paradise and received the punishment of death. According to the biblical text, the command is given on the sixth day of creation, that is, on a Friday (Παρασκευή), ‘the day of the preparation’. This exegetical approach brings together the biblical account of the creation of man on the sixth day in Gen 1:26–31, the second account of the creation of man in Gen 2:7, the creation of Eve in Gen 2:21–22, the command not to eat from the tree of knowledge (Gen 2:17) and the Paradise story in Genesis 3 as episodes happening on the same day of creation.<sup>57</sup>

According to the New Testament and Christian tradition, the crucifixion of Jesus took place on a Friday (cf. Luke 23:54–56; John 19:31). Furthermore, Jesus’ death introduces a new creation. It is, thus, natural that the account of his death would correspond chronologically to the biblical creation account.<sup>58</sup>

In Christian literature, the exact calculation of the hours that Adam spent in Paradise is often based on precise exegesis of LXX Gen 3:8: ‘Καὶ ἤκουσαν τὴν φωνὴν κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ περιπατοῦντος ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ τὸ δειλινόν’ (*And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the evening*). As Jerome explains:

*And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in paradise towards the evening.* In the majority of the codices belonging to the Latins it has *after noon*

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Symmachus’ rendering: ‘οὐ μὴ φαγῆ ἀπ’αυτοῦ· ἢ δ’ἂν ἡμέρα φαγῆ ἀπὸ τοῦ ξύλου, θνητὸς ἔσῃ’ (do not eat from that one; then on the day that you will eat from the tree, you will become mortal; Symmachus, Gen 2:17; Field, *Hexapla*, 14).

<sup>57</sup> See M.C. Steenberg: ‘Here Irenaeus wishes to maintain the literal, that is, textually precise *reading* of Genesis’ reference to the ‘same day’ (Gen 2.17), but he is open to the idea that the interpretation of that precise reading may support multiple conclusions (‘all these significations’) so long as these are grounded in the incarnational testimony of Christ. For Adam to die on ‘the very day’ that he ate from the tree may mean that he died on the sixth day of the week, or it may mean that he died within a thousand-year span from his birth, which period of time is as ‘one day’ unto the Lord’ (*Irenaeus On Creation: The Cosmic Christ and the Saga of Creation*, Leiden 2008, 86). Indeed, Irenaeus followed chiliastic ideas, according to which a day of God is like 1000 years (Ps 90:4); cf. Justin, Dial. LXXXI where Adam died after almost 1000 years (cf. Gen 5:5: Adam lived 1000 years and then died); see A. Orbe, ‘Cinco exegesis ireneas de Gen 2,17b: adv.haer. V, 23,1–2’, *Gregorianum* 62 (1982), 75–113; C.R. Smith, ‘Chiliasm and Recapitulation in the Theology of Irenaeus’, *VC* 48 (1994), 312–331.

<sup>58</sup> Interestingly, Adam was created on a Friday also according to the Samaritan chronicle Asatir II. 25 (Gaster, 197).



instead of *towards the evening*, which we have set down here. This is because we cannot translate exactly the Greek expression *deilino*, instead of what is written in Hebrew *larue aiom*. Aquila understood this as *en toi anemotes hemeras*, that is, 'in the wind of the day'; but Symmachus translated it as *dia pneumatos hemeras*, that is 'through the spirit of the day'. Finally, Theodotion rendered it more clearly as *en toi pneumatoi pros katapsuxin tes hemeras* to indicate the coolness of the breeze which blown when the noonday heat is past. (Hebr. Quest. 3:8)

In spite of the various readings in the other Greek versions, most exegetes understood the LXX reference to the 'evening' (*deilino*) as a chronologically fixed point, which was indicative of the exact timing of the events on that particular day of creation.<sup>59</sup> As mentioned above, the Paradise story was understood as a series of events happening on one and the same day of creation, although this was not explicitly stated in the biblical text. However, a stream of thought in the Christian tradition did not take the reference to the 'decline of the day' literally, but offered instead an allegorical interpretation of the word 'evening'. Accordingly, the 'evening' was but a metaphor for the decline and sinfulness of humankind. Didymus of Alexandria emphasized that the 'evening' is appropriate for sinners, since virtuous men dwell in the light of truth. However, this particular hour became 'the dark evening' for Adam, as he left the light and fell into ignorance and evil (Comm. Gen. ad Gen 3:8 [88]).

Cosmas the Indicopleustes places the Paradise story in a christological context, following the chronology of the Passion, and counts the hours of the Paradise story accordingly:

And just as the two, Adam and Eve, were at the ninth hour cast out of Paradise, so also at the ninth hour the Lord Christ in the spirit and the thief entered into Paradise. On the same day, therefore, in which Adam was made, that is, on the sixth, there occurred both the Fall and the grief of the angels, the sentence of death and the expulsion from Paradise, so also at the time of the Passion, on the same day, there occurred the death of the Saviour by the tree of the Cross, the mourning of the creation, and in the afternoon the putting away of the mourning and the entrance into Paradise. (*Christian Topography*, Book II. [153])

---

<sup>59</sup> M. Rösler remarks that 'Die LXX übersetzt das לְרִיחַ הַיּוֹם with δειλινόν 'abends', nicht wörtlich, aber dem inhaltlichen Zusammenhang und der Aussage des Textes angemessen, den der vom MT gemeinte Wind erhebt sich in den Mittelmeerländern gegen Abend' (*Übersetzung als Vollendung der Auslegung*, Berlin 1994, 92); cf. M. Harl, *La Bible d'Alexandrie: La Genèse*, Paris 1986, 108.

This exegetical approach underlines the parallelism between the hour of the expulsion of the protoplasts and Jesus' entrance into Paradise. Indeed, a significant emphasis on the mourning of the angels at the expulsion of Adam and Eve is observed, which correlates to the mourning of creation at the death of Jesus on the cross. Finally, the ultimate message conveyed by the Paradise story is of the repealing of Adam's expulsion from Paradise through Jesus' death, which opens up Paradise for humankind again.

Procopius of Gaza suggests that Adam ate from the tree at the sixth hour of the day, while judgement took place at the ninth hour. Quite logically, Procopius assumes that Satan came to Eve in the middle of the day when she was hungry and looking for food (Comm.Gen., PG 87:196).<sup>60</sup> Thus, according to Procopius, Adam and Eve were created in the morning, they transgressed the command at midday and were expelled from Paradise in the evening.

As can be observed, this specific chronological order is structured around the third, sixth and ninth hour of the day. The Christian writers followed the Ancient Greek and Roman custom of the division of the day into four parts of three hours each. This division was also followed by the Jewish citizens of the Roman Empire and is equally reflected in the New Testament, as mentioned above.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, the Early Church based its devotional practice on this particular division, assigning prayers to certain hours of the day and, notably, to the third, sixth, and ninth hours.<sup>62</sup> Significantly, monastic worship linked these particular hours of prayer with events from the Creation story and the Passion of Christ, a practice which continues to today.<sup>63</sup>

The Syriac *Cave of Treasures*<sup>64</sup> specifies in more detail the chronology of the events in Paradise. Thus, Adam was created at the first hour of the

---

<sup>60</sup> 'Περὶ μέσον οὖν τῆς ἡμέρας, ὁ δὲ διάβολος προσήλθε τῇ γυναικί, παρατηρῶν μὲν καὶ πρότερον, ὅτε δὲ εἶδε πεινάσασαν καὶ πρὸς τροφὴν ὀρμώσαν'; cf. John Chrysostom, who claims that 'Adam was cast out by the incontinence of the belly' (Hom. Matth. XIII, on Matt 4:1). In contrast to these views, Ephraem the Syrian argues that Eve was not yet hungry, as she had just been created (Comm.Gen. 1.19).

<sup>61</sup> See also Acts 3:1; 10:30; 10:9.

<sup>62</sup> See R.T. Beckwith, *Calendar, Chronology and Worship. Studies in Ancient Judaism and Christianity*, Leiden 2005, esp. 207–209.

<sup>63</sup> See N. Egenter, *La prière des Églises de rite byzantin. Vol. 1: La prière des heures: Horologion*, Chevetagne 1975, 11–90; R.F. Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West: The Origins of the Divine Office and its Meaning for Today*, Collegeville 1986.

<sup>64</sup> The Cave of Treasures (in Syriac: *Me'arrath Gazze*) presents a narration of the history of salvation from the creation of the world to the Pentecost. The text is a compilation of various apocryphal writings and legends, ancient biblical commentaries and apologetic

day, while the devil was expelled from heaven on account of his jealousy of Adam at the second hour. It is noteworthy, however, that according to the Arabic version of this text God created Adam 'in the third hour of Friday, the sixth day'.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, the *Cave of Treasures* follows a very specific pattern for the division of the day in Paradise, which is organized into sections of three hours. Accordingly, Adam and Eve were introduced into Paradise at the third hour, at which time the command not to eat from the tree was also given (III.9–10), and stayed there for three hours (that is, until the sixth hour; III.14). For three more hours, after the transgression of the command, they were in shame, until the ninth hour when they were driven away from Paradise (V.1). This pattern is repeated later in the text through a precise analogy to Jesus' Passion; the events of the first Friday of creation and the Friday of the crucifixion are recounted side by side, thus drawing exact parallels between the two:

At the FIRST HOUR of Friday God fashioned Adam from the dust, and at the first hour of Friday Christ received spittle from the sons of Adam. At the SECOND HOUR of Friday the wild beasts, and the cattle, and the feathered fowl gathered themselves together to Adam, and he gave names to them as they bowed their heads before him. And at the second hour of Friday the Jews gathered themselves together against Christ, and they gnashed their teeth at Him, even as the blessed David said, "Many bulls have gathered together round about me, bulls of Bashan have beset me round" (Ps 22:12). In the THIRD HOUR of Friday a crown of glory was placed on the head of Adam, and at the third hour of Friday the crown of thorns was placed on the head of Christ. THREE HOURS was Adam in Paradise and shining with splendour, and three hours was Christ in the Judgment Hall being beaten by creatures that had been fashioned out of dust. At the SIXTH HOUR Eve went up to the tree of the transgression of the commandment, and at the sixth hour Christ ascended the Cross, the Tree of Life. At the SIXTH HOUR

---

texts. It circulated in various versions and in numerous languages, such as Arabic, Ethiopic, Georgian and Coptic, but was originally composed in Syriac. Its latest redaction dates to the sixth or seventh century CE; see C. Bezold, *Die Schatzhöhle. Mē'arath Gazzē'. Syrischer Text, Arabische Version und Übersetzung*, Amsterdam 1981; E.A.W. Budge, *The Book of the Cave of Treasures*, London 1927; Su-Min Ri, *La Caverne des Trésors. Les deux recensions syriaques*, Louvain 1987; A. Battista – B. Bagatti (ed. – trans.), *La Caverna dei Tesori. Testo arabo con traduzione italiana*, Jerusalem 1979; C. Kourikidze, *La Caverne des Trésors. Version georgienne*, Louvain 1993; A. Götze, *Die Schatzhöhle. Überlieferung und Quellen*, Heidelberg 1922; C. Leonhard, 'Observations on the Date of the Syriac *Cave of Treasures*', in: P.M.M. Daviau et al. (eds), *The World of the Arameans III*, Sheffield 2001, 255–293; Su-Min Ri, *Commentaire de la Caverne des Trésors*, Louvain 2000; A. Toepel, *Die Adam- und Seth-Legenden im syrischen 'Buch der Schatzhöhle'*, Louvain 2006.

<sup>65</sup> See M.D. Gibson, *Apocrypha Arabica I. Kitāb al' Magāll*, London 1901, 5.

Eve gave unto Adam the fruit of the gall of death, and at the sixth hour the crowd of iniquity gave unto Christ vinegar and gall. For THREE HOURS Adam remained under the Tree naked, and for three hours was Christ naked on the wood of the Cross. And from the right side of Adam went forth Eve, the mother of mortal offspring, and from the right side of Christ went forth baptism, the mother of immortal offspring. On Friday Adam and Eve sinned, and on Friday their sin was remitted. On Friday Adam and Eve died, and on Friday they came alive. (...) At the NINTH HOUR Adam went down into the lowest depth of the earth from the height of Paradise, and at the ninth hour Christ went down to the lowest depths of the earth, to those who lay in the dust, from the height of the Cross. (XLVIII.11–30)

Similar traditions appear to have been quite widespread in Christian literature. M.E. Stone discovered and edited a short Armenian text, which he dubbed *Adam Story 2* (Erevan, Matenadaran no. 9100, fols 364r–365r). As he notes, ‘The outstanding characteristic of the present text, is its emphasis on the exact chronology of the activities of the protoplasts’.<sup>66</sup> Comparable to the literature discussed above, the main concern of this Armenian text is the christological parallelism with the Passion of Jesus. As Stone points out, the reference to the third and the ninth hour, which are common in this tradition, depends on the Passion narrative in the New Testament. Jesus is crucified at the third hour (Mark 15:25), and his death takes place at the ninth hour (Matt 27:47–50, Mark 15:33–38; Luke 23:44–46).<sup>67</sup> The persistent reference to the sixth hour as the time of the transgression probably alludes to the Synoptic Gospels, which all agree that ‘*at the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the*

<sup>66</sup> *Armenian Apocrypha relating to Adam and Eve*, Leiden 1996, 109. These texts present certain interesting variations of the tradition. According to this text, Adam was created in the morning of the first Friday of the creation, while Eve was created at the third hour. Moreover, in contrast to the texts that have been examined so far, Adam and Eve were not placed in Paradise on the same day as their creation, but forty days later, thus reflecting Jubilees 3:1–9.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. L. Ginzberg: ‘Daß aber alle christlichen Quellen die neunte Stunde als diejenige bezeichnen, während der Adam das Paradies verlassen musste, hängt damit zusammen, daß man die Stunde vor Verlust des Paradieses durch Adam mit der Stunde der Wiedereroberung desselben durch Jesus kombinierte’ (‘Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern’, 157). See also M.E. Stone, *Armenian Apocrypha*, 64ff. for parallel texts in Armenian and Old Irish literature; cf. M.E. Stone, *A History of the Literature of Adam and Eve*, Atlanta 1992, 86f., who mentions the ‘Hours of the Day’ in the Byzantine Chronicle of George Cedrenus, as well as a lost writing entitled ‘A Testament of the Protoplasts’ mentioned by Anastasius Sinaita (On the Hexaemeron 7.895 [PG 89:967]); cf. also George Syncellus, *Chronography*, ed. Dindorf, Bonn 1829, 7ff.; on texts related to the tradition pertaining to the *Testament of Adam*, see also S.E. Robinson, *The Testament of Adam*, Chico CA 1982; see R. Bauckham, ‘The Horarium of Adam and the Chronology of the Passion’, in: B. Lourié (ed.), *L’Église des Deux Alliances*, Piscataway NJ 2008, 39–68.

*ninth hour*' (Mark 15:33; cf. Matt 27:45; Luke 23:44).<sup>68</sup> In particular, the Markian Passion story is divided into sequences of three hours: the crucifixion takes place at the third hour (Mark 15:25); the darkness falls at the sixth hour (Mark 15:33); and Jesus dies at the ninth hour (Mark 15:37). Equally, the *Cave of Treasures* applies a three-hour scheme, but does not follow Mark in the details of the Passion story since it places Jesus' crucifixion at the sixth hour.

As observed, Christian tradition is very specific about the hours of the day, but does not, in general, include a particular month as the setting for the chronological calculations of the Paradise story. However, the Coptic version of the *Cave of Treasures* notes that those fateful events took place 'on the sixth day of Parmouti'.<sup>69</sup> A reference to a month of the year is also known to the Byzantine chronicler, George Syncellus (d. c.810 CE), who writes: 'On the eighth day of the first month Nisan, on the first day of April, and on the sixth of the month called by the Egyptians Pharmouthi Adam named the wild animals on the first day of the week'.<sup>70</sup> George Syncellus, who combines the Greek, Hebrew and Egyptian calendars, attributes this information to various sources, such as the Jewish archaeologies (antiquities), the Book of Jubilees and the Life of Adam.<sup>71</sup> However, Syncellus declares in this context that he follows John Chrysostom's explanation, as found in his Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, where he states that Adam was expelled from Paradise on the day of his creation, that is the sixth day of the first week. John Chrysostom

<sup>68</sup> See, however, John 19:14, which mentions that Jesus was brought before the crowd by Pilate 'at the sixth hour of the Preparation day'. Accordingly, he was crucified *after* the sixth hour. This discrepancy was also discussed among ancient exegetes. See the Apostolic Constitutions VIII.34, which reject the Johannine outline and confirm that Jesus was crucified at the third hour. In contrast, Theodore of Mopsuestia seems to support the Johannine version (Comm.John 7.19.14).

<sup>69</sup> See R.G. Coquin – G. Godron (ed. – trans.), 'Un encomion copte sur Marie-Madeleine attribué à Cyrille de Jerusalem', *BIFAO* 90 (1990), 188. Parmouti is the eighth month of the Coptic calendar and corresponds to 9th April–8th May of the Gregorian calendar; see Y. Nessim Youssef, 'Eastern Christian Hagiographical Traditions', in: K. Perry (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to Eastern Christianity*, Oxford 2010, 450; the correspondence of Parmouti with the Hebrew month Nisan was well known in antiquity, see Josephus, Ant. II.14.

<sup>70</sup> ὀγδόη δὲ τοῦ πρώτου μηνὸς Νισάν, πρώτη δὲ τοῦ Ἀπριλίου μηνός, καὶ ἕκτη τοῦ παρ' Αἰγυπτίους Φαρμουθὶ ὠνόμασεν Ἀδάμ τὰ ἄγρια θηρία τὴν πρώτη ἡμέρα τῆς ἐβδομάδος' (ed. Dindorf, 8); in fact, the view that the world was created in the spring and, in particular, in the month of Nisan is implied in Jubilees 3:15–17; 49:1–10; cf. Ephraem, Comm.Gen. I.8.1 and Theodoret of Cyrhus, Quaest.Ex. LXXII on Nisan as the first month of creation; cf. L. Ginzberg, 'Die Haggadah bei den Kirchenvätern', 74.

<sup>71</sup> On Syncellus' sources, see W. Adler, *Time Immemorial*, Washington DC 1989, 191–193.

here expressed the 'official' view of the Great Church on the chronology of creation.<sup>72</sup>

Finally, a detailed account of various approaches to the duration of the stay of the protoplasts in Paradise is found in Ishodad of Merv's Commentary on Genesis. Ishodad reveals that there was much controversy surrounding this issue, and that there were several theories, which claimed a longer stay in Paradise than just a single day.<sup>73</sup> So, there were views that maintained that the formation of Adam and Eve, the naming of the animals, the admission to Paradise, and the expulsion from it, could not have taken place in just half a day. Ishodad polemicizes against these calculations and argues that in God's time everything is possible. Ishodad believes that these theories are based on an erroneous interpretation of Isa 65:22, which he renders in a free quotation as 'the days of my people will be like the days of the tree of life'. Ishodad clarifies, through connection with Prov 13:14, that this prophetic verse has only a figurative meaning. Furthermore, he also dismisses hypotheses that question whether man could have entered Paradise and be expelled from it on the same day on the grounds of the size of Paradise. Ishodad acknowledges that Paradise is particularly vast, but he believes that the protoplasts could have walked across it in six hours. As such, they certainly left Paradise on the same day that they went in. Ishodad argues that, if God had intended for Adam to stay in Paradise for longer, God would have prepared an abode for him. Moreover, the Bible testifies to Adam's ephemeral sojourn, as it refers to the decline of the day of their creation without mentioning any other evening (cf. Gen 3:8). Ishodad even considers the possibility of a side-entrance to Paradise in the east, so that Adam could have left from where he entered without having to walk across the entire area.

After establishing that the protoplasts stayed for only one day in Paradise, Ishodad discusses the events of that day according to their exact chronology. He stresses that God had assigned to the protoplasts a certain time of the day for nourishment, as a measure against gluttony. Satan, however, misunderstood the command and thought that it was a general

---

<sup>72</sup> Cf. John Chrysostom, Hom. Matth. LIX, (on Matt 18:7): 'For if having lived in paradise a short time, perchance not so much as a whole day'.

<sup>73</sup> Ishodad knows of speculations according to which the protoplasts stayed for thirty years in Paradise in analogy to the duration of the life of Jesus, since he is called the 'second Adam'. Ishodad also refers to another hypothesis, which claims that Adam and Eve stayed in Paradise for forty days in consonance with the number of days that Jesus spent in the desert fasting. According to this view, Jesus' fast was compensation for the duration of the time of the joys of Paradise (Comm.Gen. *ad loc.*).

prohibition against food. Accordingly, he posed his question at midday, at the time of the day when people usually eat, and when he saw all animals eating but not the man. Following this prosaic explanation, Ishodad suggests that Satan's (actually not entirely malevolent) intervention took place at the sixth hour of the day. According to another suggestion, God also assigned to the spiritual beings their respective duties at the hour when Adam received his command. When Satan realized that he had to serve man, he became envious and fell from heaven, and he was loitering and lurking until the sixth hour when he approached Eve.

Similarly, on the basis of exegesis of Gen 3:8, Ishodad understands the phrase 'the end of the day' as the ninth hour, that is, the time of rest. As he explains, from the sixth hour, when Eve ate hastily, until the completion of the seduction by Satan, Adam's transgression and the sewing together of aprons made of fig-leaves, the day had declined. Following this line of interpretation, Ishodad states that the creation of the animals took place in the sixth hour of the day. In this context, he rejects the suggestion by some exegetes that the garments of skin were made out of the animals of Paradise, arguing that it would have been impossible for the animals to be fully grown for that purpose by the ninth hour, when the expulsion took place. Furthermore, he emphasizes that Adam and Eve ate at the sixth hour, when Christ ascended on the Cross, in order to redeem Adam's descendants (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 3:8).

Christian exegetical approaches to the calculation of the hours of the Paradise story are continually attested from the late second century onward. As observed, the dramatic effect of the presentation of the Paradise story in a chronological order was a popular tradition in various places and communities in the Christian world until the Middle Ages.

### *The Devil and the Serpent, or, the Loss of Paradise*

According to Genesis 3, the fall of humankind and the expulsion of the protoplasts from Paradise began with Eve's seduction by the serpent. Christian commentators speculated in detail upon the various facets of this fateful episode. The Christian exegetical literature suggested quite early that humanity's fall could not have been caused by an animal, albeit the one that was the most cunning of all:

Ὁ δὲ ὄφις ἦν φρονιμώτατος πάντων τῶν θηρίων τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς (LXX Gen 3:1)

*Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the beasts on earth*

Accordingly, a major issue of discussion was the identification of the agent of Eve's seduction. Christian tradition suggested early on that the serpent was actually Satan or the devil in disguise.<sup>74</sup> Man's adversary was known by several names in Christian literature, which primarily denoted his hostile and antagonistic character. Thus, the force of evil was already acting against humankind in Paradise, and was personified by the devil/Satan.<sup>75</sup> In early Christianity, Satan was commonly viewed as an angelic prince, who, on account of his evil machinations against humans, eventually fell from heaven.<sup>76</sup> Interestingly, the origin of this tradition is attributed by Origen to a pseudepigraphical work entitled 'The Ascension of Moses'. Furthermore, Origen reports that the devil is manifestly described as an angel (De Princ. II.1).<sup>77</sup> This tradition was popular in Christian literature already by the mid-second century, as attested by Justin:

In the Septuagint translation it is written, '*Behold, ye die like men, and fall like one of the princes*, to point out men's disobedience, I mean that of Adam and Eve, and the fall of one of the princes, namely the serpent, who fell with a great fall, because he deceived Eve. (Dial. CXXIV; cf. Apol. I. 28)

A major stream of thought in Christian exegesis suggested that the devil used the serpent as an instrument for Eve's seduction. As John Chrysostom explains:

What did he (the devil) do? He discovered this wild animal, namely, the serpent, overcoming the other animals by his cunning (...). He made use of this creature like some instrument and through it inveigled the naive and weaker vessel, namely woman, into his deception by means of conversation. (Hom.Gen. 16:3)

<sup>74</sup> See Rev 12:9, 20:2; cf. Didymus Alex., ad Gen 3:1–5 [81].

<sup>75</sup> See J. Burton Russell, *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity*, Ithaca NY 1987, 229, n.6.

<sup>76</sup> See J. Daniélou, *Les anges et leur mission d'après les Pères de l'Église*, Paris 1953, 66.

<sup>77</sup> 'Videndum nunc est secundum Scripturas, quomodo contrarias virtutes vel ipse diabolus reluctantur humano generi provocantes et instigantes ad peccatum. Et primo quidem in Genesi serpens seduxisse describitur: de que in Ascensione Moysi, cuius libelli meminit in epistola sua apostolus Iudas, Michael archangelus cum diabolo disputans de corpore Moysi, ait a diabolo inspiratum seprentem causam exstitisse praevaricationis Aadae et Evae. (...) Manifeste enim angelus fuisse describitur' (ed. E.R. Redeppening, Lipsia 1836); cf. Jud 1:9. However, Origen's reference is not transmitted in the single preserved Latin ms of the text under this title (also known as Testament of Moses); see R.H. Charles, *The Assumption of Moses*, London 1897, 106; cf. J. Tromp, *The Assumption of Moses*, Leiden 1992; G.W. Nickelsburg (ed.), *Studies on the Testament of Moses*, Cambridge 1973.



The suggestion that it was the devil who spoke through the snake and seduced Eve was particularly common in Christian literature.<sup>78</sup> At the end of the fourth century, Severian of Gabala implies that this line of interpretation was the logical response to the disbelief of ‘certain people’, who questioned the plausibility of a conversation between an animal and a human being. He argues that:

Since it was a creature that held such closeness to humanity, the snake was a convenient tool for the devil. (...) Many scoff, ‘how did the snake speak? with a human’s voice or with a snake’s hiss?’ or ‘how did Eve understand him?’ (...) The devil spoke through the snake, so that Adam would think that the snake being intelligent, was able to imitate even human speech. (On the Creation of the World 6.2)<sup>79</sup>

As Severian explains, the devil chose the serpent as his instrument, because, since Adam knew about the cunningness of the animal, he would think that it was capable of learning to speak like a man.

According to mainstream teachings of Christian tradition, the ‘adversary’ was already a fallen angel when he approached Eve. His fall is explained either as a result of his pride, based on Isa 4:1–4, or because he refused to bow down to Adam when Adam was created.<sup>80</sup> In this way, his intrinsically corrupt nature was emphasized. In the *Cave of Treasures*, the ‘Fall of the Angels’ takes place before the actual Paradise story (III.1–7). Accordingly, Satan is already a fallen angel when he seduces Eve. His refusal to adore Adam because he envied him is the cause of the fall in this text.

---

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Act.Thom. 32; Ephraem, Comm.Gen. II.19; Hymn. Paradis. 15,14 and Hymn. Epiph. 12,2–3; Narsai, Hom.Creat. I. 245–46; Eusebius of Emesa, Cat. Petit 320, 329; Theodoret, Quaest. XXXII; Epiphanius, Pan. 37.2.7; Cosmas Indicopleustes, Christian Topography II. 87; Theodore bar Koni, Lib. Schol. I. 83–84; Ishodad of Merv, Comm.Gen ad 3:1; cf. Su-Min Ri, *Commentaire*, 163.

<sup>79</sup> See PG 56:486; trans. *Ancient Christian Commentary*, 75; cf. Cat. Petit 321; cf. Ephraem (Comm.Gen. II.16), who examines various possibilities that enabled the communication between the snake and Adam (sic!), only one of which is Satan’s agency. As T. Kronholm observes, ‘it is obvious that Ephrem is conversant with various traditions to the effect that the Serpent was able to speak’ (*Motifs from Genesis 1–11*, 94, n.26).

<sup>80</sup> See Ephraem, Hymn. Epiph. 12,3; Narsai, Hom.Creat. I. 245; Ishodad, Comm.Gen. ad Gen 3:1. Ishodad presents an overview of various opinions with regard to the different days of creation on which Satan fell. See the exhaustive discussion and overview of sources in J. Dochhorn, *Die Apokalypse des Mose*, Tübingen 2005, 52, n.39; as G.A. Anderson demonstrates, the standard view of the Church, especially after the fourth century, was that Satan fell due to envy towards God, and thus his fall was prior to Adam’s creation (‘The Fall of Satan in the Thought of St. Ephrem and John Milton’, *Hugoye* 3.1 (2000), esp. §10–12); cf. idem, ‘The Exaltation of Adam and the Fall of Satan’, *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 6 (1997), 107–109, 131–134.

According to Christian writers, the use of the snake as an instrument or agent took place in various ways. A stream of thought suggests that the devil used the serpent as a garment in order to seduce Eve.<sup>81</sup> In the Syriac *Cave of Treasures*, Satan hid himself in the body of the serpent, 'because he knew that his appearance was foul, and that if Eve saw his form, she would betake herself to flight straightway before him' (IV.6).<sup>82</sup> According to this tradition, Satan used the serpent as a vehicle in order to reach Eve. The *Cave of Treasures* describes how the devil raised up the serpent and caused it to fly through the air up to Paradise as a means of transport (IV.5).<sup>83</sup> Moreover, the idea of the serpent as a beast of burden is also encountered. Ishodad of Merv notes that certain 'insane' people believe that the serpent was tall like a camel and had four legs.<sup>84</sup> This approach addresses the divine punishment that was imposed upon the snake, which was cursed to creep upon its belly (Gen 3:14; Comm. Gen. *ad loc.*).

This overview of exegetical traditions illustrates the various aspects of the identification of the serpent with Satan, which elucidates Christian theological beliefs about demonic agency in humanity's fall.

#### *Where does Adam Lay? Or, the Promise of Return*

The relationship between Adam and Jesus, as the second Adam, was established theologically in earliest Christianity.<sup>85</sup> Christian literature stressed the direct connection between Jesus' Passion and Adam's salvation, which exemplified redemption for the entirety of humankind. This most central Christian theological doctrine was also envisioned in a physical as well as geographical context. Thus, the idea is encountered in Christian literature that there was an immediate connection between Adam's body and Jesus'

<sup>81</sup> See (Pseudo-) John Chrysostom, In Genesis Sermo III; PG 56:531: 'τὴν τοῦ ὄφραως μορφὴν ἐνδυσάμενος ὁ πανοῦργος'; cf. 3 Bar 9:7.

<sup>82</sup> On Satan's ugly appearance, see Ephraem, De ieiunio III.4; cf. T. Kronholm, *Motifs from Genesis 1–11*, 92ff.

<sup>83</sup> This motif implies that Satan lived on the outskirts of Paradise and had to travel in order to visit Adam and Eve; Ephraem notes that Satan used the serpent because he was not himself allowed to enter the Garden and approach Adam (Comm.Gen. II.18); cf. Ephraem, Hymn. Parad. 3.4; 13.1–5.

<sup>84</sup> In the Arabic version of the Cave of Treasures, the serpent is compared to a camel on account of its beauty; see M.D. Gibson, *Kitāb al Mağāll*, 22; George Syncellus mentions that Josephus and the Little Genesis attest that the serpent was a quadruped before its damnation (ed. Dindorf, 14).

<sup>85</sup> Cf. 1 Cor 15; Rom 5 et al.; see M. Black, 'The Pauline Doctrine of the Second Adam', *SJT* 7 (1957), 174–176; J.D.G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: a New Testament Enquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation*, Grand Rapids MI 1996<sup>2</sup>, 94ff.

body, as there was between Adam's burial ground and the ground of Jesus' sacrifice.

In the third century, Origen attests to a tradition according to which the body of Adam is buried in Golgotha ('the place of the skull'). Interestingly, he explicitly names 'the Hebrews' as the origin of this tradition. However, he proceeds to explain the reference within a clear Christian theological frame of interpretation:

περί τοῦ Κρανίου τόπου ἦλθεν εἰς ἡμᾶς ὅτι οἱ Ἑβραῖοι παραδιδόασιν, ὅτι τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἀδάμ ἐκεῖ τέθαπται ἵνα ἐπεὶ ἐν τῷ Ἀδάμ πάντες ἀποθνήσκουσιν, πάλιν ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ πάντες ζωοποιηθῶσι (Comm.ser. in Mt on Matt 27:32 (PG 13:1777; Caten. Mss Graec)).

Concerning the place of the skull, it came to me that Hebrews hand down [the tradition that] the body of Adam has been buried there; in order that 'as in Adam all die' both Adam would be raised and 'in Christ all will be made alive' (cf. 1 Cor 15:22).<sup>86</sup>

This belief is encountered again in a text attributed to Athanasius of Alexandria.<sup>87</sup> (Pseudo)-Athanasius, who might depend on Origen, also confirms the Jewish provenance of the tradition.

“Ὅθεν οὐδὲ ἀλλαχοῦ πάσχει, οὐδὲ εἰς ἄλλον τόπον σταυροῦται, ἢ εἰς τὸν Κρανίου τόπον, ὃν Ἑβραίων οἱ διδάσκαλοι φασὶ τοῦ Ἀδάμ εἶναι τάφον. Ἐκεῖ γὰρ αὐτὸν μετὰ τὴν κατάραν τεθάφθαι διαβεβαιοῦνται. Ὅπερ εἰ οὕτως ἔχει, θαυμάζω τοῦ τόπου τὴν οικειότητα. Ἔδει γὰρ τὸν Κύριον, ἀνανεῶσαι θέλοντα τὸν πρῶτον Ἀδάμ, ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ τόπῳ παθεῖν, ἵνα, ἐκείνου λύων τὴν ἀμαρτίαν, ἀπὸ παντὸς αὐτὴν ἄρη τοῦ γένους· καὶ ἐπειδὴ ἦκουσεν ὁ Ἀδάμ· «Γῆ εἶ, καὶ εἰς γῆν ἀπελεύσῃ,» διὰ τοῦτο πάλιν ἐκεῖ τέθειται, ἵνα τὸν Ἀδάμ εὐρών ἐκεῖ, λύσῃ μὲν τὴν κατάραν, ἀντὶ δὲ τοῦ· «Γῆ εἶ, καὶ εἰς γῆν ἀπελεύσῃ,» λοιπὸν εἴπη· «Ἐγείραι, ὁ καθεύδων, καὶ ἀνάστα ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, καὶ ἐπιφάυσει σοὶ ὁ Χριστός·» καὶ πάλιν· «Ἀνάστα, καὶ δεῦρο, ἀκολούθει μοι,» ἵνα μηκέτι τεθῆς ἐπὶ γῆς, ἀλλ' ἐν οὐρανοῖς ἀνέλθῃς' (De passione et cruce domini, PG 28:208)

<sup>86</sup> J. Taylor remarks that 'This form of the paragraph is found only in the Greek catena of Origen. In the Latin there is only a reference to "a tradition"' (*Christians and the Holy Places. The Myth of Jewish-Christian Origins*, Oxford 1993, 124). Indeed, the Latin text reads: 'venit enim ad me traditio quaedam talis, quoniam corpus Adae primi hominis ibi sepultum est ubi crucifixus est Christus' (Comm. in Matt 27:32, PG 13:1777). However, it is not certain that the Latin translation, which dates to the late fifth or early sixth century, preserves the original text of Origen; see J. McGuckin (ed.), *The Westminster Handbook to Origen*, Louisville 2004, 30.

<sup>87</sup> See H.R. Drobner, 'Eine pseudo-athanasianische Osterpredigt (CPG II. 2247) über die Wahrheit Gottes und ihre Erfüllung', in: L.R. Wickham et al. (eds), *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy in Late Antiquity*, Leiden 1993, 43–51 for a discussion of the authenticity and authorship of the writing. Drobner argues for a Palestinian provenance and dates the text to 325–350 CE (op. cit., 44).

Then he did not suffer his Passion anywhere else nor was he crucified in any other place but in the place of the Skull, on which the Jewish teachers say that the grave of Adam is. They confirm that he is buried there after the damnation. So, if it is there, I marvel at the friendliness of the place. Then the Lord who wanted to renew the first Adam, had to suffer in this place, in order to abolish his sin, so that it would be lifted from the entire humankind. And since Adam heard: 'Earth you are and to earth you will return', because of this he was laid there again, so that he (Christ) would find Adam there and dissolve the damnation. So that instead of 'Earth you are and to earth you will return', he would say: 'Rise and come here and follow me, so that you will no longer be put on the earth but you will rise to heavens'.

John Chrysostom reports this tradition as well, albeit with a certain caution: 'Some say that Adam died there and there lieth; and Jesus in this place where death had reigned, there also set up a trophy' (Hom. John 85 on John 18:16–18, trans. NPNF XIV, 317).

This line of interpretation maintains that Adam must be buried in the place where Jesus was crucified in order for him to receive direct salvation through Jesus' sacrifice. The soteriological importance of the precise location is based on an exegetical understanding of Gen 3:19 as a reference to the promise of resurrection and ultimate salvation in the same place. Thus, the redemptive role of Jesus' crucifixion with regard to Adam's, and subsequently also humankind's, fall is emphasized.

According to the testimony of the New Testament, the execution place of Golgotha was located on the outskirts of Jerusalem (cf. John 19:20). However, already in the mid-second century, Melito of Sardis in his Paschal Homily (72) mentions that Christ was crucified in the very centre of Jerusalem.<sup>88</sup> The tradition that Golgotha was situated in Jerusalem was established by the fourth century, contrary to the evidence presented by the Gospels. Significantly, during the fourth century Jerusalem's importance for Christian theology grew dramatically.<sup>89</sup> According to a tradition preserved by Eusebius of Caesarea, the emperor Constantine decreed the demolition of a major pagan temple in the middle of the city, which

---

<sup>88</sup> See O. Skarsaune, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, Downers Grove IL 2002, 184; cf. H. Busse – G. Kretschmar, *Jerusalem Heiligtumstraditionen in altkirchlicher und frühislamischer Zeit*, Wiesbaden 1987, 85.

<sup>89</sup> See H. Laderman – Y. Furstenberg, 'Jewish and Christian Imaging of the 'House of God': A Fourth Century Reflection of Religious and Historical Polemics', in: M. Poorthuis et al. (eds), *Interaction between Judaism and Christianity in History, Religion, Art and Literature*, Leiden – Boston 2009, 433–456, esp. 439.

revealed the tomb of Jesus and the rock of Calvary, whereupon two churches were erected (Vit.Const. III.25).<sup>90</sup>

In the fourth century, the idea that the centre of the earth is Golgotha is encountered, which is based on exegetical speculations on Ps 74:12 (LXX 73:12): 'For God is my king of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth'.<sup>91</sup>

Moreover, the tradition that Jesus' place of sacrifice was located in the middle of Jerusalem is associated with traditions that place Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. Probably the earliest attestation of the identification of the place of Isaac's sacrifice with the place of Jesus' sacrifice is found in a Catena fragment attributed to Eusebius of Emesa.<sup>92</sup> A similar tradition is attested by Diodore of Tarsus (Cat. Csl 204; cf. Procopius, Comm.Gen., PG 87:389f.) and is preserved in an uncertain fragment that is also attributed to Eusebius of Emesa (Cat. Petit 1242). These fragments explicitly acknowledge the seventh book of Antiquities by Josephus as the source for the identification between Moriah and the site of the Temple. This serves as the basis for the Christian exegetical approach where Jesus' place of crucifixion is the same place as Abraham's place of sacrifice.<sup>93</sup> This tradition is known to Jerome, who explicitly identifies it as a Jewish tradition: 'in Hebrew it has *moriah*. The Jews say that this is the mountain on which the temple was later established' (Hebr.Quest. 22:2).

By connecting Isaac's place of sacrifice with Jesus' place of sacrifice, the Church Fathers imply that Isaac was to be sacrificed on Golgotha. This identification derives from the common theological presumption that Isaac's sacrifice was a type for Jesus' Passion. This typological connec-

---

<sup>90</sup> This tradition is associated with the legend of the discovery of the True Cross by the emperor's Christian mother. According to this legend, Helena found Jesus' tomb underneath the pagan temple built by Hadrian, and, in the vicinity, three crosses, one of which was identified as the True Cross, see J.W. Drijvers, *Helena Augusta. The Mother of Constantine the Great and the Legend of her Finding the True Cross*, Leiden 1992, 99f. Drijvers suggests that the circulation of the legend of the discovery of the Cross was connected with the efforts of Cyril of Jerusalem to aggrandize the importance of his see in Palestine (op. cit., 183). Indeed, Cyril of Jerusalem confirms that, by the middle of the fourth century, relics of the wood of the Cross were distributed in pieces from Jerusalem over the whole world (Cat.Hom. 4.10; 10.19; 13.4); cf. J.W. Drijvers, *Cyril of Jerusalem: The Bishop and the City*, Leiden 2004, 153ff. and *passim*.

<sup>91</sup> See Cyril of Jerusalem, Cat.Hom. 13.28.

<sup>92</sup> Cat. Petit 1260; cf. E. Kessler, *Bound by the Bible*, 90.

<sup>93</sup> Josephus, Ant. VII.13: 'it was the mountain of sacrifice on which David afterward built the temple'.

tion was widespread in Christian literature and dates to the third century at the latest.<sup>94</sup>

Furthermore, the connection between the locations of the sacrifice of Isaac and of Jesus becomes particularly prominent in Syriac literature. In a homily composed by Jacob of Serugh (451–521 CE), it states: ‘He indicated to him to sacrifice Isaac on Golgotha; in order for the symbol to take place on the mountain of crucifixion’.<sup>95</sup> This idea is reflected also in the Syriac pseudepigraphical text, the *Cave of Treasures*. Adam is buried on the ‘top of the mountain’ in the Cave, which is called the ‘Cave of Treasures’ (II.15–16).<sup>96</sup> Furthermore, according to the same text, Adam is created in the place where the Cross of Christ would later stand. Implicitly, therefore, Adam is created in Jerusalem (VI.21).<sup>97</sup> After the Flood, his body is carried away to be buried in the centre of the earth, which is the place where the Cross of Christ stands, that is, on Golgotha (XXIII.3–8). This is further identified with Mount Moriah (XXIX.4–9). Ishodad of Merv in the ninth century formulates this connection even more explicitly: ‘the altar (of Isaac’s sacrifice) was built on the spot where Solomon would build the Temple, where Adam lay buried and where our Lord would be sacrificed’ (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 22:9; cf. ad Gen 22:2). Accordingly, Ishodad attests to the longevity and broad acceptance of this tradition in Eastern Christian literature.

In the fourth century, the tradition of Adam’s grave in Golgotha becomes more specific. According to J. Jeremias, (pseudo-) Basil of Caesarea is the first Church Father to mention the existence of Adam’s skull beneath the Cross.<sup>98</sup> Golgotha, ‘the place of the skull’, thus becomes the

<sup>94</sup> Cf. Irenaeus of Lyons, *Adv.haer.* IV.5.4; see E. Kessler, *Bound by the Bible*, 12ff. and *passim*.

<sup>95</sup> Homily 80, *Homiliae Selectae Mar-Jacobi Sarugensis* III: 311; cf. Narsai (479–502 CE) who also points to the sacrifice of Isaac at the same location as the place of Jesus’ sacrifice (Homily 5; *Homiliae et Carmina* I:20); see A.C. Karim, *Symbols of the Cross*, Piscataway NJ 2004, 55.

<sup>96</sup> Significantly, the Cave of Treasures is also the site where Adam’s descendants minister and offer bloodless sacrifices. Thus, the Cave can be identified with the Temple, and it is also called the ‘House of Prayer’ in the text (Su-Min Ri, *Commentaire*, 179). In Christian tradition, it is Jesus who first calls the Temple ‘the House of Prayer’ (Matt 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46). In the Latin Life of Adam and Eve 30:2–3, when Adam is about to die his sons are also gathered ‘in the house of prayer, where usually they worship the Lord God’.

<sup>97</sup> The tradition that Adam was created in Jerusalem can be found explicitly in only two mss of the east Syrian group of the Cave of Treasures. Accordingly, it is considered to be a tradition that was inserted later into the text; cf. Su-Min Ri, *Commentaire*, 148.

<sup>98</sup> ‘Wo lag Golgotha und das Heilige Grab? Die Überlieferung im Lichte der Formgeschichte’, *AITEAOS* 1 (1925), 141–175.

place of Adam's skull. (Pseudo)-Basil combines various traditions that he attributes to the 'unwritten memory of the Church'. Accordingly, he presents a summary of several apocryphal traditions on Adam. First, he claims that Judaea (sic!) was Adam's residence after his expulsion from Paradise, as 'a comfort from what he missed'. Then, the same place becomes Adam's burial ground, the place where his bones and primarily his skull laid buried, hence the name 'place of the skull', and where Jesus suffered his Passion in order to give new life to humankind. The passage also adds that Noah knew of the location of Adam's burial place, and it was Noah who spread the word.<sup>99</sup>

Epiphanius of Salamis also suggests that Adam's skull was found at Golgotha (Pan. 46.5.6).<sup>100</sup> He further specifies that he found the information on Adam's remains in Golgotha 'in books' (Pan 46.5.1). Significantly, by the sixth century, Adam's tomb in Jerusalem was a famous destination for pilgrimage.<sup>101</sup>

The Jewish origin of the tradition is maintained by (pseudo?) Basil of Seleucia (6th cent.), who claims that it is a tradition of the 'Jews' that

<sup>99</sup> The text of (pseudo-) Basil reads: 'Λόγος δὲ τίς ἐστὶ καὶ τοῖσδε κατὰ τὴν ἀγραφὸν μνήμην ἐν τῇ Ἐκκλησίᾳ διασωζόμενος· ὡς ἄρα πρῶτον ἡ Ἰουδαία ἔσχεν οἰκίτορα τὸν Ἀδὰμ μετὰ τὸ ἐκβληθῆναι τοῦ παραδείσου ἐν αὐτῇ καθιερυθέντα, εἰς παραμυθίαν ὧν ἔστερηθη. Πρώτη οὖν καὶ νεκρὸν ἐδέξατο ἄνθρωπον, ἐκεῖ τοῦ Ἀδὰμ τὴν καταδικὴν πληρώσαντος. Καινὸν οὖν ἐδόκει εἶναι τοῖς τότε θέαμα, ὁστέον κεφαλῆς, τῆς σαρκὸς περιβρῦεισης, καὶ ἀποθέμενοι τὸ κρανίον ἐν τῷ τόπῳ κρανίου τόπον ὠνόμασας. Εἰκὸς δὲ μηδὲ τοῦ Νῶε τοῦ ἀρχηγοῦ πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἀγνοῆσαι τὸν τόπον, ὡς μετὰ τοῦ κατακλυσμοῦ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ διαδοθῆναι τὴν φήμην. Διόπερ ὁ Κύριος τὰς ἀρχὰς τοῦ ἀνθρωπείου θανάτου ἐρευνήσας, εἰς τὸν λεγόμενον κρανίου τόπον τὸ πάθος ἐδέξατο, ἵνα ἐν ᾧ τόπῳ ἢ φορὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔλαβεν, ἐκεῖθεν ἡ ζωὴ τῆς βασιλείας ἀρξῆται· καὶ ὡσπερ ἴσχυσεν ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ ὁ θάνατος, οὕτως ἀσθενήσῃ ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ Χριστοῦ' (Comm. in Is. 5.1; PG 30,2:348). The authorship of this work remains uncertain. It is considered, however, to be a typical Isaiah commentary from the fifth or sixth century CE; see S.A. McKinton (ed.), *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Old Testament X. Isaiah 1–39*, Downers Grove IL 2004, xviii; cf. N.A. Lipatov, 'The Problem of the Authorship of the Commentary on the Prophet Isaiah attributed to St. Basil the Great', in: E. Livingstone (ed.), *Studia Patristica XXVIII* (1993), 42–48; St. Basil the Great: *Commentary on the Prophet Isaiah*, trans. N.A. Lipatov, Mandelbachtal – Cambridge 2001.

<sup>100</sup> 'πόθεν οὖν ἡ ἐπωνυμία τοῦ Κρανίου, ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ τοῦ πρωτοπλάστου ἀνθρώπου ἐκεῖ τὸ κρανίον ἠϋρήται καὶ ἐκεῖ τὸ λείψανον ἐναπέκειται' (why the name 'Of the Skull' (i.e. Golgotha) then, unless because the skull of the first-formed man had been found there and his remains were laid to rest there).

<sup>101</sup> See J. Jeremias, 'Golgotha', *AITEAOS* 1, (1926), 34; cf. C. Leonhard, 'The Syriac Cave of Treasures', 279. The popularity of the tradition of Adam's grave at Calvary is evidenced also in the erection of a chapel of Adam at the site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre that points to Adam's burial place at Golgotha; see J. Jeremias, 'Golgotha und der heilige Felsen', *AITEAOS* 2 (1926), 78; J.W. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades*, Warminster 2002, 60; E.D. Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in Later Roman Empire AD 312–460*, Oxford 1982, 19.

Adam's skull is to be found there. This fact was known to Solomon, and it was also the reason for the naming of the location as the 'place of the skull'.<sup>102</sup>

Jerome confirms the tradition according to which Adam's skull was buried at Calvary. Similarly, he derives the name of the place from Adam's skull and also places it in a Christian soteriological frame of interpretation. In an epistle dating to 386 CE, Jerome writes:

Tradition has it that in this city, nay, more, on this very spot, Adam lived and died. The place where our Lord was crucified is called Calvary, because the skull of the primitive man was buried there. So it came to pass that the second Adam, that is the blood of Christ, as it dropped from the cross, washed away the sins of the buried protoplast, the first Adam, and thus the words of the apostle were fulfilled: 'Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light' (cf. Eph 5:14). (Ep. 46.3; trans. NPNF VI, 61)

Significantly, the dripping of Jesus' blood onto Adam's skull developed into a popular Christian motif that became an influential theme in later iconography.<sup>103</sup> However, Jerome later revises his view and dismisses the theory of Calvary as a burial place for Adam.<sup>104</sup> In his Commentary on Matthew, which was written in 398 CE, he argues instead:

I have heard that someone has explained that 'place of the skull' is the place where Adam is buried and that the reason it is so named is because the head of that ancient man is laid there. They relate this to the apostle (cf. Eph 5:14). This interpretation is attractive and soothing to the ear of the people but it is not true'—but refers to the execution place outside the gates of the city, where the skulls of the decapitated are (...). 'But in the Book of Joshua the son of Nave we read that Adam was buried near Hebron and Arba'. (Jerome, Commentary on Matthew IV ad Matt 27:33)

In the same year, namely 398 CE, Jerome specifically states that he heard this rumour in church.<sup>105</sup> This discussion of the controversial motif by

<sup>102</sup> κατὰ δὲ τὰς τῶν Ἰουδαίων παραδόσεις ὡς φασι, τὸ κρανίον τοῦ Ἀδάμ ἐκεῖσε εὐρεθῆναι· καὶ τοῦτο διεγνωκέναι τὸν Σολομώντα διὰ τῆς ὑπερβαλλούσης αὐτῷ σοφίας. Τοῦτου χάριν, φασι, καὶ Κρανίου τόπος ἐκλήθη ὁ τόπος ἐκεῖνος (PG 85:409).

<sup>103</sup> On iconographical representations of Adam's skull beneath the Cross on Golgotha, see S. Esche, *Adam und Eva: Sündenfall und Erlösung*, Düsseldorf 1957, 38; cf. L. Ouspensky – V. Lossky, *The Meaning of the Icons*, Crestwood NY 1999, 181.

<sup>104</sup> On the dating of the works of Jerome, see S. Döpp – W. Geerlings (eds), *Lexikon der antiken christlichen Literatur*, Freiburg et al. 1999<sup>2</sup>, 286ff.

<sup>105</sup> See Jerome's Commentary on Eph 5:14: 'I know that I have heard someone preaching about this marvel; he presented a model never before seen by the people, so that was pleasing. He said of this testimony, that it is said that Adam was buried at Calvary, where



Jerome affirms the popularity of the legend. Interestingly, the tradition that the grave of Adam was in Hebron, that is Kiriath Arba, is evidenced only in Jerome, who refers to this tradition as a counter-argument to the allegations that Adam was buried under Calvary. Already in 388 CE, Jerome explained in his work, *Hebrew Questions* (23:2), that the name of the site derives from the (Hebrew) word for ‘four’: ‘because in that place Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob and the head of the human race himself, Adam, were buried, as will be shown more clearly in the book of Joshua (cf. Josh 14:15)’. By referring to this place as the burial site of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Jerome implicitly identifies the grave in Hebron with the Cave of Machpelah in agreement with the biblical account in Gen 49:29–31. Moreover, in an epistle from the year 404 CE, Jerome explicitly mentions the ‘Hebrews’ as the source of the tradition that Adam was buried in Kiriath Arba, although he also discusses the possibility that Caleb and not Adam was buried there.<sup>106</sup>

In his Vulgate translation, completed in 404 CE, Jerome renders the difficult Hebrew formulation in Josh 14:15 as follows:

ושם חברון לפנים קרית ארבע האדם הגדול בענקים הוא והארץ שקטה  
ממלחמה

*And the name of Hebron was previously Kiriath Arba, he was the great man among the Anakim, and the land rested from war.*<sup>107</sup>

is translated:

nomen Hebron antea vocabatur Cariatharbe Adam maximus ibi inter Enacim situs est et terra cessavit a proeliis

*The name of Hebron was called Cariatharbe, Adam the greatest among the Enacims was laid there and the land rested from wars.*

Implicitly, Jerome considers the Cave of Machpelah to be the burial place of Adam. This, albeit indirect, reference is striking. The Cave of *Machpelah*

---

the Lord was crucified’ (R.E. Heine, *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians*, Oxford 2002, 224). As in the passage quoted above, Jerome attributes the popularity of this legend to its agreeability for the people.

<sup>106</sup> ‘And rising up from thence she went up to Hebron, that is Kirjath-Arba, or the City of the Four Men. These are Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the great Adam whom the Hebrews suppose (from the book of Joshua the son of Nun) to be buried there. But many are of opinion that Caleb is the fourth and a monument at one side is pointed out as his’ (Ep. 108.11; cf. also Comm.Eph. III ad Eph 5:14).

<sup>107</sup> Cf. LXX Josh 14:15: ‘τὸ δὲ ὄνομα τῆς Χεβρών ἦν τὸ πρότερον πόλις Ἄρβόκ· μητρόπολις τῶν Ἐνακίμ αὐτῆ, καὶ ἡ γῆ ἐκόπασε τοῦ πολέμου’ (And the name of Chebron before was the city Arbok, it was the metropolis of the Enakim; and the land rested from war).

is not attested in Christian literature. The LXX Gen 23:9 translates the appellation of ‘machpelah’ as the ‘double cave’ (τὸ σπήλαιον τὸ διπλοῦν; cf. Gen 25:9; Gen 49:29). Notably, there is a single reference in Ishodad of Merv, who explains that the name of the cave indicates that there was another cave within the cave (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 23:9).

Thus, from the third century onwards, Christian literature locates Adam’s grave in Golgotha. This tradition, which is connected to fundamental Christian theological beliefs about the redemptive significance of Jesus’ crucifixion, becomes particularly popular in the fourth century at which time Golgotha is relocated to the middle of Jerusalem. Golgotha’s transfer is connected to its identification with Mount Moriah, and with the identification of Moriah with the Temple site. About the same time, the emergence of traditions that specify that Adam’s skull is buried in Golgotha are found, and, accordingly, explain the name of the place. So, Adam (or his skull) is buried in Golgotha, that is, on the site of the Temple—the place of sacrifice *par excellence*—in the middle of Jerusalem, which is the centre of the world. Finally, this cluster of traditions is well known to Jerome in the late fourth century. Jerome, however, after some deliberation, dismisses them all and suggests that Kariat Arba is the burial place of Adam, the head of humankind.

### *Resurrection from Dust, or, Paradise Regained*

Adam’s punishment of mortality has been a major exegetical issue in Christian literature and theology. The punishment of mortality due to the transgression of God’s command was already announced by God in Gen 2:17 (cf. Gen 3:2).

Irenaeus of Lyons stresses that Adam was led astray by the serpent under the ‘pretext of immortality’ (Adv.haer. III.23.3). God shows through this punishment his compassion for Adam:

Wherefore also He drove him out of Paradise, and removed him far from the tree of life, not because He envied him the tree of life, as some venture to assert, but because He pitied him, [and did not desire] that he should continue a sinner for ever, nor that the sin which surrounded him should be immortal, and evil interminable and irremediable. But He set a bound to his [state of] sin, by interposing death, and thus causing sin to cease (Rom 6:7), putting an end to it by the dissolution of the flesh, which should take place in the earth, so that man, ceasing at length to live to sin, and dying to it, might begin to live to God. (Adv.haer. III.23.6, trans. ANF I, 457)

Furthermore, according to Irenaeus, the curse spoken to the snake, 'he will crush your head' (Gen 3:15), is another indication of final victory over death and the promise that Adam will receive new life. Thus, the salvation of man equates with the abolition of death: 'When therefore the Lord vivifies man, that is, Adam, death is at the same time destroyed' (Adv.haer. III.23.7). According to Irenaeus, it is a natural conclusion that 'if then by death, our bodies return to any other substance, it follows that from it also they have their substance' and everyone belongs to the earth from which Adam was formed (Adv.haer. V.16.1).

According to Theophilus of Antioch, man is made as a 'middle nature', that is, neither wholly mortal nor altogether immortal, but capable both of mortality and immortality. In this context, Theophilus in the second century CE regards man's entrance into Paradise as significant for his ontological state, since Paradise 'was made in respect of beauty intermediate between earth and heaven' (Ad Autolyicum II.24). Furthermore, Theophilus considers man's expulsion from Paradise to be a loving act of God, who in this way gave man the opportunity to expiate his sin and to restore his fallen state. Theophilus concludes that 'just as when some vessel has been fashioned and has some flaw, and is resmelted or refashioned so that it becomes new and perfect, so it happens to man through death; for he has virtually been shattered so that in the resurrection he may be found sound, I mean spotless, and righteous and immortal' (Ad Autolyicum II.26). Accordingly, Theophilus regards the mortal punishment of man as a necessary preamble to the resurrection, which will restore man to his immortal nature.

As such, there is a certain Christian exegetical approach that links the mortality verdict with the promise of resurrection, which is considered to represent restoration to the original immortal incorruptible nature of man. This approach appears to reflect contemporary streams of Hellenistic philosophy that advocated man's dual nature.<sup>108</sup>

---

<sup>108</sup> Indeed, a similar approach can be found in Philo, who explains that the first man was created of both heaven and earth. The transgression of God's commandment signified the end of man's incorruptible status and his enslavement to the earth. Accordingly, 'it is said to him, 'Dust you are and to dust you shall return'; therefore the earth, as it is the beginning of a wicked and depraved man, so also it is his end; but heaven is the beginning and end of him who is endowed with virtue' (Quaest.Gen. I.51, trans. R. Marcus, 30f.). Philo's approach regards the earth, the material element, as symbolic of the state of the fallen, corrupted man, while heaven is a synonym for virtue. The idea of the resurrection, however, does not seem to play a role in Philo's illustration.

In this context, Methodius of Olympus draws a comparison between first and second Adam. On the grounds of the divine announcement, ‘dust you are’, he concludes, ‘that which is mortal and sinful is uneven and discordant, and cast out as guilty and subject to condemnation’, in contrast to the sinless and incorrupt nature of the Son of God (Banquet III.3). Methodius further considers man’s mortality as a necessity for the abolishment of sin in the world, and that is the reason why God has not provided man with an immortal body and an immortal sustenance (Resurr. I.4).

Similarly, Theodoret of Cyrhus understands the phrase ‘from dust you are’ as a divine measure to limit the spread of sin. Accordingly, this punishment is actually a manifestation of God’s love for humankind, since, by binding sin with death, God limited sin when he placed the sinner under the punishment of death. Moreover, death has a salvific purpose for humankind, because it resolves evil deeds and ends the sufferings of the body (On the Incarnation of the Lord 6.1 [PG 75:1424]). Furthermore, Theodoret stresses that the biblical verse ‘on the day you eat (...) you will certainly die’ also refers to the punishment of mortality. He adds, however, that ‘those who believe in Christ the Lord, even if put to death, live in the expectation of the resurrection and the Kingdom of Heaven, ‘for we were saved in hope’ (Rom 8:24)’ (Quaest. XXXVIII).

Ephraem the Syrian explains Gen 3:19 as a fair punishment for human haughtiness: ‘Because ‘you are from dust’, and have forgotten yourself, ‘you shall return to dust’, so that, through your state of humiliation, you shall come to know your true essence’ (Comm.Gen. II.31).

Interestingly, Origen claims that the punishment refers specifically to the body, which is earth (Homilies on Leviticus 9.2.3).<sup>109</sup> Furthermore, he associates the redemption of humankind with the resurrection of the spiritual body. As he emphasizes:

Our flesh indeed is considered by the uneducated and by unbelievers to perish so completely after death that nothing whatever of its substance is left. We, however, who believe in its resurrection, know that death only causes a change in it and that its substance certainly persists and is restored to life again at a definite time by the will of its Creator and once more undergoes a transformation, so that what was at first flesh, ‘of the earth, a man of dust,’ and was then dissolved through death and again made dust and ashes—for ‘dust you are,’ it is written, ‘and unto dust shall you return’—is raised again from the earth and afterwards, as the merits of the indwelling soul shall

---

<sup>109</sup> See PG 12: 510: ‘De corpora enim, dicitur, quia terra sit, et in terram ibit’.

demand, the person advances to the glory of a spiritual body. (On First Principles 3.6.5; trans. C.W. Butterworth, 351)<sup>110</sup>

Origen's approach to the idea of spiritual resurrection was both controversial and influential at the time.<sup>111</sup> A similar idea is brought forward by Didymus of Alexandria. Didymus argues that this biblical verse demonstrates the nature of the flesh, since the soul does not originate from the earth. Accordingly, the soul, because of its incorruptible nature, cannot dissolve like earth. Furthermore, Didymus discusses an allegorical explanation of the same verse. He maintains that it refers to the resurrection of the spiritual body through which man will become a citizen of heaven that is established in the land of the meek. In this context, Didymus opens up an eschatological perspective on the exegesis of the passage. According to Didymus, who follows Origen here, the resurrection refers to the spiritual body. Additionally, it is regarded as a heavenly reward (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 3:16–19 [104]).<sup>112</sup>

In this context, Christian exegetical literature focused on the promise of the resurrection. This highlights Jesus' redemptive role, as well as his role as a 'second Adam'. As is well known, belief in the resurrection of the dead was central in early Christian theology and was much debated.<sup>113</sup> Moreover, exegesis of Gen 3:19 gave rise to questions regarding the

---

<sup>110</sup> 'Denique caro nostra ab inperitis et infidelibus ita post mortem deperire aestimatur, ut nihil prorsus substantiae suae reliquium habere credatur. Nos vero, qui resurrectionem eius credimus, immutationem eius tantummodo per mortem factam intellegimus, substantiam vero certum est permanere et voluntate creatoris sui certo quo tempore reparari rursus ad vitam, atque iterum permutationem eius fieri; ut quae primo fuit caro ex terra terrena, tum deinde dissoluta per mortem et iterum facta cinis ad terra (quoniam *terra es* inquit et *in terra ibis*) rursum resusciterum ex terra et post hoc iam, prout meritum inhabitantis animae poposcerit, in gloriam corporis proficiat spiritualis'.

<sup>111</sup> On a spiritual view of resurrection, see also Clement of Alexandria, Strom. IV.22.26 and Origen, De Princ. II.10.8; II.11.12; Contr.Cels. IV.57; V.14. Contrary to this view, early Church Fathers such as Justin, On the Resurrection 4.1 (PG 6:1577) argued against the belief that only the soul will be resurrected; for later discussion explicitly against Origen, see Methodius of Olympus, De Resurr. 29–33; Eustathius of Antioch, De engast. 22; Epiphanius, Pan. 64. See also Jerome, who argues specifically that the Paradise story testifies that Adam and Eve possessed bodies, which they also covered with fig leaves. According to Jerome, this is an argument against Origen, who denies the resurrection of the flesh (Ep. 51.5). On Origen's beliefs on the resurrection, see C. Ramers, *Des Origenes Lehre von der Auferstehung des Fleisches*, Trier 1851; cf. J. Neusner et al. (eds), *Three Faiths, One God: the Formative Faith and Practice of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, Boston 2002, 247ff.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. H. Reuling, *After Eden*, 70–71.

<sup>113</sup> See C.W. Bynum: 'most Christian writers of the 2nd century assumed some sort of resurrection of the dead; frequently they connected such resurrection to a millennial age' ('Images of the Resurrection of the Body in the Theology of Late Antiquity', *CHR* 80.2 (1994), 218).

bodily or spiritual nature of the resurrected 'bodies'.<sup>114</sup> Although Paul in 1 Cor 15 established a belief in bodily resurrection, this issue remained controversial in Christianity for centuries to follow. As C.W. Bynum shows, by the end of the second century the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh dominated the theology of the Great Church, in particular in its struggle against heretical doctrines, such as those of the Docetists and the Gnostics.<sup>115</sup>

The interpretation of Gen 3:19 in Christian literature was decisive for the understanding of human ontology, christology, divine economy and, of course, eschatology. The importance of the belief in the resurrection of the dead, as well as of the nature of the resurrection, is evident already in the New Testament. The meaning and importance of Jesus' resurrection for Christianity cannot be overstated. Significantly, Jesus himself conducts conversations on the meaning of the resurrection with the Sadducees (Matt 22:23–32, Mark 12:18–27, Luke 20:27–40, cf. Acts 24:15).<sup>116</sup>

The patristic discussions place Christian resurrection beliefs in the context of current Hellenistic ideas on mortality and immortality of the soul and of the flesh. Furthermore, these discussions are placed in a soteriological frame of interpretation, which is based largely on the exegesis of Gen 3:15–19. The Church Fathers, in general, understand the punishment of mortality as a positive measure taken by God against human sin, and, finally, as the beginning of human redemption. The death sentence already contains the promise of future eternal immortality. Thus, exegesis of Gen 3:19 is explicitly linked with the promise of the resurrection of the dead.

---

<sup>114</sup> For bibliography on resurrection beliefs in Early Christianity, see C.W. Bynum, 'Images of the Resurrection of the Body', 215, n.1; see also D.C. Allison, *Resurrecting Jesus: the Earliest Christian Tradition and its Interpreters*, N.Y. 2005; G. Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered: Thomas and John in Conflict*, Minneapolis 1995; F. Avemarie – H. Lichtenberger (eds), *Auferstehung-Resurrection*, Tübingen 2001.

<sup>115</sup> 'Images of the Resurrection of the Body', 220ff.; see also R.M. Grant, 'The Resurrection of the Body', *JR* 28 (1948), 188–199.

<sup>116</sup> On beliefs in the resurrection of the dead that were current in Jesus' time among Jewish groups, see Josephus, *Ant.* XVIII.1; see also R. Hachlili, *Jewish Funerary Customs, Practices and Rites in the Second Temple Period*, Leiden 2005, esp. 522ff; C. Setzer, *Resurrection of the Body in Early Judaism and Early Christianity*, Leiden 2004; G.W. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism and Early Christianity*, Cambridge MA 2006.

*The Exegetical Encounter*

The analysis of rabbinic and Christian exegesis of the Paradise story highlights a number of shared issues of consideration between the two exegetical traditions. The theological significance of the Paradise story is demonstrated here in the chronology of the events during Adam and Eve's stay in Paradise, in the agency of evil against the protoplasts and in the consequences of the transgression with regard to humanity's mortal nature and future redemption.

A first point for investigation of potential exegetical encounters is the chronological calculations that described man's existence from his creation up to his expulsion from Paradise. A widely attested tradition in a number of rabbinic sources was that Adam sinned on the very first day of his creation, which also suggests that Adam remained only one day in Paradise from creation to expulsion (LevR 29:1; PRK 23:1; BT Sanh 38b; ARN A 1; ARN B 1, 42; PRE 11; TanB *Bereshit* 25; TanB *Shemini* 13). Similar to the rabbinic traditions outlined above, Christian exegetes understood the events in Genesis 3 as happening on one and the same day. This apparently shared exegetical approach derives most probably from a specific understanding of the biblical text, which implies that every act of creation was completed on one single day (cf. Gen 1:5f.). Thus, it is possible that Jewish and Christian commentators arrived independently at this particular interpretation of the chronology of creation.

Moreover, rabbinic and Christian exegetical traditions represent careful calculations on the hours of Adam's ephemeral stay in Paradise, with the actions of Adam on that day assigned to specific hours of the day. Consequently, the day was scheduled according to a coherent and intentional chronological pattern. L. Ginzberg noticed this congruence between rabbinic and Christian material and remarked that 'The church fathers likewise assert that Adam sinned on the very first day of his creation. Some of the Christian sources divide this eventful day in a manner similar to the Rabbis and they even find a Christological meaning in this division'.<sup>117</sup> However, Ginzberg understates (and probably also underestimates) the centrality of the christological meaning of the division of Adam's day in Paradise in the patristic exegetical context. As analyzed above, Christian literature offered a number of different speculations and interpretations

---

<sup>117</sup> *Legends of the Jews*, vol. 5, 107, n.97; 'Die Haggadah bei den Kirchenvätern', 48–49.

of the timing of the events of the Paradise story, in which the focus did not always appear to be the issue of 'sin', but rather the scheduling of the day in accordance with Jesus' Passion and its salvific significance for humankind. Nonetheless, in spite of differences in their theological intentions and exegetical background, both rabbinic and Christian commentators place the events of the Paradise story in an exact chronological order in the context of a specific theological interpretation.

The rabbinic traditions discussed follow a twelve hour division of the day, and schedule Adam's stay in Paradise accordingly (e.g. LevR 29:1; PRK 23:1). More specifically, LevR 29:1 and PRK 23:1 place the command in the ninth hour, the transgression in the tenth, judgement in the eleventh and pardoning in the twelfth hour. Christian writers base their chronological speculations on the common custom of the division of the day into four parts of three hours each, a custom that is reflected in the New Testament and more specifically in the Passion narrative of the Synoptic tradition. In accordance with the chronology of the events of Jesus' Passion story, Christian exegetes drew a parallel between Jesus' crucifixion and death and Adam and Eve's transgression and expulsion from Paradise. Thus, Adam's transgression is assigned to the sixth hour and judgement to the ninth hour (Procopius, *Comm.Gen.*, PG 87:196; *Cave of Treasures* XLVIII.11–30; Ishodad of Merv, *Comm.Gen. ad Gen* 3:8).

Certain approaches in Christian exegesis describe the events in greater chronological detail. In particular, the Syriac *Cave of Treasures* (XLVIII.11–30) seems to generally agree with rabbinic traditions, such as LevR 29:1, PRK 23:1 and later parallel traditions identified above, in providing a detailed description of Adam's hours in Paradise. Notably, a later version of the *Cave of Treasures*, the *Kitāb al-Magāll*, describes Adam's creation at the third hour of Friday and betrays a certain affinity to rabbinic traditions that describe Adam's formation in the first hours of the day (e.g. LevR 29:1 and PRK 23:1). However, in contrast to the rabbinic traditions that describe the creation of Adam in the first five to seven hours, the *Cave of Treasures* does not extend Adam's creation to over one hour, and the exact timing of events remains largely distinct in rabbinic and Christian traditions.

Accordingly, albeit varied in detail, a shared approach to the Paradise story can be observed both in rabbinic and in Christian exegetical traditions. Significantly, both traditions calculate Adam's first day in Paradise in the context of a theologically and ontologically meaningful pattern, and thus present a shared perspective with regard to the events of the Paradise story.



According to the rabbinic tradition attested in LevR 29:1 and PRK 23:1, Adam was created on New Year's Day, which according to further calendrical calculations was the 1st of the month of Tishri. In this way, the day on which Adam was judged and received pardon is linked to New Year's Day, the Day of Judgement for Jewish people. In LevR 29:1, God promises Adam that on that day his children will be judged and will be granted pardon. As such, Adam's fate and relationship to God reflects the relationship of the Jewish people to God in terms of atonement and forgiveness on New Year's Day. Consequently, the day of creation is identified with the day of redemption.<sup>118</sup>

Most Christian exegetes do not specify the time of the year (or even a date!) for Adam's creation and expulsion from Paradise. However, certain later sources are familiar with legendary traditions that allocated the creation of the world (and of man) to the spring and, more specifically, to the month of Nisan.<sup>119</sup> The association of the fateful events of the Paradise story with the spring season is consistent with the christological chronological approach outlined above, since Jesus' Passion took place during the Jewish Passover, that is, in the month of Nisan. Moreover, this approach agrees with other ancient traditions on the chronology of the creation of the world. As Ginzberg notes, 'Jub and Philo (De spec leg 10; Quaest Ex 1.1) as well as some rabbinic authorities of the first cent. CE are of the opinion that the world (...) was created in spring, or to be more accurate, in the month of Nisan'.<sup>120</sup>

Interestingly, B. Visotzky describes the midrash in Leviticus Rabbah as 'a text which seems to be in a dialogue with Christian versions of the same' but without further elaboration on the Christian sources implied.<sup>121</sup> Indeed, the rabbinic tradition of the chronology of events in the Paradise story, as illustrated in LevR 29:1 and PRK 23:1, functions almost as a

---

<sup>118</sup> This dating in LevR 29:1 and PRK 23:1 associates the time of Adam's judgement in Paradise with the judgement of the Jewish people at Rosh ha-Shanah on 1st Tishri. However, there is some difference of opinion over the date of creation in rabbinic traditions with both Tishri and Nisan, the time of the Exodus, posited as options for the month of creation. Also, by putting the creation of Adam on 1st Tishri, this meant that the first day of creation must be 25th Elul; cf. M RH 11, T RH 11, PT RH 11, BT RH 10b-11a, EsthR 7:11 and PR 7:4. This debate is discussed by M.D. Herr, 'The Calendar', in: S. Safrai – M. Stern (eds), *The Jewish People in the First Century*, Assen 1976, 843–845.

<sup>119</sup> See above p. 66, Coptic Cave of Treasures (op. cit.), George Syncellus (Dindorf, 8).

<sup>120</sup> *Legends of the Jews*, vol. 5, 98, n.97. Ginzberg adds that the same view was held by the Stoics; on Nisan as the first month of the creation see also Ephraim the Syrian, Comm. Gen. I.8.1 and for rabbinic traditions see n.118 above.

<sup>121</sup> *Fathers of the World*, 95, n.10.

theological counterpart to the Christian expositions discussed above. Similar to Christian speculations that begin with Adam's transgression and fall and culminate with Jesus' redemptive Passion for humanity, LevR 29:1 and PRK 23:1 reflect an exegetical pattern that describes Adam's judgement and final pardoning, and extends this paradigm to Adam's descendants. It is noteworthy that LevR 29:1 and PRK 23:1 include the moment of pardoning in the narrative, which is not mentioned in the biblical account of creation. Consequently, both rabbinic and Christian exegetes were concerned with ideas of divine judgement and the promise of redemption in the context of exegesis of the Paradise story. The common use of chronological frameworks in order to express seminal—and even similar—theological ideas in the context of exegesis of the same scriptural passage is striking, and presents a very interesting case of a possible exegetical encounter.

The next focus of discussion is on the tradition of the use of the serpent as an intermediary by man's adversary in order to bring about humanity's fall. Christian exegetes suggested early on that an animal, such as a serpent, would not have been able to talk with a human voice, let alone seduce Eve. Accordingly, prominent Christian exegetical approaches state that the serpent was used as an instrument by the devil (John Chrysostom, *Hom.Gen.* 16.3; et al.). This approach presupposed certain popular beliefs on the nature of the devil/Satan, and of his intentions towards humankind. Satan is often identified with the serpent (or the similar-looking dragon; Rev 12:9; 20:2). Furthermore, he is considered to be a fallen angel on account of his envy towards humans. This tradition was already known in Christian literature by the mid-second century, as attested by Justin (*Dial.* CXXIV). According to most Christian approaches, the snake was used by the 'adversary' as an instrument in order to seduce and harm man in Paradise.<sup>122</sup> Christian tradition explains that the serpent was qualified to be used by the devil on account of its biblically attested intelligence (John Chrysostom, *Hom.Gen.* 16.3). Accordingly, the devil used the serpent as his mouthpiece, or as a disguise (Severian of Gabala, *Creat. Mundi* 6.2; et al.). Alternative traditions suggest that the devil used the creature as a vehicle (*Cave of Treasures* IV.5).

The role of Satan in the Paradise story is also described in a variety of ways in pseudepigraphic and other early sources on the nature and

---

<sup>122</sup> See above pp. 69ff. for references.

agency of (often fallen) angels.<sup>123</sup> For example, Wisdom 2:24 ascribes the existence of death to the envious nature of the devil. Furthermore, the Greek Life of Adam and Eve 16:1–5 describes the agency of the serpent for the Satan.<sup>124</sup> Interestingly, Origen explicitly acknowledges the pseudepigraphic influence on the development and adaptation of the motif of the devil as an angel and the serpent as his agent in Christian literature (De Princ. III.2.1).

The adversary's role in the creation story is not a common idea in rabbinic literature and is first found in PRE 13 in terms of date of redaction. His name is Sammael in this text.<sup>125</sup> Sammael is portrayed as an envious angel, who, because of his jealousy of Adam, used the serpent to tempt Eve, which led him to be cast out of heaven and to become the prince of demons. Sammael recognizes that the serpent is skilled at doing evil (because of its cleverness), and uses the serpent as his agent to bring about the downfall of humanity. Sammael's nature and actions as portrayed in PRE 13 correspond in a number of ways to Christian traditions about Satan, as outlined above. These shared motifs include Sammael as an angel and his jealousy of Adam, his use of the snake because of its cunning as an instrument to deceive Eve, his manipulation of the snake as a

<sup>123</sup> Cf. Philo, Quaest.Gen. I.36 (the devil uses the serpent as a mouthpiece); Josephus, Ant. I.41 (the snake envies Adam and Eve); 1 Enoch 69:5–6 (a fallen angel seduces Eve); Apocalypse of Abraham 23 [of Azazel]; 2 Enoch 31:7–8 (the Satan is jealous of Adam); Ascension of Isaiah 1:8; 3 Baruch 4:8, 9:7.

<sup>124</sup> See Wisdom 2:24: 'Nevertheless through envy of the devil came death into the world: and they that do hold of his side do find it'; Greek Life of Adam and Eve 16:1–5: 'And the devil spoke to the serpent saying, 'Rise up, come to me and I will tell you a word whereby you may have profit.' And he arose and came to him. And the devil said to him: 'I hear that you art wiser than all the beasts, and I have come to counsel you. Why do you eat of the tares of Adam and his wife and not of paradise? Rise up and we will cause him to be cast out of paradise, even as we were cast out through him.' The serpent said to him, 'I fear lest the Lord be wroth with me.' The devil said to him: 'Fear not, only be my vessel and I will speak through your mouth words to deceive them'. As J. Doehorn remarks: 'Die Integration des Teufels in die Paradiesgeschichte ist im frühen Judentum und in der alten Kirche weit verbreitet; allerdings lassen sich kaum Belege finden, die klar erkennbar älter wären, als ApkMos 15–30; am ehesten mag dies für SapSal 2,23–24 gelten. Ältere Zeugnisse für eine Rezeption von Gen 2–3 erwähnen den Teufel nicht' (*Die Apokalypse des Mose*, 287, n.1).

<sup>125</sup> Although he is known by several names, he is rarely called Sam(m)ael in early Christian literature; cf. Apocryphal Acts of Andrew 24, where the devil is called Samael on account of his blindness, thus reflecting one of the most common names for the evil creator god in the Gnostic literature (NHC II,11.16; IV,17.15; XIII,1; II,3.87.1; I,4.25; cf. Irenaeus, Adv.haer. I.30.1; Theodore Bar Koni, Lib.Schol. XI.78); see B. Barc, 'Samaël-Saklas-Yaldabaôth: Recherche sur la genèse d'un mythe gnostique', in: idem (ed.), *Colloque international sur les textes des Nag Hammadi*, Québec-Louvain 1981, 123–150; cf. E. Grypeou, 'Die Dämonologie der koptisch-gnostischen Literatur im Kontext jüdischer Apokalyptik', in: A. Lange, *Die Dämonen*, 600–609, esp. 602, n.10.

medium of transport in order to approach Eve and finally his punishment and fall from heaven.

The first motif of note from this collection is Sammael as an angel and his jealousy of Adam. As discussed above, the adversary angel or angels' jealousy of Adam is a particularly common motif not only in Christian but also in Jewish Hellenistic and pseudepigraphical literature.<sup>126</sup> Thus, PRE 13 and the discussed Christian literature illustrate an exegetical motif held in common, which may derive from shared knowledge of traditions attested in pseudepigraphic writings.

The second motif for discussion is the use of the snake by Sammael/the devil. The choice of the serpent as the agent of Sammael/devil on account of its cleverness is based on Gen 3:1 in PRE 13 and also in the majority of the Christian traditions. However, the expanded form of the motif found in both PRE 13 and Christian literature cannot be understood to be a logical conclusion from exegesis of the biblical text. Furthermore, the manipulation of the serpent by the devil in the Paradise story was an early established Christian tradition, which was encountered in a significant number of variations in Christian literature.<sup>127</sup> When this body of traditions is contrasted with the motif of Sammael and the serpent in PRE 13, which represents the first attestation of this tradition in rabbinic literature, based on date of redaction, the question remains, why did such a motif re-enter Jewish legend in this collection? As mentioned above, the use of the serpent by a Satanic figure is found in early pseudepigraphical sources, such as the Greek *Life of Adam and Eve*, which is an important factor in the development of this tradition. Thus, both Christian traditions and PRE 13 could have been independently influenced by motifs evidenced in pseudepigraphic sources. However, given the widespread popularity of the idea of the devil using the serpent as an intermediary in Christian sources, the possibility that PRE 13 may have incorporated such a tradition through knowledge of the Christian idea cannot be ruled out.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>126</sup> See footnote 123.

<sup>127</sup> See above, pp. 69f.

<sup>128</sup> This argument is also supported by G. Stemberger, who has stated 'Bereits ist Samael erstmals in den um etwa 800 am ehesten in Palästina entstandenen *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* bezeugt, einem Text, der zahlreiche aus pseudepigraphen Schriften bekannte Traditionen aufgreift. Diese waren wohl kaum schon immer jüdisch verbreitet und nur zufällig in den klassischen rabbinischen Werken nicht belegt; viel näher liegt die Annahme, dass sie auf dem Umweg über christliche Tradenten und Schriften in das Judentum zurückgefunden haben' ('Samael und Uzza: Zur Rolle der Dämonen im späten Midrasch', 652). Significantly, the cluster of traditions that describe Sammael's jealousy and the use of the serpent as a vehicle and instrument of seduction, as found in PRE 13–14,

Thirdly, the tradition that the snake is used for transport, like a camel, is found in PRE 13 and Christian sources. In PRE 13, Sammael is said to ride the serpent, which is described as 'like a kind of camel', that is, a pack animal. The motif of the snake as a camel is also attested in GenR 19:1. Ishodad of Merv, in Mesopotamia in the mid-ninth century CE, knows of a tradition that the snake was a beast of burden before its damnation, and more precisely a camel. However, he dismisses this tradition as pure nonsense. The attestation of the motif of the snake as a camel in Ishodad of Merv presents an interesting case of possible familiarity with rabbinic traditions.<sup>129</sup> It appears plausible that similar legends on the nature of the serpent circulated in both rabbinic and Christian circles. Evidently, they originated from speculations about the snake's loss of legs, as also attested or implied in early sources, such as Josephus (Ant. I.2), or the Greek Life of Adam and Eve (26.2). Nonetheless, the use and discussion of shared legendary motifs between rabbinic and Christian exegetes presents an interesting case of an indirect exegetical encounter.

Finally, the punishment of Sammael needs to be considered. Interestingly, in PRE 13, Sammael is not yet a fallen angel when he approaches Eve. The motif of the devil as a fallen angel on account of his pride or his refusal to bow down to Adam was a widespread motif in pseudographic and Christian literature in Late Antiquity.<sup>130</sup> Similarly, in PRE 14, it is emphasized that Sammael was cast out of heaven as a punishment for seducing Eve.<sup>131</sup>

Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer preserves a cluster of motifs regarding Eve's seduction by Sammael/the serpent, which are not attested in earlier rab-

---

is encountered again in the Syriac Cave of Treasures (III.1–7). The similarity between PRE 13 and the Syriac Cave of Treasures in particular has been noted by Su-Min Ri. He assumes with regard to this motif that Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer has been influenced by a tradition represented by that found in the Cave of Treasures: 'Dans les littérature rabbiniques, le serpent qui, selon le récit biblique, séduit Ève, n'est jamais en relation avec Satan, mais il est avec Samaël dans le PRE, qui ont peut-être été influencés par une tradition apparentée à la Caverne' (*Commentaire*, 162f.).

<sup>129</sup> Cf. a similar motif in the Arabic version of the Cave of Treasures, which suggests that this motif was not unknown in Christian circles of the time; the text dates to the mid-eighth century CE at the earliest, see A. Toepel, *Die Adam- und Seth-Legenden*, 9f.

<sup>130</sup> See the discussion above, pp. 69f.

<sup>131</sup> A.Y. Reed has stated: 'in sources from the Talmudic period (ca. 200–600 CE), traditions about the fallen angels have no place in the interpretation of Genesis' (*Fallen Angels*, 207). She also claims that 'the early medieval evidence seems to reflect the reintroduction of the angelic descent myth into Rabbinic culture after a long period of absence, rather than its continuous transmission in oral channels or in texts now lost to us' (op. cit., 213).

binic sources, but were popular in pseudepigraphic and Christian sources. The analysis of the material indicates that the traditions in PRE 13–14 and in Christian literature could have developed independently by incorporating motifs from a number of pseudepigraphic traditions, similar to those evidenced in the Enochic and Adam literatures on the fall of the angels and the use of the serpent by an ‘evil’ or ‘fallen’ angel. In spite of the popularity of the discussed motifs in Christian literature, the cluster of motifs found in PRE 13–14 do not correspond to a particular cluster of motifs in the Christian writings discussed, but to a variety of motifs in a number of texts of varied provenance and dating. Consequently, the evidence in PRE 13–14 testifies to knowledge of popular motifs shared in Jewish and Christian literature, and, most importantly, to an on-going mutual borrowing of motifs between Jewish and Christian exegetical traditions possibly facilitated by the medium of pseudepigraphic texts. Thus, PRE 13–14 presents a prominent example of the fluidity that can characterize the transmission of traditions and, as such, encounters.

A further point of shared exegetical concern for rabbinic and Christian commentators was the place of Adam’s burial. The biblical narrative does not specify the location of Adam’s grave, which led the exegetes to speculate on the exact place of his tomb. A cluster of interesting traditions relevant to the exegetical encounter is preserved in PRE 20. PRE 20 describes how Adam is thrown out of Eden and driven to Mount Moriah, which is identified as the site of the Temple. Mount Moriah is already identified as the site of the Temple in 2 Chron 3:1, and is reiterated in early Jewish literature (Josephus, *Ant.* I.225–227) as well as in rabbinic traditions (GenR 56:10; BT Erub 19a; MidrPss 92:6). According to PRE 12, Adam was created on the site of the Temple, which is also identified as the centre of the earth, before he was brought into Eden. The creation of Adam on the site of the Temple is a fairly widely attested rabbinic tradition (e.g. GenR 14:8; PT Naz 7:2). Finally, in PRE 20 Adam’s tomb is in the Cave of Machpelah, which is located outside of Mount Moriah, that is, the site of the Temple. PRE 20 transfers the Cave of Machpelah from Hebron to Jerusalem. Thus, Adam was created and buried in the same area, which was the centre of the earth.

The identification of the place of Adam’s creation with the place of his burial derives from a literal interpretation of Gen 3:19: ‘*until you return to the ground, for from it you were taken*’.<sup>132</sup> Variants of this tradition are

---

<sup>132</sup> See V. Aptowitz, ‘Les éléments juifs’, 152f.

also attested in pseudepigraphic sources. In Jubilees 4:29, Adam is buried in the land of his creation, while in the Greek Life of Adam and Eve 40:6, Adam is buried in the region of Paradise, in the place from which God found the dust.<sup>133</sup>

Early Christian references to Adam's burial place locate it in Golgotha. Interestingly, however, Origen attributes this tradition to *Jewish claims*, as outlined above. The Jewish origin of this tradition is also reiterated in a (pseudo-) Athanasian writing, which is dated to the late fourth-early fifth century. A number of scholars have argued for the Jewish origin of this Christian tradition, in agreement with Origen and (Pseudo-) Athanasius of Alexandria. O. Skarsaune elucidates that 'In Jewish tradition the tomb of Adam was placed under the rock upon which the second temple was built. The tradition recorded by Origen should therefore be seen as a Jewish 'temple' tradition transferred to Golgotha, which is now seen as the new temple rock'.<sup>134</sup> In addition, L. Ginzberg suggests that the burial site of Adam in Golgotha is connected with the legendary tradition found in the Greek Life of Adam and Eve and remarks further: 'This is a Christian adaptation of the same legend, according to which Adam was created in the centre of the earth and was buried in the same place, i.e. in the site of the altar in Jerusalem'.<sup>135</sup>

Significantly, the *Cave of Treasures* reflects a very similar tradition on Adam's place of creation and burial, modified against the background of christological concerns (II. 15–16; VI. 21; XXIII. 13–18; XXIX. 4–9). However, whilst the location of Adam's grave at Golgotha is popular, the motif of Adam's creation in Jerusalem is not widely attested in Christian sources, and it is only a passing reference in some of the manuscripts of the *Cave of*

<sup>133</sup> Jubilees 4:29: 'And at the close of the nineteenth jubilee, in the seventh week in the sixth year [930 A.M.] thereof, Adam died, and all his sons buried him in the land of his creation' (trans. O.S. Wintermute, *OTP* 2, 63); Greek Life of Adam and Eve 40:6: 'And God commanded that after they had prepared the body of Abel for burial that they bear Abel up also to the area of paradise, to the spot where God had taken the earth and fashioned Adam. And God made them dig the spot for two' (trans. G. Anderson – M.E. Stone, *A Synopsis*, 89); cf., however, the Latin Life of Adam 56:1: 'It must be known that God made and formed Adam in that place, where Jesus was born, that is, in the city of Bethlehem, which is the centre of the earth' (trans. *ibid.*, 98).

<sup>134</sup> *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 185; cf. J. Jeremias, who maintains that the origin of this legend is Jewish according to the evidence of Origen and Basil of Seleucia ('Golgotha und der heilige Felsen', 78); cf. V. Aptowitz, who also argues that the legend of Adam's remains at Golgotha is of Jewish origin ('Les éléments juifs', 145–162); A.v. Harnack assumes that this legend was of Judeo-Christian origin (*Der kirchengeschichtliche Ertrag der exegetischen Arbeit des Origenes*, II, Leipzig 1919, 47f.).

<sup>135</sup> *Legends of the Jews*, vol. 5, 126; cf. L. Ginzberg. 'Die Haggadah bei den Kirchenvätern', 67ff.

*Treasures*.<sup>136</sup> Thus, the exact origin of this particular motif remains uncertain. It should be noted that even if reliance on Jewish pseudepigraphical sources is not improbable, both Origen and Pseudo-Athanasius interpret this tradition in an explicitly christological frame of reference. Importantly, both authors specify that Adam was buried ‘at the place of the skull’ (i.e. Golgotha) without any further explicit references to ‘Temple’ traditions. Finally, as N.R.M. de Lange remarks, ‘The immediate source of this tradition is evidently not rabbinic’.<sup>137</sup> Indeed, this observation is supported by the absence of any related reference in rabbinic sources until the inclusion of the motif of Adam’s grave ‘outside Mount Moriah’ in PRE 20.

The identification of Jesus’ place of sacrifice with the location of Adam’s grave carried particular soteriological significance for Christian theology and became prominent in Christian exegesis. Further Christian speculations situated Golgotha in the middle of Jerusalem, which again corresponded to the centre of the earth (Melito, *Peri Pascha* 72; cf. Ps 74:12). The location of Jesus’ place of sacrifice in the middle of Jerusalem was linked with the transfer of Mount Moriah to Jerusalem (Eusebius of Emesa, *Cat. Petit* 1242). Another stream of thought in Christian exegesis adopted the tradition, cited above and attested by Josephus (*Ant.* VII.13), according to which Moriah was specifically located at the site of the Temple (see Diodore of Tarsus, *Cat. Csl* 204; cf. *Cave of Treasures* XXIX.4–9; Ishodad, *Comm. Gen. ad Gen* 22:9). The location of Adam’s grave in Golgotha, and the identification of his burial place with the site of the Temple in the middle of Jerusalem and Mount Moriah reflect theological and exegetical developments in Christian tradition that could have been influenced by a number of Jewish traditions, such as found in Josephus or 2 Chron 3:1, but do not demonstrate any direct dependence on specific rabbinic traditions.

Notably, in relocating Adam’s grave to the site of the Temple, PRE 20 contradicts the ‘mainstream’ rabbinic view of the location of Adam’s grave in Hebron (e.g. *GenR* 58:9; *BT Erub* 53a; *BT Sot* 13a). Indeed, the relocation of the site of Machpelah is first found, in terms of date of redaction, in *Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer*. The tradition outlined in PRE 20 is most probably an independent development based on various older Jewish sources, such as Josephus, *Ant.* VII.13 and 2 Chron 3:1. PRE 20 also reflects

<sup>136</sup> See discussion above page 75.

<sup>137</sup> *Origen and the Jews*, 126f., and further: ‘what is remarkable is to find a Jewish topographical tradition Christianised at such an early date before the great upsurge of interest in Christian topography under Constantine’ (*ibid.*, 204, n.33).



exegetical traditions on Gen 3:19, according to which Adam's place of creation is identified with Adam's place of burial, an approach attested by the pseudepigraphic sources quoted above. However, it is interesting to note that PRE 20 is in line with the common Christian perception that the grave of Adam was situated at the site of the Temple. The motif of the location of Adam's grave in Golgotha, which was relocated to the middle of Jerusalem, that is, at the site of the Temple, was an established Christian tradition by the fourth century CE. Furthermore, it was associated with significant Christian theological beliefs. Although PRE 20 reflects motifs from and developments of earlier Jewish and rabbinic tradition, as highlighted above, a possible awareness of the popular Christian interpretation cannot be ruled out.

A further Christian tradition, which is also attributed by Christian exegetes to Jewish sources, refers to the existence of Adam's skull beneath the Cross ([pseudo?-] Basil of Seleucia, Comm. in Is. 5.1). V. Aptowitz argued that the Christian tradition, according to which Adam's head was buried in Palestine, goes back to a misperception of a Talmudic tradition, which teaches that Arauna the Jebusite was buried under Mount Moriah (cf. 2 Sam 24:18–24).<sup>138</sup> More specifically, V. Aptowitz traces the source of this tradition to BT Sanh 38a-b, which teaches that the dust of the first man was gathered from all parts of the earth, based on Ps 139:16 and Zech 4:10, with R. Oshaiah adding that the trunk of Adam's body came from Babylon and his head from *Erez Israel*. V. Aptowitz's suggestion is intriguing, but remains unconvincing. As analyzed above, the Christian traditions on Adam's skull refer to speculations surrounding Golgotha and its etymology in connection with its soteriological significance for Christianity. Moreover, the Talmudic reference to the land of Israel as the place of Adam's head is too vague to suggest an understanding of Adam's skull being buried on the site of the Temple. The Jewish origin of this tradition, which is claimed by the patristic source (of uncertain authorship) discussed above, is not supported by the existing rabbinic evidence. Accordingly, its alleged 'Jewish' provenance cannot be linked with an awareness of specific rabbinic traditions.

According to a number of rabbinic traditions, Adam was buried in the Cave of Machpelah (e.g. GenR 58:4; 58:9; BT Erub 53a). More specifically, certain rabbinic traditions teach, based on the biblical narrative,<sup>139</sup> that

<sup>138</sup> 'Les éléments juifs', 159f.

<sup>139</sup> See n.39 above.

the Cave of Machpelah is located at Mamre, that is, at Kiriath Arba, which is called the 'city of four' because four couples were buried there (e.g. BT Erub 53a). GenR 58:4 also specifies that it was the patriarchs and their wives who were buried at Kiriath Arba. In contrast to Christian claims on Adam's burial place in Golgotha (and after revising his own), Jerome argues that Adam was buried in Hebron, that is, in Kiriath Arba (Comm.Matt. IV; Hebr.Quest. 23:2). Furthermore, Jerome explains that the name of the place derives from the Hebrew word for four, because Adam and three patriarchs (Abraham, Jacob, Isaac) are buried there (Hebr.Quest. 23:2). It is possible that the modification of Jerome's view was due to Jewish influence as a result of work surrounding his translation of the Bible into Latin.<sup>140</sup> Thus, he demonstrates direct knowledge of a rabbinic tradition, and an idea that is not attested in Christian sources and which in fact suggest another location entirely. Accordingly, Jerome possibly provides evidence of a direct exegetical encounter with the rabbinic traditions analyzed above.

Also in PRE 20, Adam builds a tomb for himself in the double cave of Machpelah out of fear of idolatry. It is tempting to think that the reference to Adam's fear that his remains will be used for idolatrous purposes was perhaps a reaction to Christian pilgrimage practices and traditions of the time. As discussed above, Adam's tomb in Jerusalem was developed into a famous pilgrimage site by the sixth century CE. Specifically, the reference in PRE 20 that the 'bones of Adam' will become 'an image for idolatry' implies practices reminiscent of Christian veneration of relics.<sup>141</sup>

The next point of discussion is the interpretation of Gen 3:19 in Christian and rabbinic exegesis. A number of rabbinic traditions understand Gen 3:19 literally as a reference to the (eventual) death of Adam (e.g. GenR 12:6; 20:10; LevR 11:1; NumR 13:12). However, an alternative exegetical approach suggests that Gen 3:19 actually announced Adam's resurrection (e.g. GenR 20:10; BT Shab 152b). The earliest rabbinic tradition to connect the verdict of mortality in Gen 3:19 with the resurrection of Adam is Tg Neofiti Gen 3:19. According to this tradition, Adam will be resurrected in order to give an account of his deeds. Moreover, Tg PsJon Gen 3:19 explicitly connects Adam's resurrection with the Day of Judgement. In addition,

---

<sup>140</sup> See also P.W. van der Horst, 'The Site of Adam's Tomb', in: M.F.J. Baasten – R. Munk (eds), *Studies in Hebrew Language and Jewish Culture*, Dordrecht 2007, 251–256, who suggests that Jerome's interpretation is clearly influenced by Jewish traditions on Adam's burial place; cf. M. Rahmer, *Die hebräischen Traditionen in den Werken des Hieronymus*, 36.

<sup>141</sup> See P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, Chicago 1981.

GenR 20:10 contains an interpretation based on the verb *you will return*. Thus, Adam will not go to death, but will return to life at the resurrection. However, there is no explicit reference to judgement here. Another rabbinic tradition, found in Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah, explicitly combines the subject of the resurrection with God's mercy. Thus, the rabbinic traditions discussed here frequently associate the promise of resurrection with the opportunity for Adam to be redeemed on the Day of Judgement.

Already in the second century, Church Fathers, such as Irenaeus of Lyons, understood the punishment of mortality announced in Gen 3:19 as a gesture of divine compassion accompanied by the promise that Adam will receive new life. Theophilus of Antioch considered the mortal punishment of man to be a necessary preamble to the resurrection, which will restore man to his immortal nature. Also, later Church Fathers, such as Theodoret of Cyrillus, stress in the context of exegesis of Gen 3:19 that believers in Christ will live in expectation of the resurrection. The connection of Gen 3:19 with the promise of resurrection was prominent also in the Alexandrian tradition, as evidenced by Origen and Didymus. Origen explicitly links Gen 3:19 and the phrase to '*to dust you will return*' with the promise of resurrection, albeit in connection with the spiritual body.

Interestingly, the understanding of Gen 3:19 as a promise for the Resurrection of the Dead is also attested in the pseudepigraphic text known as the Greek Life of Adam and Eve 41:1–4: 'And God called and said, 'Adam, Adam.' And the body answered from the earth and said: 'Here am I, Lord.' And God said to him: 'I told you (that) earth you are and to earth shall you return. Again I promise to you the Resurrection; I will raise you up in the Resurrection with every man who is of your seed'" (trans. G. Anderson – M.E. Stone, *A Synopsis*, 89). The Jewish or Christian provenance of the text is highly disputed, but it reflects exegetical ideas similar to those found in both rabbinic and patristic traditions.<sup>142</sup> Thus, the Greek Life of Adam

---

<sup>142</sup> See M.D. Elridge, *Dying Adam and his Multi-ethnic Family*, 233ff for the history of scholarship on the Christian or Jewish provenance of the work; cf. M. de Jonge: 'All versions of the Life of Adam and Eve, including the Greek, have come down to us in Christian manuscripts. The great differences between the versions, and between the manuscripts of each version, show that the text has often been handled very freely. The fact that it was transmitted by so many people in so many ways indicates that the story as told here, was and remained meaningful for Christians who took Genesis 3 seriously' ('The Christian Origins of the *Greek Life of Adam and Eve*', in: G. Anderson et al. (eds), *Literature on Adam and Eve: Collected Essays*, Leiden 2000, 347–364, esp. 350); cf. M. de Jonge – J. Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve and Related Literature*, Sheffield 1997, esp. 68ff. on the work as a Christian compilation; M.E. Stone, *A History of the Literature of Adam and Eve*, 58–60; G.A. Anderson – M.E. Stone, *A Synopsis of the Books of Adam and Eve*, Atlanta 1994.

and Eve testifies to the early circulation of the idea of the resurrection promised to Adam by God, in contrast to the punishment of mortality, as attested in the book of Genesis. However, the popularity of this exegetical approach in various nuances and various streams of rabbinic and patristic literature, as outlined above, suggests that it is highly improbable that the Greek Life of Adam and Eve was a direct source for either rabbinic or Christian exegetes.<sup>143</sup> Besides, the Greek Life of Adam and Eve seems to focus on the idea of the physical resurrection of the body.<sup>144</sup> As analyzed above, the rabbinic traditions do not explicitly expand upon the nature of Adam's resurrection in this particular exegetical context. In contrast, the issue of physical or spiritual resurrection was much debated in early Christianity based on Gen 3:19.<sup>145</sup> Significantly, Origen links the exegesis of Gen 3:19 with beliefs regarding the resurrection of the 'spiritual body' (Origen, *De Princ.* III.6.5; Didymus, *Comm.Gen ad Gen* 3:16-19).

As observed, exegetical ideas that understood Gen 3:19 as a promise of resurrection were prominent in a number of rabbinic traditions (e.g. Tg Neofiti Gen 3:19; GenR 20:10), and in various works of patristic exegetical literature (i.e. Origen, Irenaeus, Theophilus, Theodoret, as noted above). The connection between mortality and resurrection cannot be concluded from the biblical text, but, as the evidence of the Greek Life of Adam and Eve demonstrates, is related to popular contemporary beliefs about the afterlife. Nonetheless, it is striking that the shared exegetical understanding by rabbinic and Christian sources reverses the plain meaning of the original wording of the biblical verse. The discussed rabbinic and patristic traditions, with slight differences in context, understand Gen 3:19 specifically not as a death sentence but as proof of God's mercy, who, through the promise of resurrection, offers humanity a chance for redemption. Accordingly, this fundamental theological approach to Gen 3:19 presents a possible case of an exegetical encounter between rabbinic traditions and Christian writings in Late Antiquity.

---

<sup>143</sup> As J. Doehhorn in his study of the text remarks, in this passage the text promises not solely the resurrection of Adam but additionally the resurrection of mankind in general (*Die Apokalypse des Mose*, 274). Doehhorn stresses further that 'Die Idee der Totenauferstehung war wie angedeutet, im Entstehungsmilieu der ApcMose bereits etabliert und zwar in ihrer universalistischer Ausprägung' (ibid.).

<sup>144</sup> See M.D. Elridge, *Dying Adam and his Multi-ethnic Family*, 38ff.; cf. G.W.E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism*.

<sup>145</sup> See discussion above pp. 81ff.



## CHAPTER TWO

### CAIN AND ABEL

*Now the man knew his wife Eve and she conceived and bore Cain, and she said 'I have acquired a man by means of the Lord'. And she continued to bear his brother Abel. (MT Gen 4:1–2)*

*And Cain said to Abel his brother, and it came to pass when they were in the field that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. (MT Gen 4:8)*

#### *Rabbinic Traditions*

The biblical story of Cain and Abel is sparse in details and leaves unanswered many questions.<sup>1</sup> As a result, the story is the focus of much aggadic elaboration in rabbinic sources.<sup>2</sup> Key questions raised from the Hebrew text of Genesis 4 include: How did Cain get his immoral nature? Why did Cain kill Abel? How did Cain kill Abel? Did Cain repent of his actions? In general, the rabbinic material deals with the Cain and Abel saga from the point of view of the relationship between the two brothers. A great deal of space is given to describing the respective roles and character of the brothers, which could be discerned from birth, and was perhaps determined from conception.<sup>3</sup> Exegesis is devoted to the nature of the sacrifices offered by Cain and Abel in order to explain why God rejected Cain's sacrifice, but also because this was seen as a major cause of dissent between

---

<sup>1</sup> This point is also raised by C.T.R. Hayward, 'What did Cain do Wrong? Jewish and Christian Exegesis of Genesis 4:3–6', in: E. Grypeou – H. Spurling (eds), *The Exegetical Encounter between Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity*, Leiden 2009, 101–102, and J.L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 146.

<sup>2</sup> The rabbinic sources on Cain and Abel have previously been discussed by scholars such as J.L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 146–170; C. Milikowsky, 'Why did Cain kill Abel? How did Cain kill Abel? Methodological Reflections on the Retelling of the Cain and Abel Narrative in Bereshit Rabbah', *Nordisk Judaistik* 24 (2003), 79–93; A.J. Springer, 'Proof of Identification: Patristic and Rabbinic Exegesis of the Cain and Abel Narrative', *Studia Patristica* 39 (2006), 259–271; V. Aptowitz, *Kain und Abel in der Agada, den Apokryphen, der Hellenistischen, Christlichen und Muhammedanischen Literatur*, Wien – Leipzig 1922; and G.P. Luttikhuisen (ed.), *Eve's Children: The Biblical Stories Retold and Interpreted in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, Leiden – London 2003.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. GenR 19:11, 22:3, 36:3, CantR 8:1, PRE 21, Tg PsJn Gen 4:1, Tan *Noah* 13 and ExodR 5:1.

the brothers.<sup>4</sup> Other reasons behind the rift between the two brothers are also explored, including theological dispute and conflict over ownership of property.<sup>5</sup> There is also an exegetical approach to these figures as symbolically representing good and evil.<sup>6</sup> Another prominent approach focuses on how Cain understood the consequences of his actions, which is considered at length in a number of rabbinic traditions with particular emphasis on the themes of exile, repentance and forgiveness.<sup>7</sup>

### *Cain was the Son of Sammael or the Devil*

The first set of traditions for analysis on the Cain and Abel story focus on the birth of Cain and Abel, and particularly the parentage of the brothers. The birth of Cain and Abel is described in Gen 4:1–2a:

והאדם ידע את חוה אשתו ותהר ותלד את קין ותאמר קניתי איש את י' ותספ  
ללדת את אחיו את הבל

*Now the man knew his wife Eve and she conceived and bore Cain, and she said 'I have acquired a man by means of the Lord'. And she continued to bear his brother Abel.*

The phrase 'I have acquired a man by means of the Lord' (קניתי איש י' את) was difficult for a number of rabbinic exegetes. The use of the particle את with the name of the Lord could be understood as the object marker, so making 'the Lord' the object of the verb 'I have acquired' (קניתי).<sup>8</sup> This textual ambiguity allowed for a variety of interpretations regarding the parentage of the two brothers and the impact that this had upon their characters and behaviour. Indeed, the first example considered here is the interpretation of Gen 4:1 to mean that Sammael, the fallen angel, was in fact the real father of Cain, rather than Adam.<sup>9</sup> The concept

<sup>4</sup> E.g. Tg Neofiti Gen 4:4–8, GenR 22:5, LevR 9:6, 27:5, PRK 9:4, 28:5, CantR 4:16, EcclR 3:18, PR 5:4, Tan Bereshit 9 and NumR 13:2.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. Tg Neofiti Gen 4:8, GenR 22:6, 22:7, LevR 27:5, BT Sanh 91b, PRE 21, Tg PsJon Gen 4:3, Tan Bereshit 9, 11, MidrPss 9:6 and ExodR 31:17.

<sup>6</sup> E.g. Sifre Deut 45, GenR 22:8–9, CantR 7:11 and TanB Lekh Lekha 7.

<sup>7</sup> E.g. GenR 22:6, 22:11, 22:13, 30:8, 97, LevR 10:5, PRK 24:11, PR 47:1, 50:5, BT Sanh 37b, 101b, EsthR 6:3, DeutR 8:1, Tan Bereshit 9, TanB Bereshit 25 and MidrPss 100:2.

<sup>8</sup> This exegetical problem is explicitly identified in GenR 22:2; cf. G.J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, Waco 1987, 101–102. This textual difficulty and the targumic approach is outlined in F. García Martínez, 'Samma'el in Pseudo-Jonathan and the Origin of Evil', *JNSL* 30.2 (2004), 19–21.

<sup>9</sup> This tradition has been discussed by R. Adelman, *The Return of the Repressed*, 98–108; F. García Martínez, 'Samma'el in Pseudo-Jonathan and the Origin of Evil', 19–41; and A. Goldberg, 'Kain: Sohn des Menschen oder Sohn der Schlange?', *Judaica* 25 (1969), 203–221.

of Eve's union with Sammael to produce Cain is found in the late Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan. PRE 21 teaches:

בא אליה ורוכבת נחש ועברה את קין ואחר כך [בא אליה אדם ו]עברה את הבל  
שנאמר והאדם ידע את חוה אשתו (בראשית ד א) מהו ידע שהיתה מעוברת  
וראתה [את] דמותו שלא היה מן התחתונים אלא מן העליונים והביטה ואמרה  
קניתי איש את יי'

(ed. D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Eliaser*, 223–225 [111–112])

He came to her and she was riding (the) serpent, and she conceived Cain. Afterwards [Adam came to her and] she conceived Abel, as it is said: *Now the man knew his wife Eve* (Gen 4:1). What is meant by 'knew'? That she conceived. And she saw his likeness that it was not of the earthly creatures, but of the heavenly beings, and she looked and said: *I have acquired a man with (את) the Lord* (Gen 4:1).

In PRE 21, Sammael comes to Eve, and she is described as riding on the serpent. Although the name Sammael is not explicitly cited here, Sammael is implicitly understood as the subject, as, earlier in PRE 13–14, he is described as using the snake as his representative to bring about the downfall of Adam and Eve, which עלה ורכב 'he mounted and rode'. The union between Sammael and Eve is not described in any detail, but the reader is to understand that it resulted in Eve's pregnancy.<sup>10</sup>

This interpretation on the parentage of Cain is also made clear in Tg PsJon Gen 4:1 which simply states: ואדם ידע ית חוה איתתיה דהיא מתעברא: 'Now Adam knew his wife Eve who conceived from Sammael the angel of the Lord'. M. Maher states that 'Ps.-J. is the earliest text that explicitly identifies Sammael as the father of Cain'.<sup>11</sup>

---

In discussion of "קניתי איש את יי", J.L. Kugel states that this rather ambiguous statement was explained by some exegetes as a way of saying that Eve conceived an angelic child from the 'devil', and consequently Cain was evil from birth as proven by his later actions (*Traditions of the Bible*, 147–148).

<sup>10</sup> Börner-Klein's work is based primarily upon the editions of Venice 1544 and Warsaw 1852. However, in the edition of M. Higger, the connection with Sammael is even clearer as his edition states: 'בא אליה רוכב נחש' 'He came to her riding (the) serpent' ('Pirque Rabbi Eliezer', *Horeb* 8 (1946), 82–119; 9 (1947), 94–166; 10 (1948), 185–294). The edition of Higger is a collation of three manuscripts from the Bibliotheca Casanatense in Rome. Thus, Sammael is riding the serpent when he comes to Eve. In PRE 13, the relationship between Sammael and the snake is likened to a 'horse and its rider' from Job 39:18. The fact that he is riding the serpent in Higger's edition of PRE 21 is an illustration of his control of the snake and builds on the earlier idea of the serpent as Sammael's instrument. The traditions on the use of the serpent by Sammael as a means of influencing proceedings in the Garden of Eden are already discussed in the chapter 'In Paradise' in this volume. The description of Eve riding the snake/Sammael may symbolize the sexual union; cf. PRE 13–14.

<sup>11</sup> A. Díez Macho (ed.), *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis*, 29; M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, Edinburgh 1992, 31.



This tradition represents a clear departure from the biblical text, which specifically states that ‘the man’ or Adam ‘knew Eve’ (והאדם ידע את חוה).<sup>12</sup>

PRE 21 then very clearly states that the conception of Abel was by Adam when he came to Eve ‘afterwards’, thus making a clear distinction between Sammael and Adam with regard to the paternity of Eve’s children. The tradition interprets the biblical assertion that Adam ‘knew’ his wife to mean that he ‘knew’ she had conceived rather than as referring to sexual activity, but it does not discuss whether Adam was aware of two conceptions.

The latter part of the tradition represents Eve’s acknowledgment that Adam was not the father of Cain. In PRE 21, Eve recognizes that Cain had the appearance of the heavenly beings, that is, the angel Sammael rather than Adam.<sup>13</sup> This is also an allusion to Gen 5:3 where Seth is said to look like Adam, which implied for rabbinic exegetes that if Cain did not look like Adam then he was not really his son.<sup>14</sup> This point is also explained in Tg PsJon Gen 5:3, which reports that Adam produced Seth when he was 130 years old and that Seth resembled him. However, it goes on to say that before this Eve had produced Cain, who was not his son and did not look like him.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, Eve’s acknowledgement of Cain’s parentage in PRE 21 is understood from her statement that *‘I have acquired a man with (את) the Lord’*. In other words, the object marker את is understood to be the preposition ‘by means of, with’, and the ‘Lord’ is understood to refer to an angel of the Lord, that is, an angelic figure which in this instance is Sammael. This interpretation is also made clear in Tg PsJon Gen 4:1, which describes Sammael as ‘the angel of the Lord’.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> The tradition in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan is discussed by F. García Martínez, ‘Eve’s Children in the Targumim’, in: G.P. Luttikhuisen, *Eve’s Children*, 27–45. García Martínez points out that this is not the typical approach in rabbinic traditions, which focus on ידע ‘knew’ as referring to procreation; cf. GenR 21:9. The tradition on Sammael as the father of Cain is frequently found in later texts, e.g. Zohar I, 31a and 54a–b, III, 177a.

<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, in the edition of D. Börner-Klein, PRE 21 records: והביטה ואמרה קניתי יי איש את יי ‘and she looked and said: *I have acquired a man with the Lord* (Gen 4:1), whereas in the edition of M. Higger, Eve’s proclamation is viewed as a prophecy: ואיתנביאת ואמרה: קניתי איש לה’ ‘and she prophesied and said: *I have acquired a man of the Lord* (Gen 4:1)’ (‘Pirque Rabbi Eliezer’, *Horeb* 8 (1946), 82–119; 9 (1947), 94–166; 10 (1948), 185–294).

<sup>14</sup> Gen 5:3 states: *And Adam lived 130 years and he bore in his likeness according to his image, and he called his name Seth.*

<sup>15</sup> See the discussion on Tg PsJon Gen 5:3 in F. García Martínez, ‘Eve’s Children in the Targumim’, 34–35.

<sup>16</sup> F. García Martínez prefers the editio princeps of Targum Pseudo-Jonathan from 1591, which preserves a similar reading. He quotes: ‘And Adam knew his wife Eve, who had desired the angel, and she conceived from Samma’el, and bore Cain; and she

The serpent as the representative of Sammael, along with Sammael as the father of Cain, is first explicitly found in Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan. However, the motifs build on a number of traditions found in earlier rabbinic material. In particular, the lust felt by the serpent towards Eve is frequently mentioned in a variety of sources. For example, BT Yeb 103b, and similarly BT Shab 146a and BT AZ 22b, state that when the serpent had sexual relations with Eve, he infused her with lust. This led to the creation of a lustful attribute within humanity, and it was only removed from those Israelites who stood at Mount Sinai. BT Shab 110a describes how women may be in sexual danger around snakes. Furthermore, ARN A 1 describes the desire of the serpent to marry Eve.<sup>17</sup>

Eve is also reported to have sexual relations with demons. GenR 24:6 seeks to explain the genealogy of Adam in Genesis 5 and the fact that the names were only recorded at this point in the biblical story. The tradition states that the descendants of Adam mentioned prior to the genealogy in Genesis 5 (namely Cain's descendants) were, in fact, demons. This is again based on exegesis of Gen 5:3, which states that Adam had a son in his likeness after 130 years, which implies that he did not have children before this time was complete. As such, if Adam did not have sexual relations with Eve for 130 years, then any descendants were a product of Adam and Eve's encounters with demons. This tradition is paralleled in BT Erub 18b, which explicitly states based on Gen 5:3 that until that time he did not have children after his own image. However, also in BT Erub 18b, R. Jeremiah b. Eleazar states that Adam himself begat demons during the 130 years, which is then challenged by R. Meir who explains that this came about from the semen which Adam emitted accidentally.

Overall, the tradition of Sammael as the father of Cain is based on a number of factors, including connections between biblical passages and earlier rabbinic tradition. The 'proof' for this tradition comes from detailed biblical exegesis, particularly of Gen 4:1 on the conception of Cain and Gen 5:3 on the appearance of Seth and the implication that Cain did not share Adam's likeness and so was not Adam's son. There is also a substantial body of background traditions involving the relationship between

---

said: "I have acquired as man the angel of the Lord" ('Samma'el in Pseudo-Jonathan and the Origin of Evil', 21).

<sup>17</sup> This tradition is found in the Babylonian Talmud as well as Palestinian sources, for example, GenR 18:6, BT Shab 110a, 146a, BT Yeb 103b, BT AZ 22b, BT Erub 18b and ARN A 1; cf. 1QHodayot<sup>a</sup> 11.1-19 and 4 Maccabees 18:8 discussed below.

the serpent and Eve, which provide a literary context for Sammael, as the serpent, having sexual relations with Eve. However, these interpretations do not preserve the connection between Sammael and Cain's parentage, as is found in *Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer* and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*. The interpretations preserved in these particular texts provide an explanation for the origin of evil in the world and specifically the evil nature of Cain the first murderer.

### *Cain and Abel's Twin Sisters*

The birth of Cain and Abel 'continues' to be the focus of exegesis in the next tradition, which is that Cain and Abel were twins and/or were born with twin sisters.<sup>18</sup> This tradition is based on exegesis of Gen 4:2 which states: *וַתִּסַּף לְלֹדֵת אֶת אָחִיו אֶת הָאֵלֶּם* 'and she continued to bear his brother Abel'. The phrase that Eve 'continued to bear' (וַתִּסַּף לְלֹדֵת) Abel is unusual wording that needed further explanation and led to consideration of whether there was only a single pregnancy.<sup>19</sup> Interpretation of this biblical expression is developed in a variety of ways in rabbinic traditions, but PRE 21 will serve for a preliminary examination of these ideas, as it provides a useful collection of a range of rabbinic interpretations:

רבי מיאשא אומר נולד קין ותאומתו עמו נולד הבל ותאומתו עמו אמר לו רבי ישמעאל והלא כבר נאמר ואיש אשר יקח את אחותו בת אביו (ויקרא כ ז) אמר לו מתוך הדברים האלה תדע לך שלא היו נשים אחרות בעולם שישאו להן והתירן להם ועל זה נאמר כי אמרתי עולם חסד יבנה (תהלים פט ג) בחסד נברא העולם עד שלא נתנה התורה רבי יוסי אומר קין והבל תאומים היו שנאמר ותהר ותלד את קין (בראשית ד א) בהיא שעת אוסיפת למילד שנאמר ותוסף ללדת [את אחיו את הבל]

(ed. D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, 225–227 [112–113])

Rabbi Miasha says: Cain was born, and his twin sister with him. Abel was born and his twin sister with him. Rabbi Ishmael said to him: Has it not already been said, *And a man who takes his sister, the daughter of his father* (Lev 20:17). He said to him: From these words you know that there were no other women in the world whom they could marry, and they were permitted to them, and concerning this it is said, *For I have said, the world will be built up by loving kindness* (Ps 89:3). With loving kindness the world was created before the Torah had been given. Rabbi Yose says: Cain and Abel

<sup>18</sup> For discussion on this motif, see F. García Martínez, 'Eve's Children in the Targumim', 36–39 and L. Teugels, 'The Twin Sisters of Cain and Abel: A Survey of the Rabbinic Sources', in: G.P. Luttikhuisen, *Eve's Children*, 47–56.

<sup>19</sup> This textual issue is explicitly mentioned in GenR 22:3. See discussion of the motif of twins below. G.J. Wenham states that 'there is no indication that Cain and Abel, unlike Esau and Jacob, were twins. Certainly Abel is the younger brother, a significant theological point' (*Genesis 1–15*, 102).

were twins, as it is said, *And she conceived and bore Cain* (Gen 4:1). At that moment she continued to bear, as it is said, *And she continued to bear [his brother Abel]* (Gen 4:2).

The tradition in PRE 21 has two main arguments. The first part of the tradition seeks to explain how procreation was possible when so few people were in existence, and the birth of Cain's wife (who is first mentioned in Gen 4:17) is not recorded or explained. One answer in PRE 21 is that Cain and Abel were born with twin sisters (who would become their respective marital partners).<sup>20</sup> The idea of twinship and further siblings is an obvious departure from the biblical text, which contains no reference to the sisters.<sup>21</sup> The tradition that Cain had a twin sister is also found in Tg PsJon Gen 4:2, which often closely parallels Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer: *וְאוֹסִיפֶת לְמִילֵד מִן בְּעֵלָה אָדָם יֵת תְּזִימְתִּיהָ וְיֵת הַבֵּל* 'And she continued to bear from her husband Adam his [Cain's] twin sister and Abel'.<sup>22</sup>

The discussion in PRE 21 is extended in the name of Rabbi Ishmael, as the fact that Cain and Abel married their sisters presented a moral difficulty, and also a legal problem, that needed to be addressed. In particular, the marriage of Cain to his sister needed to be explained in light of the command against incest in Lev 20:17: *'and a man who takes his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother and sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness, it is shameful (חֲסֵד), and he will be cut off in the eyes of the sons of their people'*. PRE 21 stresses that marriage among siblings was permissible on this occasion, so as to enable the world to be

<sup>20</sup> The edition of M. Higger explicitly states that Cain's twin sister became his wife, but does not mention the situation of Abel: *ר' מִיֵּאֲשָׁה אֹמֵר נוֹלָד קִין וְאִשְׁתּוֹ תוֹאֲמֹת עִמוֹ: 'Rabbi Miashah said: Cain was born, and his wife, his twin sister, with him' (Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer, Horeb 8 (1946), 82–119; 9 (1947), 94–166; 10 (1948), 185–294).*

<sup>21</sup> Indeed, L. Teugels states 'no twin sisters of Cain and Abel are mentioned in the biblical account. They are entirely the product of midrashic creativity' ('Twin Sisters of Cain and Abel', 49).

<sup>22</sup> A. Diez Macho (ed.), *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis*, 29. This is also noted by J. Bowker who states: 'The "twin sister" is an allusion to the extensive discussion about whom Cain and Abel could possibly have married' (*The Targums and Rabbinic Literature: an Introduction to Jewish Interpretations of Scripture*, Cambridge 1969, 137). M. Maher lists a number of parallels to Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and claims: 'Ps.-J. in our present verse simply makes an allusion to these well-known traditions' (*Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 31); cf. Jubilees 4:1, 4:8, Josephus, Ant. I.52, GenR 22:3, PT Yeb 11:1, 11d, BT Sanh 38b, PRE 21. F. García Martínez notes that Jubilees is 'the oldest source that gives Adam and Eve named daughters ('Awan, in 4:1, who will become the wife of Cain in 4:9, and Azura in 4:8, who will become the wife of Seth in 4:11)' ('Eve's Children in the Targumim', 36). Interestingly, in the edition of D. Börner-Klein, PRE 21 contains the Aramaic phrase *אוֹסִיפֶת לְמִילֵד* 'as found in both Tg Onqelos Gen 4:2 and Tg PsJon Gen 4:2 (cf. Tg Neofiti Gen 4:2 which gives *וְאוֹסִיפֶת לְמִילֵד*, although only Tg PsJon Gen 4:2 mentions the twin sister.

built up.<sup>23</sup> This interpretation comes by connecting **בָּנָה** from Lev 20:17 with **בָּנָה** from Ps 89:3 where the word is used to mean ‘loving kindness’ rather than ‘shameful’: *for I have said, the world will be built up with loving kindness (בָּנָה)*. Thus, allowing the marriage of siblings on this occasion was not ‘shameful’, but an act of ‘loving kindness’ by God to populate the world. PRE 21 also makes the point that the Torah had not yet been given. However, this is usually not given as an ‘excuse’ for lack of knowledge of Torah, with many patriarchs privileged with foreknowledge of the Torah.<sup>24</sup>

The second part of the tradition in PRE 21 represents an alternative explanation of Gen 4:2 in the name of Rabbi Yose, who states that Cain and Abel were twins. This interpretation arises from exegesis of the Hebrew *‘and she continued to bear (וַתֵּלֶד)*. The use of the verb **יָסַד** implies that there was no break between the birth of Cain and Abel and so they were in fact the product of one birth, that is, twins.<sup>25</sup>

The need to explain how Cain and/or Abel could marry their sister in light of the law in Lev 20:17 is found in a number of sources redacted earlier than Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer. None of these traditions describe Cain and Abel as twins, but instead focus on the tradition of the twin sisters. Furthermore, this is clearly an early tradition, as it is found in Sifra, a text which is commonly given a final date of redaction in the third century. The version of the tradition in Sifra *Qedoshim* 11 does not explain the existence of the twin sisters, but focuses instead solely on the issue of procreation with them and how this could be permissible. The fact that the existence of the sisters is assumed even in Sifra could also indicate the antiquity of this tradition. Sifra *Qedoshim* 11, PT Sanh 5:1 and 9:1, PT Yeb 11:1, 11d and BT Sanh 58b present, with marginally differing contexts, the argument already described from PRE 21, namely the connection between **בָּנָה** in Lev 20:17 and Ps 89:3 as proof that God allowed the procreation of siblings to populate the world; it is an act of loving kindness and not shame. PT Sanh 9:1 and PT Yeb 11:1, 11d stress that this was an

<sup>23</sup> L. Teugels notes that ‘The use of the verb “to build” for procreation is common’ (Twin Sisters of Cain and Abel’, 55).

<sup>24</sup> For example, a number of traditions state that the patriarchs kept the Torah even before it was given at Sinai, e.g. see the practice of tithing by Abraham before the command to do so was given as discussed in the chapter on ‘Abraham and Melchizedek’ in this volume.

<sup>25</sup> The tradition does not explain how they could be twins when the earlier interpretation from PRE 21 saw Cain and Abel as half-brothers due to their different fathers. This may represent the idea of different parentage despite a single birth.

exceptional case and should not be used as proof that this type of behaviour is acceptable in contemporary society.

Another approach to the multiple children of Adam and Eve is in the context of the events of Adam's first day in Paradise. GenR 22:2 describes three wonders on the first day—the creation of Adam and Eve, their cohabitation and procreation. This leads to the statement in the name of R. Yehoshua ben Korḥah that seven people descended from the marital bed of Adam and Eve. The tradition names the seven as Cain and his twin sister, Abel and his two twin sisters, and of course Adam and Eve themselves. This is also found in GenR 22:3, which refers to these seven people and explicitly interprets Gen 4:2 to refer to twins: '*And she continued to bear (Gen 4:2).*' This refers to an additional birth, but not an additional pregnancy'.

The widely transmitted motif of the hours in Paradise has already been discussed in the chapter 'In Paradise', but of particular relevance here is the eighth hour in which Adam and Eve had sexual relations and produced children. BT Sanh 38b states that Adam and Eve ascended to bed as two and descended as four. This statement is ambiguous and could understand the two people additional to Adam and Eve to be either Cain and his twin sister, or Cain and Abel as twins. ARN A 1 is less ambiguous, which records a similar tradition to that found in BT Sanh 38b, but provides a statement in the name of R. Yehudah b. Bathyra that two went upon the bed and six came down. This refers to Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel and their respective twin sisters.

Clearly, the wider context for traditions on the children of Adam and Eve is the rabbinic emphasis on the duty of procreation. The fact that Adam and Eve procreated even on the first day whilst in the garden is an example of the importance of this command.<sup>26</sup> The importance of procreation is one of the primary stimuli behind traditions on the children of Adam and Eve, along with the need to explain how the world

---

<sup>26</sup> The duty of marriage and propagation, based on Gen 1:22, 27–28, 2:18, 22–24, 9:1 and Isaiah 45:18, is fundamentally important in a range of rabbinic traditions. This demand is widely discussed in both Palestinian and Babylonian sources and is a particularly dominant concept in rabbinic exegesis of Genesis 2 (e.g. GenR 17:2, EcclR 9:8, BT Yeb 61b and MidrPss 59:2). Indeed, part of this discussion focuses on the very popular rabbinic tradition of the marriage of Adam and Eve in Paradise before the first sin (e.g. GenR 18:1, EcclR 7:6, 9:8, BT Shab 94b–95a, BT Erub 18a–b, ARN A 4, PRE 12, TanB *Ḥayye Sarah* 2, MidrPss 25:11 and 68:4); cf. G. Anderson, 'The Garden of Eden and Sexuality in Early Judaism', in: H. Eilberg-Schwartz (ed.), *People of the Body*, N.Y. 1992, 47ff and M. Satlow, *Jewish Marriage in Antiquity*, New Jersey 2001.

became populated, and finally the need to clarify the ‘continuous’ birth of Cain and Abel from Gen 4:2. The issue of the duty of procreation and the population of the world in connection with exegesis of Genesis 4 is also discussed in BT Yeb 62a. The gemara clearly identifies procreation as the framing topic for consideration by quoting the statements of Beth Hillel and Shammai on the minimum requirement for propagation of a race. Beth Shammai declared two males and two females, whilst Beth Hillel stated only one male and female.<sup>27</sup> The reasoning behind the statement of Beth Shammai is based on exegesis of Gen 4:2 and the implication that both Cain and Abel had twin sisters.<sup>28</sup> As such, the need for two males and two females was clearly God’s requirement for this world to grow.

Finally mention should be made of GenR 61:4, which describes the birth of Cain followed by the birth of Abel with *two* twin sisters. This interpretation is based on the use of the verb יָסַךְ to indicate that there was more than one birth, and the repetition of the particle אֵת in Gen 4:2 (אֵת אַחִיו) אֵת הַבֵּל ‘his brother Abel’) to indicate that Abel was not born alone.

The tradition that Cain and Abel were twins and also had twin sisters is clearly a major topic of exegesis widely transmitted in a variety of rabbinic traditions. The discussion is closely bound up with comment on the duty of procreation, and the need to explain not only how the world was populated but the associated moral and legal implications of the world’s development. This is the foundation for exegesis of Gen 4:2 on the ‘continuous’ labour of Eve to produce both Cain and Abel.

### *Cain killed Abel over a Woman*

The next set of traditions is related to the story of the death of Abel. The Hebrew text of Gen 4:8 is notoriously ambiguous and leaves open a number of questions about this event and what happened between the brothers:

וַיֹּאמֶר קַיִן אֶל הַבֵּל אַחִיו וַיְהִי בִהְיוֹתָם בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיִּקָּם קַיִן אֶל הַבֵּל אַחִיו וַיַּהַרְגֵהוּ

*And Cain said to Abel his brother, and it came to pass when they were in the field that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.*

<sup>27</sup> The argument of Beth Hillel for only one man and woman required for the propagation of humanity is based on Gen 1:27: ‘male and female he created them’.

<sup>28</sup> The argument is also supported by the fact that God gave Eve another child after Abel’s death, which is understood as a means of making up the minimum requirement. The ‘rabbis’ in BT Yeb 62a are presented as disagreeing with this last approach and see the birth of Seth and Eve’s statement about it in Gen 4:25 as an indication of her gratitude.

The biblical text does not explain Cain's attack on Abel and raised questions for rabbinic exegetes over his motivation for such a course of action.<sup>29</sup> The ambiguity about what Cain said to Abel prior to the murder leads to a variety of interpretations which suggest that the motivation behind the murder was due to a disagreement.<sup>30</sup>

The nature of the disagreement is extensively elaborated upon in rabbinic traditions. A prominent interpretation is that Cain was envious that Abel's sacrifice was accepted whilst his own was rejected, and so the brothers fought because Cain resented Abel. This is based on the biblical context of Gen 4:8, which is preceded by the story of the sacrifices of Cain and Abel. A form of this tradition is found in a variety of Jewish texts from the book of Jubilees to the Zohar, and, with nuances in detail, describe the rejection of Cain's sacrifice either because the sacrifice itself was inadequate, or because the character of Cain himself was flawed.<sup>31</sup>

A widely attested tradition on the source of the disagreement is that the argument was over the division of property. This motivation for the dispute is based on the different roles assigned to the brothers in Gen 4:2. Cain was a farmer (עֹבֵד אֲדָמָה) and Abel was a shepherd (רֹעֵה צֹאן). As such, Cain had dominion over the land itself, whilst Abel was in charge of its produce. Such a division in roles led to an argument over who owned what and had the right to use it, as it was impossible to be entirely self-sufficient in one of these areas.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> The biblical text simply states 'And Cain said to Abel' without explanation of what was said. The text then says that the brothers were in the field without any preamble. See the discussion in G.J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 106.

<sup>30</sup> In discussing Genesis Rabbah, Ch. Milikowsky argues that the death of Abel is the unfortunate consequence of an argument brought on by the very human response of jealousy. In other words, Abel is not an innocent bystander, nor Cain evil incarnate, but they are both involved in a reciprocal fight which ended badly ('Why did Cain kill Abel?', 85). This leads Milikowsky to say that 'Abel is no longer a paradigm of righteous innocence, but also shares some blame for the final horrific outcome' ('Why did Cain kill Abel?', 87). In contrast, J.L. Kugel cites a number of traditions that portray Cain as wicked in contrast to Abel as righteous (*Traditions of the Bible*, 151–152). Alternatively, F. García Martínez, speaking of the targumic tradition, suggests that the tradition that a dispute led to the death of Abel provides a means of 'exculpating the Almighty of all possible blame' ('Samma'el in Pseudo-Jonathan and the Origin of Evil', 31).

<sup>31</sup> Jubilees 4:2, Josephus Ant. I.52, Philo Sacr. 52, GenR 22:5–6, LevR 27:5, BT Sanh 91b, PRE 21, Tg PsJon Gen 4:3, Tan *Bereshit* 9, 11, Tan *Emor* 9, TanB *Lekh Lekha* 7, MidrPss 9:6, Zohar Hadash 24a on Gen 4:2.

<sup>32</sup> For example, flocks would need to walk on the land; cf. GenR 22:7, Tan *Bereshit* 9, Tan *Mishpatim* 13.



Another exegetical approach describes a theological dispute. For example, in GenR 22:7 the brothers quarrel over the location of the Temple, and Targum Neofiti and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan famously preserve a theological argument over the nature of the creation of the world, the future world, judgement, punishment and repentance.<sup>33</sup>

As part of this broad theme that an argument was behind the murder of Abel is the tradition that Cain killed Abel over a woman and, in particular, the twin sister of Abel. This interpretation is again found in PRE 21, which also mentions some of the causes of dispute described above:

רבי צדוק אומר נכנסה קנאה ושנאה גדולה בלבו של קין על שנרצית מנחתו של הבל ולא עוד אלא שהיתה אשתו תאומתו יפה בנשים אמר אני אהרוג את הבל אחי ואקח את אשתו שנאמר ויאמר קין אל הבל אחי ויהי בהיותם בשדה (בראשית ד ח) ואין בשדה אלא האשה שנמשלה כשדה שנאמר כי האדם עץ השדה (דברים כ יט) לקח האבן וטבע במצחו של הבל והרגו שנאמר ויקם קין אל הבל אחיו ויהרגו

(ed. D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, 229–231 [114–115])

Rabbi Zadok says: Jealousy and great hatred entered the heart of Cain because the offering of Abel was accepted. And not only this, but even more that his wife, his twin sister, was beautiful among women. He said: 'I will kill Abel my brother, and I will take his wife', as it is said, *And Cain said to Abel his brother, and it came to pass when they were in the field* (Gen 4:8). The expression 'in the field' means the woman, who is compared to a field, as it is said, *For the man is a tree of the field* (Deut 20:19). He took the stone and embedded (it) in the forehead of Abel, and killed him, as it is said, *Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him* (Gen 4:8).

PRE 21 cites the source of the quarrel as, first of all, Cain's 'jealousy' and 'great hatred' over the acceptance by God of his brother's sacrifice, and, secondly, that he desired Abel's twin sister and wife, who was the most beautiful of women.<sup>34</sup> This is based on Gen 4:8 which states that Cain and

<sup>33</sup> See especially Tg Neofiti Gen 4:8, GenR 22:7 and Tg PsJon Gen 4:8; cf. Philo, Det. 32–37 and Testament of Abraham 13. The targumic passages have been the subject of exhaustive scholarly attention. For example, M. McNamara argues that this tradition has influenced NT passages, namely, 1 John 3:12 and Hebrews 11:4 (*The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch*, Rome 1966, 156–60). Alternatively, R. Kasher emphasizes the long development of the targumic material, and sees in this theological dispute a reflection of the Christian debate in the fourth and fifth centuries on the conflict between grace and justice focused around Pelagius ('The Palestinian Targums to Genesis 4:8: A New Approach to an Old Controversy', in: I. Kalimi – P.J. Haas (eds), *Biblical Interpretation in Judaism and Christianity*, London 2006, 33–39). J. Bassler has summarized many of the key scholarly positions, see J.M. Bassler, 'Cain and Abel in the Palestinian Targums: a brief note on an old controversy', *JSJ* 17.1 (1986), 56–64.

<sup>34</sup> The edition of M. Higger is explicit that the woman in question was Abel's twin sister in particular, although it does not mention whether Abel was married to her. Furthermore,

Abel were בשדה *'in the field'*. The word שדה *'field'* is understood to be a description of a woman. This is based on exegesis of Deut 20:19 part of which asks *'is humanity a tree of the field (האדם עץ השדה) that they should come under siege from you?'* This verse is discussing the rules of warfare, but the Hebrew האדם עץ השדה was understood to refer not to humanity but to the first man, Adam, who is the tree, whereas Eve his wife is the field. As such, when it states in Gen 4:8 that Cain and Abel were *'in the field'*, it means that they were both interested in the same woman. Thus, in PRE 21, it is the beauty of Abel's sister which led to the dispute as she is desired by both brothers.<sup>35</sup>

GenR 22:7 has already been mentioned for describing an argument between Cain and Abel over property, and theological disagreement on the place of the Temple. However, the fight between Cain and Abel over a twin sister of Abel is also found in GenR 22:7. The tradition ends with the statement: *'Then over what did they argue? R. Huna said: An additional twin sister was born with Abel. (...) This one said: 'I will take her, because I am firstborn', and the other one said: 'I will take her, because she was born with me'.* However, in GenR 22:7, the fight over Abel's sister is more about the issue of sibling rivalry and firstborn rights than desire.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, a number of reasons are given in rabbinic traditions for the dispute between Cain and Abel. Of particular interest is the fact that a woman was at the heart of the confrontation and, in fact, it was a sister of the two brothers. Indeed, as F. García Martínez notes *'by introducing this motive, R. Zaddok avoids the pitfalls of theological discussions and excludes divine responsibility for this first murder, making it a very human affair'*.<sup>37</sup> As such, the means of populating the world also became a named cause of its first murder.

---

the edition of Higger is clear that it was Cain's desire for Abel's twin sister that prompted his action: ולא עוד אלא שהיתה תאומתו של הבל יפה בנשים וחמד אותה בלבו, ולא עוד אלא ולא עוד אלא 'And no more? But also that the twin sister of Abel was beautiful among women and he desired her in his heart. And no more? But also that he said that I will kill Abel my brother and I will take his twin sister from him' (*Pirque Rabbi Eliezer*, *Horeb* 8 (1946), 82–119; 9 (1947), 94–166; 10 (1948), 185–294).

<sup>35</sup> Cf. PR 51:6.

<sup>36</sup> J.L. Kugel has suggested that the tradition that Cain and Abel disputed over a woman was because the sources which mention this describe only one daughter available to be a wife to Cain and Abel (*Traditions of the Bible*, 148). However, as can be seen from the different editions of *Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer*, rabbinic tradition is divided over who exactly had a twin sister—Cain or Abel or both of them.

<sup>37</sup> *'Eve's Children in the Targumim'*, 41.

*Abel was killed by a Stone*

The biblical text also raises the question of how Cain killed Abel. Gen 4:8 does not describe the means of the murder, it only states the fact that it happened: ויקם קין אל הבל אחיו ויהרגהו: *'And Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him'*. In the generation of Cain and Abel, a murder had never before been committed, which led to questions such as how Cain even knew how to kill Abel. Consequently, the act of the murder is elaborated upon in a variety of rabbinic traditions with the most frequently cited interpretation that Cain killed Abel with a stone.<sup>38</sup> GenR 22:8 provides detailed discussion on Cain's murder weapon of choice:

ויקם קין וגו' אמר ר' יוחנן הבל היה גיבור מקין שאין תלמוד לומר ויקם אלא מלמד שהיה תחתיו נתון, אמר לו שנינו בעולם מה את הולך ואומר לאבא, נתמלא עליו רחמים, מיד עמד עליו והרגו, מן תמן אינון אמ' טב לביש לא תעבד ובישה לא מטי לך: במה הרגו, ר' שמעון א' בקנה הרגו וילד לחבורתי (בראשית ד כג) דבר שעושה חבורה, רבנין אמ' באבן הרגו כי איש הרגתי לפעמי (שם שם) דבר שעושה פצעים, ר' עזריה ור' יונתן בשם ר' יצחק נתבונן קין מאיכן שחט אביו את הפר ותיטב ליי"י משור פר (תהלים סט לב) ומשם הרגו [ממקום הצואר] וממקום הסימנין: (ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 1, 214–215)

*And Cain rose up*, etc. (Gen 4:8). R. Yoḥanan said: Abel was stronger than Cain, because the expression *'and he rose up'* can only mean that he (i.e. Cain) was underneath him (i.e. Abel). He said to him: "Two of us are in the world: what will you go and say to our father?" He was filled with compassion on account of him. Immediately he stood over him and killed him. From there, we ourselves say: 'Do not do good (deeds) for a bad man, and evil will not happen to you'. With what did he kill him? R. Shimon said: He killed him with a staff: *And a young man for my bruising* (Gen 4:23): a thing that makes a bruise. The Rabbis said: He killed him with a stone: *For I have killed a man for wounding me* (Gen 4:23): a thing that makes wounds. R. 'Azariah and R. Yonatan in the name of R. Isaac said: Cain looked at where his father had slaughtered the bullock, *And it was pleasing for the Lord, better than a bullock* (Ps 69:32), and from there he killed him: [from the place of the neck] and from the place of the organs.

GenR 22:8 begins with exegesis of ויקם on what was meant by Cain 'rising up'. The fact that there was a struggle between the brothers is indicated in the biblical text, which says that Cain 'rose up' against his brother. The verb קום can indicate hostility, but also simply rising from a lying or sitting position. GenR 22:8 describes how Abel was beating Cain in the fight,

<sup>38</sup> E.g. GenR 22:8, Tan *Bereshit* 9, PRE 21 and Tg PsJon Gen 4:8. This tradition is also found in later sources such as Sefer ha-Yashar 1:25, Zohar I, 54b.

as Cain was underneath him. However, the thought of telling their father that he had killed Abel moved Abel to pity, at which Cain took advantage of the situation and ‘rose up’ from underneath Abel and killed him instead. The tradition then turns to the method of killing.<sup>39</sup> The first suggestion is that Abel was killed with a staff, based on Gen 4:23, as a staff can bruise. The second claim is that Cain used a stone, also based on Gen 4:23, as a stone can wound. Finally, the suggestion is given that Cain had learned how to kill from observing the practice of ritual slaughter, and so he killed Abel in the same way that his father had sacrificed a bullock.

Descriptions of a stone as the first murder weapon are widely transmitted in rabbinic sources.<sup>40</sup> PRE 21, Tg PsJon Gen 4:8 and Tan *Bereshit* 9 all simply describe a stone as the murder weapon without further elaboration. For example, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan states: ‘And Cain rose up against Abel his brother and sank a stone into his forehead and killed him (וִטְבַּע אֲבִנָּא בְּמִצְחֵיהּ וְקָטְלִיהּ)’. Tan *Bereshit* 9 builds on the exegesis of the verb וִיקָם ‘and he rose up’ to indicate both hostility and also simply rising from a lying or sitting position. The text states that the words ‘and Cain rose up’ clearly indicate that Cain must have been thrown to the ground by Abel previously, which suggests that Abel was physically fighting Cain.<sup>41</sup> Tan *Bereshit* 9 also describes how Cain inflicted ‘many wounds and blows’ on Abel because no one had died yet in the world and Cain did not know how to recognize when the soul of Abel had left his body.<sup>42</sup> Thus, a variety of methods by which Cain killed Abel are discussed in a range of rabbinic sources, but a stone as the weapon of choice is the most frequently cited option.

### *Lamech killed Cain*

The Hebrew biblical text never mentions the death of Cain, and so naturally the question of when and how Cain died arose for rabbinic exegetes, especially as he was supposed to receive some form of punishment for his crimes. Exegesis on this subject is primarily related to Gen 4:15, which gives the most information about the fate of Cain:

<sup>39</sup> See the discussion in Ch. Milikowsky, ‘Why did Cain kill Abel?’, 90.

<sup>40</sup> J.L. Kugel has suggested that a stone was described as the weapon because it was the most likely thing to be found ‘in the field’ (*Traditions of the Bible*, 152).

<sup>41</sup> This exegetical position is also found in GenR 22:8.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. BT Sanh 37a, which describes how Abel’s blood was splashed over trees and stones.

וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ י' לִכְנֹן כָּל הַרְגֵי קַיִן שִׁבְעָתַיִם יָקָם וַיִּשֶׂם י' לִקְיִן אוֹת לְבַלְתִּי הַכּוֹת אֹתוֹ  
כָּל מִצְאוֹ

*And the Lord said to him: 'therefore anyone who kills Cain, sevenfold will he be avenged', and the Lord put a sign on Cain so that anyone who found him would not kill him.*

In one exegetical approach, this verse is interpreted to mean that the punishment of Cain for murdering Abel would be delayed for seven generations.<sup>43</sup> For example, this is noted in GenR 23:4 where Lamech claims that although Cain killed Abel, his judgement was suspended for seven generations. Other sections of Genesis Rabbah claim that Cain's punishment came in the seventh generation when he was killed in the Flood, which also wiped out seven generations of peoples.<sup>44</sup>

The delay in the punishment of Cain for seven generations is further explained through connection with traditions that describe the leniency shown by God towards Cain in his decree of punishment.<sup>45</sup> There are two key explanations for God's leniency: first, Cain repented of his actions, or at least confessed;<sup>46</sup> secondly, Cain had reduced responsibility because he had not had anyone to teach him that murder was wrong and he could now serve as an example to others.<sup>47</sup>

An alternative suggestion on the fate of Cain is that he was killed by Lamech.<sup>48</sup> This tradition is found in Tan *Bereshit* 11:

<sup>43</sup> E.g. Tg Onqelos Gen 4:15, 24, Tg Neofiti Gen 4:15, 24, GenR 23:4, Tg PsJon Gen 4:15, 24 and Tan *Bereshit* 11. This tradition is also found in the work of Josephus, Ant. 1.2.1 [58]: 'God, however, exempted him from the penalty merited by the murder, Cain having offered a sacrifice and therewith supplicated Him not to visit him too severely in His wrath; but He made him accursed and threatened to punish his posterity in the seventh generation, and expelled him from that land with his wife' (trans. H.St.J. Thackeray, 27); cf. Testament of Benjamin 7:1–5.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. GenR 22:12, 23:2, 24:6 and 32:5. Noah was from the eighth generation and descended from Cain in Genesis 4, but the tenth generation and descended from Seth in Genesis 5.

<sup>45</sup> This point is also noted by B. Grossfeld who stated in reference to Targum Neofiti: 'N's interpretation, according to which Cain's punishment was suspended for seven generations, coincides with the Targumist's opinion, also supported by rabbinic interpretation, that God had partially forgiven Cain, and this leniency was indicated by a suspension of punishment for seven generations at which time Lamech accidentally killed him' (*Targum Neofiti 1: An Exegetical Commentary to Genesis including Full Rabbinic Parallels*, N.Y. 2000, 92).

<sup>46</sup> The repentance of Cain, its genuineness, efficacy and extent are discussed, often based on Gen 4:14, in GenR 22:7, 22:13, LevR 10:5, DeutR 8:1 and TanB *Bereshit* 25, while BT Sanh 37b teaches that exile atones for half of a person's sin as shown by Cain's exile.

<sup>47</sup> E.g. GenR 22:12 teaches that Cain had no example from which to learn, but that he could now serve as an example to others.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Tan *Mishpatim* 13. For this tradition in later redacted sources, see MHG 1:118–119, Zohar I, 3a–3b, Yalqut Shimoni 1:38.

וכיצד נהרג קין נעשה מלאך המות ק"ל שנה והוא נע ונד בקללה למך בן בנו היה שביעי לדורות וסומא היה יוצא לצוד והיה בנו אוחזו בידו כשהיה רואה אותו תינוק חיה היה אומר לו א"ל כמין חיה אני רואה מתח את הקשת כנגדו והרג את קין. ראה אותו תינוק מרחוק הרוג וקרן במצחו אמר לו ללמך אבי הרי דמות אדם הרוג וקרן במצחו. א"ל למך ווי לי זקני הוא. טפח שתי ידיו בחרטה ונגע בראש התינוק והרגו בשוגג שנאמר כי איש הרגתי לפצעי  
(ed. E. Zondel ben Joseph, *Midrash Tanḥuma*, vol. 1, 8a [=9a])

How was Cain killed? He became the angel of death for one hundred and thirty years, and he was wandering and roaming under a curse. Lamech was the son of his son in the seventh generation, and he went out blind to hunt, and his son was leading him by his hand. When the child saw a beast, he told him. He said to him: 'I see something like a beast'. He stretched the bow towards it and he killed Cain. The child saw from a distance that it was killed and a horn was on its forehead. He said to Lamech: 'My father, behold the likeness of a man is killed and a horn is on its forehead'. Lamech said to him: 'Woe is me, it is my ancestor'. He clapped his two hands in regret and struck the child on the head and killed him by accident, as it is said, *For I have killed a man for wounding me* (Gen 4:23).

Tan *Bereshit* 11 raises the question 'how was Cain killed?' and proceeds to describe Cain as an angel of death wandering the earth in exile under the curse of God (a reference to Gen 4:11–12) for 130 years. This appears to be an allusion to Gen 5:3 when after 130 years Adam and Eve had another son, Seth, and so suggests that the exile and curse lasted until a better line of succession was secured. However, the 130 years also located Cain at the time of the seventh generation and his descendant Lamech. Lamech was from the seventh generation according to Gen 4:18,<sup>49</sup> and this links with the concept that Cain should receive his ultimate punishment in the seventh generation, as understood from Gen 4:15.

The tradition then describes the role of Lamech in Cain's death. Lamech is blind and accidentally kills his grandfather Cain in a hunting accident. This tradition connects the fact that Lamech is of the seventh generation and that this is the time of Cain's punishment with exegesis of Gen 4:23. In Gen 4:23, Lamech states: *כי איש הרגתי לפצעי וילד לחברתי כי שבעתים יקם קין ולמך שבעים ושבעה* 'For I have killed a man for wounding me and a young man for my bruising, but if Cain is avenged seven times then Lamech seventy-seven times'. This verse has caused problems for exegetes of all ages. The text does not explain the identity of the man Lamech killed, and it is also not clear if the man and the young man are actually the same person.<sup>50</sup> The tradition in *Tanḥuma* understands the text to refer

<sup>49</sup> Lamech is reported to be of the ninth generation in Gen 5:25, which is not taken into account in Tan *Bereshit* 11.

<sup>50</sup> See the commentary of G.J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 114.

to two people. The man is identified with Cain and the young lad with Lamech's son. The identification of the 'man' (שׂאִי) with Cain may well have been based on the fact that Cain was also called שׂאִי in Gen 4:1, and, as J.L. Kugel notes, Cain was the only person in the biblical story so far to be called שׂאִי.<sup>51</sup>

It was the role of the child to point out game for Lamech to shoot and, because Cain had the mark (from Gen 4:15) of a horn upon him, from a distance he looked like a wild animal. When Lamech realized he had killed his grandfather, in his grief he also killed his son. Thus, the tradition in question identifies the two anonymous figures from Gen 4:23. The accidental nature of the crime is emphasized, however, as Lamech is blind and cannot see what he is shooting.<sup>52</sup>

In this tradition, an explanation is provided for the fate of Cain and is closely linked to exegesis of the biblical text of Genesis. A connection is drawn between Gen 4:15, which is understood to refer to the punishment of Cain in the seventh generation, Gen 4:18, which locates Lamech in the seventh generation, and Gen 4:23, which describes how Lamech has killed unnamed persons. All three verses are brought together to show that the ultimate fate of Cain was to be accidentally killed by his descendant. This interpretation ensures that Cain did receive his punishment, even though it is not described in the biblical text, and shows that ultimately a murderer will receive justice.

### *The Christian Tradition*

The first fratricide, indeed the first murder, in the history of humanity and its huge moral implications was—understandably—one of the most popular biblical episodes in Christian exegetical literature.<sup>53</sup> According to the biblical narrative, the fateful event took its course following the respective offerings of the two brothers, which ultimately led to the murder of Abel by Cain. The Church Fathers focused on the reasons for the rejection of

<sup>51</sup> 'Why was Lamech Blind?', *Hebrew Annual Review* 12 (1990), 95.

<sup>52</sup> A more critical view of Lamech and his descendants is found in GenR 23:2. J.L. Kugel has pointed out that Lamech could be seen here as an instrument of divine justice. Furthermore, Kugel notes the emphasis on Lamech as an accidental murderer, who therefore, in contrast to Cain, is deserving of forgiveness (Why was Lamech blind?, 94f.).

<sup>53</sup> On the figure of Abel in patristic literature, see J. Daniélou, *Les saints 'paiens' de l'Ancient Testament*, Paris 1955, 39–55; M. Alexandre, *Le Commencement du Livre*, Paris 1988, 342.

Cain's offering, and for the prompt acceptance of Abel's sacrifice by God. The biblical text does not offer a conclusive explanation for God's partiality (Gen 4:7).<sup>54</sup> A certain stream of patristic exegesis understands God's decision to favour Abel's sacrifice over Cain's within a moral context of interpretation. The Church Fathers argued that God preferred Abel's sacrifice, because he was already aware of Cain's evil nature in contrast to Abel's innocent and benevolent character.<sup>55</sup> As 1 John 3:12 admonishes the community: '*Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous*'. In this passage, Cain is identified with the evil one, the devil, albeit only metaphorically.<sup>56</sup> In the Epistle of Jude 1:11, Cain becomes synonymous with a heretic.

The Epistle to Hebrews 11:3–5 explains that Abel's sacrifice was preferred over Cain's on account of Abel's faith. In this context, Abel becomes a model of faith and righteousness. In a similar exegetical context, Justin Martyr points out that God was pleased with Abel's offering even though Abel was uncircumcised, which stresses once again the uselessness of circumcision (Dial. XIX). Christian pseudepigraphic tradition lists Abel among the righteous in Paradise (ApcPaul 51, Asc.Is. 9:7). However, it seems that Abel is portrayed as righteous in the exegetical literature as a contrast to the murderer Cain. Significantly, the biblical text itself does not dwell on a description of his character.<sup>57</sup>

Another major exegetical approach places the blame for the unacceptable offering entirely on Cain's actions. Indeed, the biblical text implies that Cain has miscalculated and mishandled his offering to God. As such, this stream of interpretation explains that Cain failed to offer the best pieces for sacrifice and to perform the offering in an appropriate way.<sup>58</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup> See C.T.R. Hayward, who underlines 'the Bible's apparent failure to explain why Cain's offering was rejected' ('What did Cain do Wrong?', 101).

<sup>55</sup> Origen, *On Prayer* 29.18 (Selected Writings, trans. R.A. Greer 1979); Aphrahat, *Dem.* IV.2; Irenaeus, *Adv.Haer.* IV.18.3; III.23.2; Symeon the New Theologian, *Discourses* 4.2.

<sup>56</sup> See also J. Dochhorn: 'Auch die Zuschreibung *ἐκ τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστίν* stammt aus dem 1 Johannesbrief (vgl. 1 Joh 3,8), wo allerdings generell Sünder als Abkömmlinge des Teufels qualifiziert werden (*ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐκ τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστίν*)' ('Mit Kain kam der Tod in die Welt', *ZNW* 98 (2007), 155).

<sup>57</sup> For Abel as a type for the righteous, see Josephus, *Ant.* I.2.1. According to C. Böttrich, Christian theology followed the idealisation of Abel as found in Philo and Josephus (*Die Vögel des Himmels haben ihn begraben*, Göttingen 1995, 12, n.12). The same suggestion has been brought forward by V. Aptowitz, *Kain und Abel*, 24.

<sup>58</sup> Ephraem, *Comm.Gen.* III.2; Gregory of Nyssa, *In Cant.Hom.* 4.2.4; Irenaeus, *Adv.haer.* IV.18.3.



Furthermore, for the majority of the Church Fathers, the motive behind Abel's murder was Cain's envy. Most patristic sources agree that God gave Cain a chance to repent. However, this chance was ungratefully dismissed by Cain.<sup>59</sup>

A common exegetical approach understands the Cain and Abel story in terms of an emphatic christological interpretation. Abel, the innocent murder victim, is a type for Christ, while Cain is a type for the Jewish people.<sup>60</sup> The typological interpretation is linked to John 8:44, in which Jesus accuses the Jews of belonging to the devil 'who was a murderer from the beginning'. Consequently, the association with the first murderer, Cain, was evident. Similarly, Procopius applies a typological interpretation to the details of the Cain story in the context of overtly anti-Jewish polemics. He argues that Israel (i.e. the Jewish people), who looked to kill Jesus (cf. John 7:20), acted according to the ways of Satan. Moreover, similarly to Cain, Israel was unable to offer a proper sacrifice to God. Consequently, Israel was punished in the same way as Cain was punished, namely, trembling in distress in exile (Comm.Gen., PG 87:252).

Furthermore, Jesus as the 'good shepherd' (cf. John 10:10–17) is linked to Abel who was a shepherd by profession (Gen 4:2).<sup>61</sup> Irenaeus of Lyons concludes: 'that is, the passion of the Just One, which was prefigured from the beginning in Abel, and described by the prophets, but perfected in the last times in the Son of God' (Adv.haer. IV.25.2; cf. IV.34.4). In the Gospels of Matthew (23:35) and Luke (11:51), the blood of 'righteous Abel' marks the first of the blood of the prophets that will come upon the present generation. Jesus' blood is associated with Abel's blood and it is said to '*speaking a better word than the blood of Abel*' (Heb 12:24). Cosmas the Indicopleustes stresses that Abel is 'figuratively a representative of the Passion of Christ'

---

<sup>59</sup> Theophilus of Antioch, Ad Autolyicum II.29; John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 19.13–14; idem, Hom.Matth. XII.2 on Matt 3:13; Didymus Alex., Comm.Gen. ad Gen 4:13–15 [132, 135, 137]; Cyril of Alexandria PG 69:36A; Basil of Seleucia PG 85:72A; Cosmas Indicopleustes, Christian Topography V.75; Ephraem, Comm.Gen. III.7; Narsai, Hom.Creat. IV. 380–385. For an extensive discussion of this motif, see A. Kim, 'A Study in the History of the Interpretation of Envy in Genesis 4.1–16' *JSP* 12.1 (2001), 65–84; cf. J.B. Glenthøj, *Cain and Abel in Syriac and Greek Writers (4th–6th centuries)*, Louvain 1997, 146–147.

<sup>60</sup> Theophilus, Ad Autolyicum II.29; Methodius, Banquet 11; Melito, Peri Pascha 59.69; Cosmas Indicopleustes, Christian Topography V.; S. Brock (ed.-trans.), 'A Syriac Life of Abel', *Le Muséon* 87 (1974), 467–492; on Abel as a type for Christ and Cain as a type for the Jews, see A.J. Springer, 'Proof of Identification: Patristic and Rabbinic Exegesis of the Cain and Abel Narrative', *Studia Patristica* 39 (2006), who notes that 'the narrative became a part of the *Adversus Judaeos* tradition' (262); on Abel as a type for Christ in Ephraem's works, see T. Kronholm, *Motifs from Genesis 1–11*, 145–147.

<sup>61</sup> See Cyril of Alexandria, Glaphyra (PG 69:37E); Procopius, Comm.Gen. (PG 87:252).

(Christian Topography V.129). According to Procopius, Abel's blood is compared to Christ's blood, which cries out against the Jews (cf. Gen 4:10; Comm.Gen., PG 87:252).<sup>62</sup> Finally, Abel's blood is related to the blood of martyrs in general (Origen, Exhortation to Martyrdom 50).<sup>63</sup> Abel's death was widely understood as an announcement of the resurrection of the dead.<sup>64</sup> As Cosmas the Indicopleustes illustrates: 'This is Abel the righteous, who having been unrighteously put to death, was the first of all men, who showed that the foundations of death were unsound. Wherefore also he being now dead yet spoke, announcing the resurrection of the dead' (Christian Topography V). Christian exegetes argued specifically that Abel's blood (cf. Gen 4:10) was crying out for atonement, which would be fulfilled through Christ at the future resurrection of the dead.

### *The Birth of Cain and Abel*

The patristic literature associates the devil or the snake with Cain in many instances. Cain and the devil are both regarded as prototypes of evil; while the devil presents the metaphysical dimension of evil, Cain, as the first murderer, is the human manifestation of wickedness. Ultimately, both figures are connected because they introduce, albeit in different ways, death into human life. As noted above, the relationship between these two figures goes back to ideas that can be found in the New Testament.

In Theophilus of Antioch's work, *To Autolykos*, Cain is portrayed as an instrument of the devil. The devil wished to bring death upon Adam and Eve, but when he saw that he did not succeed and, furthermore, that Abel pleased God, he used Cain to bring death into the world: 'And so the beginning of death came into this world to reach the whole race of men to this very day' (*Ad Autolycom* II. 29).

Irenaeus remarks that it was the apostate angel who filled Cain 'with his spirit and made him a fratricide'. Thus, the understanding of Abel's murder is that righteous people will be persecuted and slain by the unrighteous (Dem. 17; cf. 1 John 3:12).

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* V.14.1; Ishodad of Merv, *Comm. Gen.* ad Gen 4:10.

<sup>63</sup> J.L. Kugel argues that Abel was already a biblical example of a martyr for the Jews of the Maccabean era (*Traditions of the Bible*, 152).

<sup>64</sup> See John Chrysostom, *De resurrectione mortuorum* VIII (PG 50:430–431); Ephraem, *Carm. Nis.* LXXI.7; XLIV. 6.4; cf. J. Frishman, 'Themes on Genesis 1–5 in Early East Syrian Exegesis', in: *eadem* – L. van Rompay, *The Book of Genesis in Jewish and Oriental Christian Interpretation*, 184.

Accordingly, in the patristic tradition, the identification of Cain with the devil retains its metaphorical, symbolic character.<sup>65</sup> Some exegetes specifically emphasize that Cain murdered Abel under the influence of Satan, who used Cain as his agent in order to corrupt humanity.<sup>66</sup> Procopius of Gaza, following John 8:44, stresses that Jesus referred to the Jewish people as the offspring of Cain, who in turn is identified with Satan. Procopius' approach seems, however, to be solely of a metaphorical character (Comm.Gen, PG 87:252).<sup>67</sup>

As analyzed in the previous chapter, the motif of Eve's seduction by the devil, with the assistance of the serpent, was well known in Christian literature.<sup>68</sup> However, there is no explicit evidence of sexual activity linked to the tradition of Eve's seduction in the patristic writings. Notably, the idea that Eve was sexually seduced by the devil, and that she was even impregnated by the devil, is alluded to in a Christian apocryphon known as the Protevangelium of James, which probably dates to the second century CE.<sup>69</sup>

Epiphanius of Salamis in Panarion (40.5.3) reports that, according to the Gnostic sect of the Archontics, both Cain and Abel were children of the devil through Eve. A similar tradition can be found in other Gnostic sources, and is related to the fundamental Gnostic exegetical understand-

---

<sup>65</sup> See Cyril Alex. (Glaphyra, PG 69:37–40), who quotes John 8:44 in order to demonstrate that Cain is the offspring of Satan (φημι δὴ τοῦ Κάϊν δίδωσι πατέρα, κάκεινου τὸν Σατανᾶν, τὸν τῆς ἁμαρτίας εὐρετήν), but, in *ibid.* c.33, he mentions Abel and Cain as the sons of Adam (Κάϊν καὶ Ἄβελ ἄμφω μὲν ἐγενέσθησαν ἐκ Ἀδάμ); see also Ephraem, Comm.Gen III.1, who mentions Cain and Abel as the sons of Adam; cf. A. Goldberg, 'Kain: Sohn des Menschen oder Sohn der Schlange?', 203–221; V. Aptowitz, *Kain und Abel*, 20.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Cyril Alex., Glaphyra (PG 69:36); John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 19.11; Ephraem, Carm.Nis.LVII.4; Hymn. Eccl. XI.7; Narsai, Hom.Creat. IV.342. 360ff.; see J.B. Glenthøj, *Cain and Abel*, 147.

<sup>67</sup> ὅθεν καὶ ἀνθρωποκτόνον αὐτὸν καλεῖ καὶ ψεύστην, ὡς καὶ τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῦ, τουτέστι τὸν διάβολον· ἐάν δὲ προηγουμένως εἴπωμεν τὸν πατέρα λέγειν αὐτῶν τὸν διάβολον, τίς ἔσται ὁ τούτου πατήρ.

<sup>68</sup> See the chapter 'In Paradise' in this volume.

<sup>69</sup> 'She was in her sixth month when one day Joseph came from his building projects, entered his house, and found her pregnant. He struck himself in the face, threw himself to the ground on sackcloth, and began to cry bitterly: 'What sort of face should I present to the Lord God? What prayer can I say on her behalf since I received her as a virgin from the temple of the Lord God and didn't protect her? Who has set this trap for me? Who has done this evil deed in my house? Who has lured this virgin away from me and violated her? The story of Adam has been repeated in my case, hasn't it? For just as Adam was praying when the serpent came and found Eve alone, deceived her, and corrupted her, so the same thing has happened to me' (*Infancy Gospel of James* 13; ed. and trans., R.F. Hock). On the dating of the text, see R.F. Hock, *op. cit.*, 11; cf. Hannecke-Schneemelcher, *NT Apokryphen*, 337.

ing of Seth as the only true son of Adam.<sup>70</sup> Epiphanius explicitly refutes any literal interpretation of Cain as the son of the devil: 'It has been fully demonstrated that Cain was called the devil's son because his behaviour was similar and he mimicked his wickedness—not, as they think, because Eve conceived of the devil's seed, as in conjugal union, and sexual intercourse, and bore Cain and Abel' (Pan. 66.63.10). In contrast to Gnostic beliefs, Epiphanius maintains that Cain became the son of the devil by imitation on account of the fratricide (Pan 66.63.11; cf. Pan. 64.29.6).

As observed, although the motif of Cain as the 'biological' son of the devil was known in patristic literature, it is found mainly in heresiological reports and is ultimately condemned as heretical. The mainstream opinion in the patristic writings focused on a metaphorical association between Cain and the devil.

### *The Death of Abel*

As mentioned above, according to the patristic literature, Cain's envy was the main impetus behind Abel's murder. Accordingly, a prominent stream of exegesis suggests that the cause of Abel's murder was pure sibling rivalry.

Following the biblical text, which explicitly states that Eve bore Abel after she had given birth to Cain (LXX: *καὶ προσέθηκεν τεκεῖν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν Ἄβελ*—and again she bore his brother, Abel), the Church Fathers affirm that Cain was firstborn.<sup>71</sup> Procopius of Gaza adds that the two brothers were twins (Comm.Gen., PG 87:233; cf. Cat.Petit 486). Apparently, Procopius assumes that the biblical text referred to only one

---

<sup>70</sup> Various Gnostic sources suggest that the evil Creator God, or chief of the creator angels, had intercourse with Eve. In addition, a stream of thought in Gnostic writings implies that Cain was the son of this 'angel', see *The Gospel of Philip* (NHC II,5), 61.5–10: 'First, adultery came into being, afterward murder. And he was begotten in adultery, for he was the child of the Serpent. So he became a murderer, just like his father, and he killed his brother. Indeed, every act of sexual intercourse which has occurred between those unlike one another is adultery' (trans. W.W. Isenberg, *The Coptic Gnostic Library*, vol. 2, Leiden 2000, 161ff.). Theodoret of Cyrillus in his work *Haereticarum fabelarum compendium*, which depends on Epiphanius' *Panarion*, mentions also that the Archontics believe that Cain and Abel are the children of the devil (*τὸν δὲ Κάϊν καὶ Ἄβελ, τοῦ διαβόλου παιδᾶς φασί*) (*Haer.fab.comp.* I.11, PG 83:361).

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Cyril Alex., *Glaphyra* (PG 69:33,39); John Chrysostom, *Hom.Gen.* 18.15. There is only one source, the Oriental version of the *Cave of Treasures* (V.8; trans. Su-Min Ri, 19) that reverses the order and mentions Abel's conception and birth first, but this confusion of the birth order might also be due to a scribal error (see J.B. Glenthøj, *Cain and Abel*, 57f.).

labour. This exegetical approach is probably based on the understanding of the verb ‘προσέθηκεν’ as ‘she continued’ [to give birth].<sup>72</sup> This tradition is already transmitted by Didymus of Alexandria (Comm.Gen ad 4:1–2 [118]), which may have been a source for Procopius. Didymus notes that Philo of Alexandria thought that Cain and Abel were twins, although this information is not attested in the preserved works of Philo. Actually, Philo stresses that Cain was the ‘elder’ brother of the two (De Sacr. 11). Didymus questions the veracity of the tradition that Cain and Abel were twins. He argues that a source with the title ‘Book of the Covenant/Testament’ (Βίβλος τῆς Διαθήκης) provides exact information on the time period that elapsed between the two births.<sup>73</sup>

In addition, according to the Christian tradition, Cain and Abel had sisters. This assumption is associated with the biblical text of Gen 5:4, which mentions Adam’s sons and daughters (LXX: καὶ ἐγέννησεν Ἀδὰμ υἱοὺς καὶ θυγατέρας). Moreover, Gen 4:17 mentions that Cain married a woman, albeit without further elucidation regarding the origin of this woman. Thus, it must have seemed logical to presume that this woman was one of Adam’s daughters as mentioned in Gen 5:4.

Consequently, Ephraem the Syrian knows of sisters to Cain and Abel, who were living at the same time, but he does not mention a precise number (Comm.Gen. III.3).<sup>74</sup> In the *Cave of Treasures*, Cain and Abel are not twins, but are born instead each with a twin sister: Kelimath, who was born with Abel, and Lebuda, who was born with Cain (V. 19–20).<sup>75</sup> J.B. Glenthøj

<sup>72</sup> ‘Καὶ προσέθηκε τεκεῖν (...) Τινές ἀπὸ μίᾳς συλλήψεως ἄμφω τεχθῆναι φασὶ καὶ εἶναι διδύμους· καὶ «προσέθηκε» τοῦτο δηλοῦν’ (PG 87:233).

<sup>73</sup> Didymus probably refers to a tradition similar to the one preserved in the Book of Jubilees 4:1: ‘And in the third week in the second jubilee she gave birth to Cain, and in the fourth she gave birth to Abel’, see J. Doehorn, *Die Apokalypse des Mose*, 196, n.6; D. Runia remarks that, ‘The precise Philonic passage on Cain and Abel as twins cannot be located, but it is consistent with statements in Philo elsewhere (cf. Quaest.Gen. I.78). Didymus’ text has been excerpted in the Catena under Philo’s name’ (*Philo in Early Christian Literature*, 201); cf. J.R. Roysse, who argues that Didymus may cite a lost Philonic work (*The Spurious Texts of Philo*, Leiden 1991, 22f.); see also D. Lührmann, ‘Alttestamentliche Pseudepigraphen bei Didymus von Alexandrien’, *ZAW* 104 (1992), 231–249, who examines Didymus’ references to the ‘Book of the Covenant’ and concludes that it is not identical with the Book of the Jubilees in spite of certain similarities.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Epiphanius, Pan. 66.23.1; Ps.-Clem. Hom. III.25; on Adam’s children, see V. Apterwitzer, *Kain und Abel*, 10, who lists similar traditions also in later sources, such as Barhebraeus, Ps.-Methodius, Cedrenus; an evidence of the popularity of these traditions also in later times. Greek Life of Adam 5.1 and Latin VitAd 14.2 know of thirty children. According to Jubilees 4:8, Adam and Eve had two daughters, Awan and Azura, and nine more sons after Cain, Abel and Seth; cf. Cat. Petit 585.

<sup>75</sup> See A. Toepel, *Die Adam- und Seth-Legenden*, 193ff.

observes that ‘There is a constant interest in the daughters of Adam and Eve arising for two reasons: a) From where did Cain take his wife? and b) How did the dispute arise?’<sup>76</sup> Significantly, the birth of a daughter to Adam and Eve after Cain and Abel is mentioned in various sources.<sup>77</sup>

Intermarriage with siblings posed a moral problem that the exegetes tried to explain in a pragmatic way. They argued that marriage between brothers and sisters was permissible at the beginning of the human race due to the lack of prospective matches.<sup>78</sup> Didymus of Alexandria attacks ‘those people’, who claim that Cain’s marriage to his own sister was an incestuous act. He explains that this marriage was allowed out of necessity, and that it would have been incest only if other women had existed at the time as well (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 4:17 [137–138]). John Chrysostom confirms that Cain married his own sister, and explains that Scripture does not list the sisters specifically in order to ‘avoid superfluous detail’: ‘So it is likely (...) that Eve gave birth to a daughter after Cain and Abel, and Cain took her for wife. You see, since it was in the beginning and the human race had to increase from then on, it was permissible to marry their own sisters’ (Hom.Gen. 20.3). Similarly, Theodoret of Cyrhus states that Cain’s marriage to his own sister was only natural: ‘At that time, this was not an offense, no law forbidding it, especially since there was no other way to provide for the increase of the race’ (Quaest. XLIII).<sup>79</sup> Interestingly, Epiphanius specifies, quoting the Book of Jubilees, that Cain married ‘his older sister, whose name was Saue (Σαυή)’ (Pan. 39.5.4).<sup>80</sup>

<sup>76</sup> *Cain and Abel*, 4.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 20.3; Didymus Alex. ad Gen 4:17 [137]; Diodore, Fragments on Gen 4:17 (ed. Devreesse).

<sup>78</sup> The legend that Cain married his sister can also be found in Philo (Post.Cain. 36), who argues against it and condemns it as an immoral slander; cf. V. Aptowitz, *Kain und Abel*, 8ff.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Cat. Petit 555; Gennadius, Fragments (PG 85:1641); Diodore, Fragm. Gen 4:17 (ed. Devreesse).

<sup>80</sup> A. Kim argues that ‘After the death of Abel and the removal of the rival for the only reproductive mate available, Jubilees records that in the sixth week Eve gave birth to another daughter who was named Azura (Jub 4.8). It seems likely that this detail gave rise to the tradition that each brother was born with a twin sister. Later interpreters harmonize Azura with the first daughter’ (*Cain and Abel*, 83). On the dependency of Epiphanius on Jubilees, see J.C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, 148. John Malalas, Chronicle 1.6 mentions Azoura and Asouam as the daughters of Adam and Eve; Cain marries Azoura and Seth marries Asouam. George Syncellus mentions that Seth married Azourah (ed. Dindorf, 17), while Cain married Asauna, his sister, when she was fifty years old and he was sixty-five (op. cit., 15).

However, Ishodad of Merv emphasizes that the names of Seth and Cain's wives are not mentioned in the Bible intentionally, so that immodest people do not use the story as a pretext to marry their sisters. Ishodad, nevertheless, does mention their names and reports that Cain marries Asoa and Seth Azora (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 4:17).

Most Christian sources argue that Cain married his own sister, while Abel remained unmarried. The tradition that Abel remained unmarried can be explained on the basis of the biblical text, which mentions only Cain's (and Seth's) wife and progeny.<sup>81</sup> Against the background of the typological interpretation of Abel in Christian tradition, the motif of celibate Abel became very popular in patristic literature. Didymus of Alexandria stresses that Abel died unmarried (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 4:17 [137–138]). Cosmas the Indicopleustes emphasizes that Abel was righteous and a virgin, and specifically that he had no wife or children (Christian Topography V). Epiphanius also mentions that Abel died young and unmarried (Pan. 39.5.9).<sup>82</sup> Similarly, Ephraem the Syrian highlights Abel's chastity (Hymn. Virg. 44.21f.).<sup>83</sup>

The Pseudo-Clementine Homilies suggest rivalry among the siblings as the motive for the murder, and consider a woman, property or simply their parent's love as possible issues of conflict:

Hence the ambiguous name which she gave to her first-born son, calling him Cain, which has a capability of interpretation in two ways; for it is interpreted both possession and envy, as signifying that in the future he was to envy either a woman, or possessions, or the love of the parents towards him. But if it be none of these, then it will befall him to be called the possession. For she possessed him first, which also was advantageous to him. For he was a murderer and a liar, and with his sins was not willing to be at peace with respect to the government. Moreover, those who came forth by succession from him were the first adulterers. And there were psalteries, and harps, and forgers of instruments of war. Wherefore also the prophecy of his descendants being full of adulterers and of psalteries, secretly by means of pleasures excites to wars (III.25, ANF VIII, 67).

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Jubilees 4:9,11, where Cain and Seth also marry their sisters.

<sup>82</sup> Epiphanius mentions in another context that Abel was killed at the age of 30 when Adam was 100 years old (Pan. 66.23.1).

<sup>83</sup> Cf. John Malalas, Chronography 1.10 (Dindorf, 3); on this motif, see V. Aptowitz, *Kain und Abel*, 8ff., 22f., 119f.; T. Kronholm, *Motifs from Genesis 1–11*, 142; J. Frishman, 'Themes on Genesis 1–5', 171–186.

The Pseudo-Clementine Homilies are thought to have originated in the region of Coele-Syria in the early fourth century. According to manuscript evidence, they were translated into Syriac shortly after their composition in Greek, namely by the end of the fourth century.<sup>84</sup> Interestingly, the tradition of rivalry over a woman is encountered as the main motive of the murder in later Syriac pseudepigraphical literature, and most notably in the *Cave of Treasures*.

In the *Cave of Treasures*, Adam suggests to Eve that Cain and Abel should marry the respective twin sister of the other. Cain disagrees with this decision, as he wishes to marry his own twin sister, who was beautiful.<sup>85</sup> Adam considers intermarriage between the twin siblings to be a transgression of the commandment to marry one's own sister, and becomes upset with Cain.<sup>86</sup> Adam commands his sons to go up to 'this holy mountain' (i.e. the *Cave of Treasures*) to bring their offerings and offer their prayers. He adds that, after the fulfilment of these duties, they will be able to consort with their wives (V.21–26).<sup>87</sup> In the course of the story, Cain becomes a fugitive after the murder, but in the end does take his twin sister as a wife (V.31–32). Cain's marriage to his twin sister is additional evidence for his unholy behaviour and evil character. Moreover, in contrast to various earlier Christian writings, this text makes the effort to set certain, albeit somewhat idiosyncratic, limits to incestuous behaviour, and ultimately to condemn it. Finally, it is worth noting that although this source initially suggests nuptials for Abel, Abel dies unmarried.

---

<sup>84</sup> See Hannecke-Schneemelcher, *NT Apokryphen*, 440f.; cf. B. Rehm, 'Zur Entstehung der pseudoklementinischen Schriften', *ZNW* 37 (1938), 77–184; F.S. Jones, 'The Pseudo-Clementines. A History of Research', *The Second Century* 2 (1982), 1–33, 63–96.

<sup>85</sup> According to Su-Min Ri: 'L'annonce du désir de Cain à sa mère contre la volonté d'Adam explique l'étymologie du nom de Cain qui se fonde sur les radicals 'qoph, nun aleph' 'être jaloux'. Ce mot est employé dans la langue talmudique (babylonienne) surtout pour la jalousie à l'égard d'une femme' (*Commentaire*, 186); on the disagreement over the sisters as the reason for Cain's envy, see also S. Brock, 'A Syriac Life of Abel', 467–492, esp. 487.

<sup>86</sup> Although this attitude could reflect the relevant commandment in Lev 18:9, it might also express a latent criticism of the custom of marriage between siblings in the Persian empire, which was the familiar cultural background of the text; see R.N. Frye, 'Zoroastrian Incest', in: *Orientalia I. Tucci memoriae dicata*, Rome 1985, 445–455; M. Mitterauer, 'The Customs of the Magians: the Problem of Incest in Historical Societies', in: R. Porter – M. Teich (eds), *Sexual Knowledge, Sexual Science: the History of Attitudes to Sexuality*, Cambridge 1994, 231–250.

<sup>87</sup> J.B. Glenthøj notes that 'Adam's speech is probably the central part of the wedding ceremony seeing that Adam refers to the sisters as wives' (*Cain and Abel*, 75). Indeed, there is a certain ceremonial tone in this passage.



The motif of the fight over the sisters was particularly popular in the Christian pseudepigraphical literature and it can be found in texts such as the Syriac Testament of Adam<sup>88</sup> and the Ethiopic Book of Adam and Eve.<sup>89</sup>

Finally, the story of Cain and Abel's fight over a woman is reported by Epiphanius in the late fourth century as a legend common to the Gnostic group of the Archontics: "That was why the one attacked the other and not, as the truth is because Abel had somehow pleased God. Instead they concoct another story and say "Because they were in love with their own sister, Cain attacked Abel and killed him for this reason" (Pan. 40.5.4).<sup>90</sup>

Thus, Cain's envy was considered a key motive for Abel's murder in patristic literature. Furthermore, speculations on Adam's progeny led to the widely held assumption that Cain married his own sister. Interestingly, in Syriac pseudepigraphic and other non-mainstream traditions Cain's envy regarding Abel's prospective spouse incites him to the murder of his brother.

The next point of discussion is the weapon used by Cain to kill Abel, as the biblical text does not mention exactly how Cain killed Abel. Certain

---

<sup>88</sup> See Test. Adam 3.5: 'a Flood is coming and will wash the whole earth because of the daughters of Cain, your brother, who killed your brother Abel out of passion for your sister Lebuda'. The date and provenance of the Testament of Adam are uncertain and much disputed. S.E. Robinson argues that the work was originally written in Syriac in the 3rd century (*OT Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1, 990); cf. M.E. Stone, *A History of the Literature of Adam and Eve*, 96–97; J. Charlesworth's suggestion that 'the conflict over the sisters reflects early Syrian asceticism' is unconvincing (*The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research*, Missoula 1981, 91).

<sup>89</sup> See S.C. Malan, *The Book of Adam and Eve: Also called the Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan*, London – Edinburgh 1882, 95. The dating of the text is uncertain, however, its latest redaction dates to the seventh century at the earliest, as it is translated from Arabic into Ethiopic; see M.E. Stone, *A History of the Literature of Adam and Eve*, 98ff. Interestingly, this motif can be found in that form also in the later Samaritan collection of biblical legends, the *Asatir* (1,3), see M. Gaster, *The Asatir: The Samaritan Book of the 'Secrets of Moses'*, Leipzig 1927, 184; see also the review of the various names of the sisters in pseudepigraphical traditions in *ibid.*, n.3.; on this text, see P. Stenhouse, 'Samaritan Chronicles', in: A.D. Crown (ed.), *The Samaritans*, Tübingen 1989, 223f.

<sup>90</sup> A. Kim suggests that: 'These interpretations illustrate that the twin tradition was an attempt by early interpreters to anchor envious conflict between Cain and Abel apart from the issue of their sacrifices. The function of these twin legends is to deflect attention away from God's seemingly capricious decision to regard Abel's sacrifice and to refuse Cain's sacrifice' (op. cit., 83); cf. L. Ginzberg, 'Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern', 227. Indeed, Epiphanius adds that the Archontics believe that a fight over their sister, with whom they were both in love, was the real reason for Abel's murder and not that God favoured Abel's offering. However, Epiphanius, faithful to the biblical text, stresses that the real reason was that Abel's offering was pleasing to God (Pan. 40.5.4).

sources argue that Cain used just his bare hands.<sup>91</sup> Some sources propose a stone as a possible and plausible weapon, since the two brothers were in a field (*Cave of Treasures* V.29).<sup>92</sup> Didymus of Alexandria, quoting the ‘Book of the Covenant’, notes that Cain used a club (ξύλον) (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 4:8 [126]). A staff, which Cain brought with him to the field on the pretext of danger from wild beasts, is used initially by Cain in the Ethiopic Book of Adam and Eve, but the fatal instrument is actually a big stone:

(Cain) hastened and smote him with the staff, blow upon blow, until he was stunned (...); whereupon Abel pleads for mercy: ‘If thou kill me, take one of these large stones, and kill me out right’. Then Cain, the hard-hearted and cruel murderer, took a large stone, and smote his brother with it upon the head, until the brains oozed out and he weltered in his blood before him.<sup>93</sup>

Somewhat anachronistically, other sources refer to an iron weapon, such as a sword.<sup>94</sup> Didymus of Alexandria remarks that in any case it was a ‘slaughter’ (σφαγή), as evidenced in 1 John 3:12: ‘οὐ καθὼς Κάϊν ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ ἦν καὶ ἔσφαξε τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ.’ (Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother) (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 4:8 [126–127]). Indeed, the verb provided in the epistle: ‘σφάζω’, means ‘slaughter’ and specifically by cutting the throat, which would have implied the use of an iron weapon, such as a knife or a sword.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Didymus Alex., Comm.Gen. ad Gen 4:7 [126]; Ephraem the Syrian, Comm.Gen. IV.2; John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 26.4 mentions the right hand.

<sup>92</sup> See J.B. Glenthøj, *Cain and Abel*, 43; cf. M.D. Eldridge, *Dying Adam with his Multiethnic Family. Understanding the Greek Life of Adam and Eve*, Leiden 2001, 68, who observes: ‘if Cain used a stone to kill Abel, he would have had to wound him repeatedly, before discovering the fatal spot’. The tradition lives on in the Armenian Life of Adam, in which Cain also hits Abel with a stone, see E. Preuschen, *Die apokryphen gnostischen Adamschriften*, Giessen 1900, 35.18.

<sup>93</sup> See S.C. Malan, *The Book of Adam and Eve*, 101.

<sup>94</sup> John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 19.5; Didymus Alex., Comm.Gen. ad Gen 4:8 [126] simply mentions an ‘iron object’.

<sup>95</sup> J. Byron notes that ‘the term used to describe Cain’s murderous action is σφάζω, which again is a rarely used term in the NT. (...) Commentators on 1 John 3,12 usually note that the term is used to indicate a violent murder—perhaps even premeditated—, and sometimes translate the verse to read: “Cain butchered his brother” (‘Slaughter, Fratricide, and Sacrilege: Cain and Abel Traditions in 1 John 3’, *Biblica* 88 (2008), 526–535, esp. 531f.). Byron builds upon the use of this verb, which is also specifically used for sacrificial slaughtering, and reads sacrificial implications into the story. Josephus also describes Cain’s killing of Abel as an act of slaughter: ‘Ἀβέλου μὲν ἐσφαγμένου, Κάϊος δὲ διὰ τὸν ἐκείνου φόνον πεφευγότος’ (Ant. I.67).

Finally, Ishodad of Merv (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 4:8) considers various possibilities for the manner in which Cain killed Abel. As he reports, according to some people, Cain strangled Abel, or he bit him or he hit him with a stone. Ishodad's suggestions all point to the fact that the biblical text does not mention any weapon used or carried by Cain in the field. Accordingly, some action of extreme physical violence seemed plausible as the cause of Abel's death.<sup>96</sup>

The biblical narrative of Abel's murder by Cain contains major gaps with regard to the motive for murder as well as the murder weapon. In other words, crucial questions, such as 'why was Abel murdered' and 'how was Abel murdered', remained open. Thus, Christian authors sought to address these questions in order to complete the full picture of the murder story. Christian sources viewed the Cain and Abel saga as a tale full of human passion, involving strong sibling rivalry and, most interestingly, rivalry in love. In addition, various murder weapons were considered, each one of them adding different meanings to the murder story. Accordingly, the murder weapons ranged from a simple stone, found accidentally in the field, to an insidiously hidden club, or even a sacrificial knife.

### *The Death of Cain*

The biblical text remains silent over Cain's death. This absence of information must have puzzled exegetes considerably. Usually, the lack of reference to the death of a person in the Bible is an indication of his exaltation and direct transfer to heaven (see Enoch, Gen 5:24). Additionally, the scriptural passages on Cain's fate as a vulnerable fugitive, whom everybody could randomly kill, and God's enigmatic response that '*who kills Cain will let loose seven acts of vengeance*' (LXX: *πᾶς ὁ ἀποκτείνας Κάιν ἑπτὰ ἐχθιχούμενα παραλύσει*) have certainly not facilitated an answer to the simple question: what happened to Cain at the very end?

Ephraem the Syrian reports a tradition, according to which Cain perished in the Flood together with the seven generations that elapsed between his time and the time of the Flood.<sup>97</sup> Ephraem writes: 'Some

---

<sup>96</sup> Cf. also the Book of the Bee XVIII: 'and he (Cain) persuaded his brother to come out on the plain and slew him. Some say that he smashed his head with a stone, and killed him and others say that Satan appeared to him in the form of wild beasts that fight with one another and slay each other. At any rate he killed him this way or that way'.

<sup>97</sup> A.F.J. Klijn observes that 'These seven generations agree with the number of generations from Cain to Lamech and his children (Gen 4,17–22), after whom no other children

say that the seven generations were those of his tribe who died with him. This [interpretation], however, cannot be maintained. For, even, if the flood overtook them, it overtook the seventh generation. And if that one generation perished with [Cain], how can they say that seven generations perished with Cain when they cannot even show that the flood occurred in the seventh generation of Cain's descendants?' (Comm. Gen. III.9). Accordingly, the reference to the 'seven acts of vengeance' refers to the seven generations. However, Ephraem points out that this calculation is not correct and that it was after more than nine generations that the Flood occurred (Comm.Gen. III.9).<sup>98</sup> He argues, further, that Cain remained alive until the seventh generation because this was the duration of the life of people in those times, such as Adam who was alive until the generation of Lamech.

According to a certain stream of exegesis, Lamech's confession that he killed a man and a young man (Gen 4:23–24) implies that his victim was Cain. Didymus of Alexandria reports a tradition from the 'Book of the Covenant' that Cain was killed by Lamech accidentally: 'It is said in the Book of the Testament that Cain was killed by Lamech by accident: Lamech was building a wall and upset the wall when Cain was [standing] behind it' (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 4:24 [143]).<sup>99</sup> John Malalas in the early sixth century reiterates this motif. However, he distinguishes between Lamech as Cain's murderer and Cain's death by a stone construction. According to Malalas' information, 'certain people' maintain that Cain was killed accidentally by

---

of Cain are mentioned' (*Seth in Jewish, Christian and Gnostic Literature*, 72). Interestingly, Basil of Caesarea in the fourth century explicitly refutes the tradition that there were seven generations between Cain and the Flood: 'There are, however, some who have gone so far as the following explanation, which does not jar with the doctrine of the Church; from Cain to the Flood, they say, seven generations passed by, and the punishment was brought on the whole earth, because sin was everywhere spread abroad' (Ep. to Optimus 5, trans. ANPN VIII, 298). Mainstream patristic exegesis counts ten generations in this context, and refers to Noah as the tenth generation from Adam; on this motif see J.P. Lewis, *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood*, 118, n.4.

<sup>98</sup> The tradition that Cain drowned in the Flood is also implied in the Testament of Benjamin 7: 'It is for this reason that Cain was handed down by God for seven punishments, for in every hundredth year the Lord brought upon him one plague. When he was two hundred years old suffering began and in his nine hundredth year he was deprived of life. For he was condemned on account of Abel his brother as a result of all his evil deeds, but Lamech was condemned by seventy times seven' (trans. H.C. Kee, *OTP* 1, 827). See L. Ginzberg: 'Nur die Notiz, die Ephräm hat, nämlich, dass Kain in der Sintflut umkam geht auf eine alte jüdische Tradition zurück (Das. 22,8)' ('Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern', 297).

<sup>99</sup> J.L. Kugel argues that 'the tradition attested in *Jubilees* (or something like it) survived through Didymus in the patristic writings' (*Traditions of the Bible*, 167); cf. *Jubilees* 4:31.

a collapsing house, while others believe that Lamech killed Cain (without specifying if it was intentional or not).<sup>100</sup>

In contrast, Basil of Caesarea in his Epistle to Optimus (4) explains that ‘some suppose that Cain was killed by Lamech, who survived to this generation that he might suffer a longer punishment’. Basil clarifies that this opinion is not true. He claims instead that Lamech committed two crimes, both unrelated to Cain’s death: wounding a man and hurting a young man, as testified in the biblical text. Theodoret of Cyrrhus also denies that Cain was killed by Lamech. He dismisses this version of the story as a myth, and suggests instead that Lamech killed a youth: ‘Whom did Lamech kill? Not two peoples, as some commentators suppose, nor Cain, a tale invented by others, but one, a young man. The text says, note ‘I killed a man as a wound to myself and a youth as a bruise to myself’, that is, a man in his youth. Yet he escaped punishment by confessing the sin, and, by delivering sentence on himself, headed off the divine verdict’ (Quaest. XLIV). Both Basil and Theodoret of Cyrrhus appear to dismiss the tradition of Lamech as Cain’s murderer due to its legendary character and because it did not explicitly agree with the biblical account.<sup>101</sup>

The tradition that understood Lamech as the murderer of Cain was also current in Syria in the fourth century, as attested by Ephraem. Ephraem elucidates that Lamech killed Cain, who was still alive at the time, because he regarded Cain as an obstacle to the contact between Lamech’s generation (the Cainites) with the blessed generation of the Sethites. Significantly, Cain is described ‘like a wall’ between the two generations. Moreover, Lamech also killed a young boy, his own son, in order to prevent the continuation of his own shame (Comm.Gen. IV.3).<sup>102</sup>

An alternative tradition is preserved in the *Cave of Treasures*. According to this tradition, Lamech killed Cain because he was blind and mistook Cain for a wild animal in the forest. Moreover, he also killed his own son accidentally, who was leading him through the forest by hitting him with his hands.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>100</sup> ‘κατὰ δὲ ταῦτα τῆς οἰκίας ἐπ’ αὐτὸν πεσοῦσης ἀπέθανεν, ὡς ἔνιοι φασιν, ἕτεροι δὲ ὅτι Λαμὲχ αὐτὸν ἀπέκτεινε’ ed. Dindorf, 4; obviously Malalas refers to the text of Jubilees without the additional elements transmitted by Didymus.

<sup>101</sup> See further discussion on the same motif: Procopius PG 87:256ff.; Cat. Petit 564; Jerome, Ep. 36.2–9; cf. C.T.R. Hayward, *Hebrew Questions*, 123.

<sup>102</sup> Cf. Ishodad of Merv, Comm.Gen. ad Gen 23–24, who quotes Henana.

<sup>103</sup> The killing of the boy by hitting him is implied by Ephraem: ‘For I, like Cain, have killed a man for wounding me. Just as he struck the cheeks of Abel as [one would] a youth and so killed him, so have I also killed a youth for beating me’ (Comm.Gen. IV.2).

And in the days of Enosh, in his eight hundred and twentieth year, Lamech, the blind man, killed Cain, the murderer, in the Forest of Nôdh. Now this killing took place in the following manner. As Lamech was leaning on the youth, his son [Tubal-Cain], and the youth was setting straight his father's arm in the direction in which he saw the quarry, he heard the sound of Cain moving about, backwards and forwards, in the forest. Now Cain was unable to stand still in one place and to hold his peace. And Lamech, thinking that it was a wild beast that was making a movement in the forest, raised his arm, and, having made ready, drew his bow and shot an arrow towards that spot, and the arrow smote Cain between his eyes, and he fell down and died. And Lamech, thinking that he had shot game, spoke to the youth, saying, "Hurry up, and let us see what game we have shot." And when they went to the spot, and the boy on whom Lamech leaned had looked, he said unto him, "O my lord, thou hast killed Cain." And Lamech moved his hands to smite them together, and as he did so he smote the youth and killed him also (VIII.2–10).

In this passage, Lamech accidentally kills Cain (i.e. the 'man') and the boy (i.e. the 'young boy') due to his blindness.<sup>104</sup> A similar exegetical tradition survives in a Greek catena text from a twelfth century manuscript attributed to Hippolytus of Rome.<sup>105</sup> However, Hippolytus' authorship and, consequently, the dating of the source are uncertain. The text narrates how Lamech had weak sight and did not recognize Cain. He shot an arrow from his bow and instantly killed both Cain and the youth who was leading him.<sup>106</sup> In contrast to the Syriac tradition evidenced in the *Cave of Treasures*, Lamech was not completely blind, and the youth was not his own son but Cain's guide.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. also a version of the motif attested in an Arabic catena text attributed to Ephraem, S.P. de Lagarde, *Materialien zur Kritik und Geschichte des Pentateuchs* II, 57–58; the tradition of Lamech's blindness survives also in later byzantine texts, such as in Ps.-Methodius II (trans. Martinez, 124), *Palaea Historia* (ed. Vassiliev, 13f.) and Michael Glykas (Annales, ed. Bekker, 118). Michael Glykas attributes this tradition to Methodius of Patara; cf. V. Aptowitz, *Kain und Abel*, 66.

<sup>105</sup> Athens, Bibl. Nat. 2492, fol. 127v-128r, twelfth century; see M. Richard, 'Un fragment inédit de S. Hippolyte sur Genèse IV 23', in: J.L. Heller (ed.), *Serta Turyniana. Studies in Greek Literature and Palaeography in honor of Alexander Turyn*, Urbana 1974, 394–400.

<sup>106</sup> "Ο δὲ ἀρχιερεὺς μάρτυς Ἰππόλυτος τοῦτο μᾶλλον σαφέστερον διηγείται ὡς ὅτι ὁ Λάμεχ ἀσθενεὶς ἔχων τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἀμυδρῶς πῶς ἦν ἐ[μ]βλέπων τοῦ δὲ Κάιν δεινῶς τὸ στένειν καὶ τρέμειν (...) καὶ τείνας τὸ τόξον ἐν δυνάμει, ἐν μιᾷ βολῇ ἄμφω τοὺς δύο ἀπέκτεινεν τὸν τε χειραγωγούμενον Κάιν καὶ τὸν χειραγωγούντα νεανίσκον' (Richard, op. cit., 396f.); cf. Su-Min Ri, *Commentaire*, 217f.

Finally, in the Ethiopic Book of Adam and Eve Lamech kills both Cain and the youth, a young shepherd who accompanied Lamech, with a stone from his sling in the open field.<sup>107</sup>

Ishohad of Merv maintains that Cain's punishment lasted for seven generations, and that he was killed after that time had passed (Comm. Gen. ad Gen 4:15). Moreover, Ishodad reports the tradition that Lamech mistook Cain for a wild beast and threw a stone at him and killed him. The killing of Cain by a stone might derive from the tradition outlined above, which suggested that Cain used a stone to kill Abel. Accordingly, the law of retaliation applied here: Cain killed Abel with a stone and then likewise he himself was killed with a stone.<sup>108</sup>

The possibility that Lamech was Cain's murderer intentionally or unintentionally was widely discussed in patristic sources. A major stream of thought suggests that Lamech killed Cain accidentally, or was a mistake due to a physical impairment. The exegetical approaches examined above present responses to the biblical enigmas that arose from Cain's unmentioned death and from Lamech's unnamed victims.

### *The Exegetical Encounter*

Rabbinic and Christian exegesis of the tale of Cain and Abel opened up discussion on the relationship between the two brothers, their ultimate fate and the significance and consequences of their actions for humanity. Indeed, the Cain and Abel story was significant for discussing theological concepts such as sin, repentance and forgiveness and the relationship between humanity and God. The examples discussed in this chapter are primarily focused on the use of similar motifs and argumentation in both rabbinic and Christian interpretations, which have partly developed as a result of the lack of detail in and ambiguity caused by the biblical text of Genesis 4. This section discusses the possible basis for these motifs in logical interpretation of the biblical text, in the development of ideas found in

---

<sup>107</sup> 'And Lamech struck him with a stone from his sling, that fell upon his face, and knocked out both his eyes then Cain fell at once and died. (...) Then was Lamech sorry for it and from the bitterness of his regret, he clapped his hands together, and struck with his flat palm the head of the youth, who fell as if dead; but Lamech thought it was a feint, so he took up a stone and smote him, and smashed his head until dead' (ed. Malan, 122f.); according to the Kitāb al-Magāll, blind Lamech mistakes Cain for a wild beast and kills him by throwing a stone at him (ed. M. Gibson, 20).

<sup>108</sup> V. Aptowitz, *Kain und Abel*, 61.

early pseudepigraphical sources or (and not exclusively) in the possibility of encounter with the traditions of the other.

The first set of examples under analysis examines the association between Sammael or the devil and Cain. In both rabbinic and Christian exegesis, certain traditions make a link between Cain and the 'devil', whether literally or metaphorically, as a reflection on the nature of Cain. From rabbinic traditions, this connection is first made in PRE 21 and Tg PsJon Gen 4:1 where Sammael is identified as the biological father of Cain. The concept of Sammael as the father of Cain may be a late development, as suggested by the fact that this tradition has not been preserved in rabbinic sources redacted earlier than Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan.<sup>109</sup> As such, the question of what prompted the inclusion of this tradition into these texts comes to the fore, and, as to be expected, there are a number of factors.

One basis for the development of this tradition is that it has arisen from connections between verses within the Hebrew Bible. First, exegesis of Gen 4:1 *'I have acquired a man by means of the Lord* ('אֱתֵן לַיהוָה') is a key factor. Rabbinic exegetes needed to explain the unusual use of the particle אֱתֵן with the name of the Lord, which in Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan results in the teaching that Eve conceived Cain 'by means of' an angel of the Lord, namely Sammael. Secondly, a connection is made between Gen 4:1 and 5:3. Seth is described as being in the likeness of Adam in Gen 5:3: *'And Adam lived for one hundred and thirty years and he begat in his likeness according to his image, and he called him Seth'*. As noted above, for certain rabbinic exegetes, this led to the implication that if Cain did not look like Adam (as his other son, Seth, did—Abel is not mentioned) then Cain was not his son. This approach also helps to distance Cain's evil actions from the first man.<sup>110</sup>

There are also precursors to this tradition in sources such as the Qumran literature and pseudepigrapha, forms of which may have circulated and

<sup>109</sup> In support of this, traditions about Sammael have been convincingly shown by G. Stemmerger to be a late development within rabbinic literature, which supports the late dating of the tradition; cf. G. Stemmerger, 'Samael und Uzza: Zur Rolle der Dämonen im späten Midrasch', 636–661.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. Tg PsJon Gen 5:3. The association between Gen 4:1 and 5:3 is acknowledged by a number of scholars including J. Bowker who states: 'The belief that Cain was the child of Sammael, from whom he inherited his evil character, was derived from Gen 5:3, which says that Adam *Begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth*. This is not said of Cain, the implication being, therefore, that Cain was not Adam's son' (*The Targums and Rabbinic Literature*, 136). However, it is likely that a range of influences and background have been brought to bear on the tradition.



impacted on later rabbinic traditions such as PRE 21 and Tg PsJon Gen 4:1. 1QHodayot<sup>a</sup> 11.1–19 possibly refers to ‘one who is pregnant of the serpent’.<sup>111</sup> However, the context is not the birth of Cain, but of two women in childbirth; one woman has a successful labour but the birth of the other child initiates eschatological events.<sup>112</sup> In another early tradition, 4 Maccabees 18:8 describes the mother who was persecuted by Antiochus making the claim: ‘No seducer of the desert nor deceiver in the field corrupted me, nor did the seducing and beguiling serpent defile my maidenly purity’ (trans. H. Anderson, *OTP* 2, 563). This makes no reference to Cain, but a connection is made between the serpent and sexual relations with a woman. A. Goldberg has argued that the tradition of the parentage of Cain belongs to the realm of apocalyptic and mystical thought that was current in the first centuries CE.<sup>113</sup> He argues that this element was then suppressed by rabbinic exegetes and only resurfaced in later Jewish mysticism, as represented by Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan.<sup>114</sup> However, there are no existing pseudepigraphical sources that specifically refer to the angelic adversary as Cain’s father.

There are also a number of precursors to the tradition that Sammael was the father of Cain in rabbinic sources. In particular, there are traditions on the lust of the serpent (Sammael’s agent in PRE 13) for Eve and Eve’s relationship with demons, as outlined in the discussion of rabbinic motifs.<sup>115</sup> The tradition of Cain’s parentage should also be seen in connection with the other traditions specifically about Sammael in rabbinic sources. In the chapter ‘In Paradise’, it is argued that the involvement of Sammael and Eve in Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer could in part reflect influence from Christian tradition, alongside other factors in the development of this motif. Thus, in light of the development of other traditions about Sammael, the relationship with Christian interpretations should, therefore, be explored in this instance too.

The metaphorical association between the devil and Cain is found prominently in Christian sources, which is most likely based on New

<sup>111</sup> 1QHodayot<sup>a</sup> 11.13 gives: להביל נמרץ אפעה להביל נמרץ which is paralleled in 11.19 with הריית עול (H. Stegemann et al., *1QHodayot<sup>a</sup>*, DJD XL, Oxford 2009, 144).

<sup>112</sup> Cf. C.D. Bergmann, *Childbirth as a Metaphor for Crisis: Evidence from the Ancient Near East, the Hebrew Bible, and 1QH XI*, 1–18, Berlin 2008, 164–217.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Philo, *Opif.* 157–160; 3 Baruch 9:7; 2 Enoch 31:6. Although of later date and uncertain provenance see also *Apocalypse of Abraham* 23:4–6.

<sup>114</sup> A. Goldberg, ‘Kain: Sohn des Menschen oder Sohn der Schlange?’, 203–221.

<sup>115</sup> E.g. GenR 18:6, BT Shab 10a, 146a, BT Yeb 103b, BT AZ 22b, BT Erub 18b and ARN A 1.

Testament texts such as John 8:44 and 1 John 3:7–12. 1 John 3:7–12 describes those who do sinful actions as ‘of the devil’ and the primary example given in 1 John 3:12 is Cain: ‘Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother’s were righteous’.<sup>116</sup> The metaphorical association between Cain and the devil as a type of evil was reiterated by Church Fathers such as Irenaeus of Lyons, who teaches that Cain was filled with the spirit of an apostate angel (Dem. 17), and Theophilus of Antioch who writes that Cain was the instrument of the devil (Ad Autolyicum II.29). Again, with symbolic intent, Procopius of Gaza implies that Cain acts like the ‘son’ of the devil, which links to John 8:44 (Comm.Gen., PG 87:252). Epiphanius of Salamis describes Cain as the ‘son of the devil by imitation’ (Pan. 66.63.10), but explicitly refutes the possibility that Cain is the biological son of the devil.

The reference in Epiphanius leads to another possible source of the tradition, namely, the Gnostic literature. Epiphanius reports that, according to the Gnostic sect of the Archontics (Pan. 40.5), both Cain and Abel were children of the devil and Eve, which is also reported in Theodoret, Haer. Fab.Comp. I.11.<sup>117</sup> This tradition can also be found in Gnostic sources, such as the Gospel of Philip NHC II,5.61.5–10. Indeed, V. Aptowitz argues that the Sammael legend has its origin in Gnostic heresies, following Epiphanius’ report: ‘Sie (die Sage) drang auch, etwas modifiziert, in das Pirke R. Eliezer ein, gewiss aus christlichen oder muhammedanischen Kreisen (...) Pirke weicht von den Häretikern darin ab, dass es nur Kain von Samael empfangen werden läßt’.<sup>118</sup>

As such, the development of the tradition of Sammael as the father of Cain in Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan is complex

---

<sup>116</sup> There has been debate over the relationship of 1 John to Targum Pseudo-Jonathan. M. McNamara has suggested that, as 1 John goes beyond what is stated in the biblical text of Genesis, ‘the development is due either to the NT writers themselves or to later Jewish tradition’, and even that the tradition in the Targum ‘influenced their pens when describing the figures of Cain and Abel’ (*The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch*, 156–60). Similarly, F. García Martínez states that ‘Specialists of targumic literature (...) do not hesitate in seeing in the New Testament a clear echo of this Targumic tradition, which assures us of the tradition’s antiquity’ (‘Samma’el in Pseudo-Jonathan and the Origin of Evil’, 28). However, later in his article García Martínez acknowledges that ‘giving the devil a name, Samma’el, is most probably a late development, since it is attested to only in pseudo-Jonathan’ (ibid. 37).

<sup>117</sup> According to Epiphanius (Pan. 40.1), the ‘Archontics’ hailed from Palestine. Epiphanius’ report reveals a certain familiarity in this group with Jewish pseudepigraphical legends and books, see E. Grypeou, *Das vollkommene Pascha*, 136.

<sup>118</sup> *Kain und Abel*, 129.

and there are a number of potential trajectories of development.<sup>119</sup> First, there is the connection between Gen 4:1 and 5:3 as ‘proof’ of the tradition. Secondly, there is an extensive background in earlier rabbinic sources regarding the snake or an angelic adversary and Eve, but without specific mention of Sammael. Thirdly, there is the possibility of influence from pseudepigraphic traditions, such as found in 4 Maccabees, or Gnostic traditions, such as reflected in the work of Epiphanius and the Gospel of Philip.<sup>120</sup> Finally, the Sammael and Cain tradition may reflect awareness of exegesis also found in a variety of Christian sources that describe how the devil influences Cain. However, the metaphorical approach in these sources in contrast to the literal biological understanding in PRE 21 and Tg PsJon Gen 4:1 should be emphasized.<sup>121</sup> As such, PRE 21 and Tg PsJon Gen 4:1 may provide evidence of encounter with Christian approaches, but without excluding the probability of awareness of a whole range of other traditions and exegesis that have led to the existing form of the tradition in these texts.

The subject of the birth of Cain and Abel also gave rise to traditions that Cain and Abel were twins. In a number of rabbinic interpretations, the fact that the brothers were born together is based on Gen 4:2: ‘*And Eve continued to bear his brother Abel*’, with the ‘continuation’ of labour understood as an indication of a single pregnancy, as discussed above.<sup>122</sup> The idea that Cain and Abel were twins is clearly based on a close reading of the Hebrew biblical text of Gen 4:2, and is explicitly found in rabbinic sources of both Palestinian and Babylonian provenance.

---

<sup>119</sup> A similar view is put forward by R. Adelman who argues for the influence of pseudepigraphic, Gnostic and earlier rabbinic exegetical sources on Sammael as the father of Cain in Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer, with particular emphasis on the Gnostic parallels (*Return of the Repressed*, 98–108). See also H. Spurling – E. Grypeou, ‘Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer and Eastern Christian Exegesis’, esp. 220–224.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. A. Goldberg who argues against influence from Gnostic legends (‘Kain: Sohn des Menschen oder Sohn der Schlange?’, 211).

<sup>121</sup> This argument is in part supported by F. García Martínez, who also argues that the tradition may have developed from both exegesis of the biblical text and through importing a foreign story into the rabbinic text. He notes the connection between exegesis of Gen 4:1 and 5:3; the idea that Cain was not Adam’s son is based on the fact that Seth resembled Adam whereas Cain did not. He then argues that this provides the motive for the introduction of the story of Sammael in order to explain the parentage of Cain. Ultimately, García Martínez argues that the story of Sammael was included to explain the origin of evil in God’s perfect created world (‘Samma’el in Pseudo-Jonathan and the Origin of Evil’, 19–41); cf. P. Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen*, 100–101 and A. Shinan, ‘The Angelology of the ‘Palestinian’ Targums on the Pentateuch’, *Sefarad* 43.2 (1983), 181–198, esp. 193.

<sup>122</sup> E.g. GenR 22:3, BT Sanh 38b and PRE 21.

Equally, within Christian tradition, Procopius of Gaza explicitly refers to Cain and Abel as twins (Comm.Gen., PG 87:233; cf. Cat. Petit 486), which is similarly found in Didymus of Alexandria (Comm.Gen. ad loc. [118]), who testifies to the existence of this idea whilst arguing against it. Didymus claims that Philo recorded that Cain and Abel were twins, but notes, on the contrary, that the 'Book of the Covenant' provides exact information on the time period that elapsed between the two births. This precise tradition is not attested in the extant works of Philo and, indeed, Philo emphasizes that Cain was the 'elder' brother (De Sacr. 11).<sup>123</sup> However, it is clear that Didymus at least thought that he was referring to Philo, and possibly a Philonic tradition that has not been preserved.<sup>124</sup>

The idea that Cain and Abel were twins is close to the idea of the biblical text of Gen 4:2, which says that '*Eve continued* [ἤρτην/προσέθηκεν] *to bear Abel*'. It is, therefore, possible that the motif of a single birth was arrived at independently in rabbinic and Christian tradition based on close analysis of the biblical text. However, Gen 4:2 does not explicitly refer to twins, and it is notable that this tradition is not frequently attested or found in early Christian sources. As such, the fact that Didymus claims this is a Jewish tradition provides evidence of indirect encounter.

Furthermore, interpretations on the birth of Cain and Abel in rabbinic and Christian exegesis go beyond discussion on the two brothers to include the idea that they had sisters, and even twin sisters. This assumption is connected to Gen 5:4, which describes the sons and daughters that Adam produced after Seth. Moreover, Gen 4:17 mentions the wife of Cain without further explanation on the identity of this woman.

The various rabbinic traditions on the twin sisters of Cain and Abel are again linked to exegesis of the 'continuous' pregnancy implied in Gen 4:2, but also address important questions regarding how the world became populated, namely through the marriage of the brothers and sisters, and

<sup>123</sup> See n.73 above on the possible loss of the Philonic passage.

<sup>124</sup> It is also possible that another Jewish source may have been in view. For example, with regard to the birth of Cain and Abel, the Greek Life of Adam 1:3 states: 'Eve conceived and bore two sons, Diaphotos called Cain, and Amilabes called Abel', which implies that the brothers were twins, although this is not explicit (trans. M.D. Johnson, *OTP* 2, 267). Indeed, J. Dochhorn notes: 'Es hat den Anschein, dass die beiden Söhne als Zwillinge gedacht sind; jedenfalls ist nicht von zwei Geburten erst recht nicht von zwei Schwangerschaften die Rede. (...) Doch auch im Gen 4,2 können Kain und Abel durchaus als Zwillinge gedacht sein, den von einer zweiten Schwangerschaft (...) wird nichts gesagt; und es gibt in der Tat sowohl in der patristischen wie auch in der rabbinischen Literatur Belege dafür, dass man den Text so aufgefasst hat' (*Die Apokalypse des Mose*, 196).

the duty of procreation. The twin sisters of Cain and Abel (in various numbers) is clearly a widely transmitted rabbinic tradition, and its inclusion in a well developed form in Sifra, a text which is commonly given a final date of redaction in the third century, is also an indication of the antiquity of the idea.<sup>125</sup>

In addition, there are precursors to these traditions on the brothers and sisters found in the pseudepigraphical literature and Josephus. There are a number of texts that simply refer to the brothers as having sisters. For example, Pseudo-Philo 1.1–2 states that ‘Adam became the father of three sons and one daughter: Cain, Noaba, Abel, and Seth. And after he became the father of Seth, Adam lived 700 years; and he became the father of twelve sons and eight daughters’ (trans. D.J. Harrington, *OTP* 2, 304). Josephus, *Ant.* 1.58 simply states that Adam and Eve also had daughters. Jubilees contains more information, beginning in 4:1: ‘And in the third week in the second jubilee, she bore Cain. And in the fourth she bore Abel. And in the fifth she bore ‘Awan, his daughter’ (trans. O.S. Wintermute, *OTP* 2, 61). Early pseudepigraphical sources do not report the existence of twin sisters for Cain and Abel. However, Jubilees 4:9 does discuss the marriage of Cain to ‘Awan. Indeed, A. Kim argues that ‘After the death of Abel and the removal of the rival for the only reproductive mate available, Jubilees records that in the sixth week Eve gave birth to another daughter who was named Azura (Jub 4.8). It seems likely that this detail gave rise to the tradition that each brother was born with a twin sister. Later interpreters harmonize Azura with the first daughter’.<sup>126</sup> Despite the antiquity of the traditions within rabbinic sources, these pseudepigraphical and other texts do not contain the idea found in the various rabbinic traditions that Cain and Abel had twin sisters. Instead, they refer to sisters of the two brothers, as also suggested by Gen 5:4, which provides a relevant exegetical context for the development of the rabbinic traditions.

Interestingly, these pseudepigraphical traditions could provide a background to Christian sources that do focus more on the idea that Cain and Abel had sisters, although not specifically twin sisters. A range of Christian sources refer primarily to sisters rather than twin sisters, presumably following Gen 5:4.<sup>127</sup> For example, Ephraem the Syrian

<sup>125</sup> Cf. Sifra *Qedoshim* 11, GenR 22:2, 22:3, 61:4, PT Sanh 5:1, 9:1, PT Yeb 11:1, 11d, BT Sanh 38b, 58b, BT Yeb 62a, ARN A 1 and PRE 21.

<sup>126</sup> ‘Cain and Abel’, 83.

<sup>127</sup> E.g. John Chrysostom, *Hom.Gen.* 20.3; Didymus of Alexandria, *Comm.Gen.* ad Gen 4:17 [137]; and Diodore (Fragments ad Gen 4:17).

(Comm.Gen. III.3) refers to sisters of Cain and Abel who were alive at the same time as them, but he does not mention a precise number. However, the *Cave of Treasures* V.19–20 is worthy of particular mention, as it is one of the few Christian sources to refer specifically to twin sisters whom the brothers married (rather than just sisters), as is similarly found in rabbinic traditions. In the *Cave of Treasures*, Cain and Abel are not twins, but Kelimath is a twin to Abel, and Lebuda is a twin to Cain.<sup>128</sup> Importantly, there is no mention of the birth of a twin sister in the biblical text of Genesis 4, and so the fact that this motif is found in a range of rabbinic traditions and the *Cave of Treasures* in particular is an interesting point of potential encounter. Indeed, the frequently attested and developed state of the traditions, alongside the antiquity of the idea, in rabbinic literature and the lack of such a motif in the pseudepigraphical sources could be an indication that the *Cave of Treasures* reflects awareness of rabbinic traditions.

The precise nature of the relationship between the brothers and sisters has resulted in a similar exegetical approach representing shared values in both the rabbinic and Christian material, as both sets of interpretations are frequently concerned with the question of the morality of that relationship.<sup>129</sup> The biblical laws against incest are clear, such as in Lev 20:17. This moral difficulty is addressed in a variety of rabbinic interpretations and is clearly an early tradition, as it is again found in Sifra, redacted in the third century.<sup>130</sup> With variations in details, the rabbinic traditions teach that God allowed the procreation of siblings to populate the world, but this was an exceptional case and should not be used as proof that this type of behaviour is acceptable. This approach is also widely attested in Christian sources.<sup>131</sup> For example, John Chrysostom (Hom.Gen. 20.3) says that because the human race had to increase, it was permissible on this occasion to marry sisters.

The possible causes of the fight between the brothers are elaborated upon extensively in both rabbinic and Christian traditions with a variety of motivations presented in both sets of interpretations. However, of particular interest is the tradition found in both rabbinic and Christian

<sup>128</sup> See A. Toepel, *Die Adam- und Seth-Legenden*, 193ff.

<sup>129</sup> An issue also raised by Philo, Post. Cain 36.

<sup>130</sup> Cf. Sifra *Qedoshim* 11, PT Sanh 5:1, 9:1, PT Yeb 11:1, 11d, BT Sanh 58b and PRE 21.

<sup>131</sup> E.g. Didymus of Alexandria (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 4:17), John Chrysostom (Hom.Gen. 20.3), Theodoret of Cyrrhus (Quaest. XLIII), Epiphanius (Pan. 39.5.4), Cat. Petit 555, Diodore, Fragm. Gen 4:17, ed. Devreesse, John Malalas, Chronicle 1.6, George Syncellus (15–17) and Ishodad of Merv, Comm.Gen. ad Gen 4:17.

sources that the cause of their dispute was conflict over a woman, and one of the sisters of the brothers.<sup>132</sup> The portrayal of this motif as preserved in both PRE 21 and the *Cave of Treasures* V.21–32 is of particular interest. The *Cave of Treasures* describes how Abel was killed by Cain after a fight over Cain's twin sister, which is closely paralleled in PRE 21. Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer and the *Cave of Treasures* agree that the fight was over a twin sister, that the motivation was because Cain wanted to marry the more beautiful of the two sisters, and both traditions also refer to the apparent transgression of the biblical incest laws. There is one key point of difference as, in PRE 21, it is Abel's sister who is the source of dispute, while in the *Cave of Treasures* it is Cain's own twin sister.<sup>133</sup> The traditions preserved in these sources that Cain and Abel fought over a woman are strong evidence of a direct exegetical encounter. There is no mention of this motivation for the murder of Abel in the biblical text, or in alternative shared sources, and yet very similar argumentation is employed in both traditions.<sup>134</sup>

A dispute over a woman, and particularly Abel's twin sister, is also found in GenR 22:7, alongside disagreement between Cain and Abel over property, but in this tradition the issue is sibling rivalry and ownership rather than desire. This is illustrated by the fact that the text states: 'This one said: 'I will take her, because I am firstborn', and the other one said: 'I will take her, because she was born with me''. This interpretation may be based in part on the understanding of Cain's name (קַיִן) as meaning envy or jealousy (קנאה in Hebrew), but also alluding to acquisition (קנה in Hebrew). Similarly, the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies III.25 suggest sibling rivalry as the motivation for the murder, and mention a woman, property or parental approval as possible issues of conflict. Interestingly, the name Cain is associated with 'possession and envy' in the Homilies, although there is no etymological connection in the Greek, and this may demonstrate awareness of how the Hebrew was understood.

<sup>132</sup> E.g. GenR 22:7 and PRE 21; cf. Pseudo-Clementine Homilies (III.25), *Cave of Treasures*, Test. Adam 3.5, *The Book of Adam and Eve* (ed. Malan, 95).

<sup>133</sup> This is because Abel was considered to be unmarried, and even a model of chaste living, in many patristic sources, as outlined above. This is based on the fact that no wife for Abel is mentioned in the biblical text.

<sup>134</sup> It should be noted that the story that Cain and Abel's fight was because of a woman is reported by Epiphanius in the mid fourth century as a legend common to the Gnostic group of the Archontics (Pan. 40.5.4).

The means by which the murder of Abel was committed is also a topic of exegesis in both rabbinic and Christian traditions. A variety of potential weapons and methods of killing are presented, but certain traditions in both sets of material refer to murder by use of a stone.<sup>135</sup> This instrument of killing Abel is also found in the book of Jubilees, which states at 4:31: 'At the end of that jubilee Cain was killed one year after him. And his house fell upon him, and he died in the midst of his house. And he was killed by its stones because he killed Abel with a stone, and with a stone he was killed by righteous judgment' (trans. O.S. Wintermute, *OTP* 2, 64). In Jubilees, the death of Cain is seen as poetic justice for the fact that he had also killed Abel with a stone.

The murder of Abel with a stone is clearly a widely attested rabbinic tradition, which may well reflect influence from early sources, such as found in the book of Jubilees. It is, therefore, interesting that sources, such as the *Cave of Treasures* and Ishodad of Merv (Comm.Gen. ad loc.), mention 'a stone' as the instrument of the murder. However, although such descriptions of the death of Abel are certainly not found in the biblical text, it is not a difficult conclusion that Cain would have used a weapon at hand such as a stone. As such, this most likely represents an independent tradition about the death of Abel, which was circulated amongst both rabbinic and Christian exegetes, rather than a point of encounter.<sup>136</sup>

The last set of examples focuses on the fate of Cain. The first point of discussion is on the motif of the timing of Cain's death, and, in particular, that the punishment of Cain for murdering Abel would be delayed for seven generations. This tradition is found in a range of rabbinic sources, including Tg Onqelos Gen 4:15, 24 and Tg Neofiti Gen 4:15, 24, which attest to the antiquity of this tradition.<sup>137</sup> In particular, the timing is noted in GenR 23:4 where Lamech claims that Cain's punishment was suspended for seven generations. Furthermore, a connection is made with the punishment of the Flood, and GenR 22:12, 23:2, 24:6 and 32:5 claim that Cain's punishment came in the seventh generation when he was killed in the Flood, which also wiped out seven generations of peoples.

---

<sup>135</sup> E.g. GenR 22:8, PRE 21, Tg PsJon Gen 4:8 and Tan *Bereshit* 9; cf. *Cave of Treasures* V.29, *Ethiopic Book of Adam and Eve*, ed. Malan, 101 and Ishodad of Merv, *Comm.Gen.* ad loc.

<sup>136</sup> As noted above, J.L. Kugel has suggested that a stone was described as the weapon because it was the most likely thing to be found 'in the field' (*Traditions of the Bible*, 152).

<sup>137</sup> E.g. Tg Onqelos Gen 4:15, 24, Tg Neofiti Gen 4:15, 24, GenR 23:4, Tg PsJon Gen 4:15, 24 and Tan *Bereshit* 11.



Early pseudepigraphical and related material again needs to be considered in the transmission of this tradition. The timing of Cain's fate is also found in the work of Josephus, *Ant.* 1.58, which states that God threatened Cain's posterity in the seventh generation (the generation of Lamech according to Gen 4:18). The motif that Cain drowned in the Flood is also mentioned in the Testament of Benjamin 7:1–5, which describes seven vengeance by God, but it goes on to teach that it is in the nine hundredth year that Cain perished in the Flood (the generation of Lamech according to Gen 5:25). It is clear that the death of Cain in the Flood is an early Jewish tradition that is also widely attested in a variety of rabbinic traditions.

This exegetical explanation is also raised by Ephraem the Syrian who notes that 'some say' that Cain was killed in the seventh generation when those generations were wiped out in the Flood. Ephraem goes on to dismiss this view as, following Genesis 5, the Flood did not come until the ninth generation.<sup>138</sup> However, he maintains that the death of Cain was in the seventh generation, as it was the typical lifespan of humanity at that time. Indeed, he claims that seven generations would come and see Cain's diminished status and then he would die (*Comm.Gen.* III.9).<sup>139</sup> This has led L. Ginzberg to state that 'Nur die Notiz, die Ephräm hat, nämlich, dass Kain in der Sintflut umkam geht auf eine alte jüdische Tradition zurück (*Das.* 22,8).'<sup>140</sup> The inclusion of the motif of Cain's death in the seventh generation in the work of Ephraem the Syrian may indicate possible evidence of a direct encounter with rabbinic interpretations, as it alludes to the approach also found in rabbinic traditions that the '*sevenfold*' of Gen 4:15 refers to seven generations. The fact that Ephraem then argues against those who claim that Cain was killed in the Flood, as is widely attested in rabbinic traditions, suggests that Ephraem may have been directly engaging with rabbinic interpretations.

The last set of examples focuses on the legend that Lamech killed Cain. In rabbinic traditions, this idea is preserved in *Tan Bereshit* 11, where the exegesis is based on connections made between three biblical verses.

---

<sup>138</sup> Lamech was from the seventh generation according to Gen 4:18, whereas Lamech is reported to be of the ninth generation in Gen 5:25. As such, based on Genesis 4, Noah was from the eighth generation and descended from Cain whereas Genesis 5 places Noah in the tenth generation and descended from Seth.

<sup>139</sup> Cf. Basil of Caesarea, *Ep. to Optimus* 4, Theodoret of Cyrillus (*Quaest.* XLIV), Procopius, *Comm.Gen.* PG 87:256ff.; *Cat. Petit* 564; Jerome, *Ep.* 36.2–9.

<sup>140</sup> 'Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern', 297.

Cain receives his punishment in the seventh generation (based on Gen 4:15), which is also the generation of his descendant Lamech (based on Gen 4:18) who reportedly kills a man and a young man (based on Gen 4:23). The connection of all three verses forms a basis for the tradition in Tan *Bereshit* 11 that blind Lamech killed his ancestor Cain in a hunting accident.

L. Ginzberg has emphasized the popularity of the tradition that Lamech killed Cain.<sup>141</sup> On the rabbinic side, the tradition is very common in Jewish medieval writings.<sup>142</sup> For example, rabbinic texts that are considered to have a late redaction, such as Midrash ha-Gadol and Midrash Aggadah, contain this tradition.<sup>143</sup> However, whilst these texts do preserve traditions from prior to their date of redaction, the earliest rabbinic text in terms of redaction to transmit this legend is Tan *Bereshit* 11.<sup>144</sup> This suggests, albeit not conclusively, that the motif may be a late tradition incorporated into the pool of existing interpretations on the fate of Cain, which prompts investigation into the development of the tradition.

Significantly, the tradition that Lamech killed Cain is a widespread Christian idea referred to in both Greek and Syriac sources, although, as expected, with different theological motivations. For example, Ephraem the Syrian (Comm.Gen. IV.2) describes how Lamech killed Cain to allow the mixing of the generations of Seth and Cain. Interestingly, the killing of Cain by Lamech is also a source of debate and is refuted by authors such as Basil of Caesarea (Ep. to Optimus 4) on the grounds that the biblical text of Gen 4:23 describes how he wounded a man and hurt a young man. Theodoret of Cyrhus (Quaest. XLIV) also argues against the tradition that Lamech killed Cain, and claims that the biblical text refers to a single young man.

<sup>141</sup> 'Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern', 293–99, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. 5, 145–147.

<sup>142</sup> See E. Reiss, 'The Story of Lamech and Its Place in Medieval Drama', *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 2 (1972), 35–48.

<sup>143</sup> J.L. Kugel has listed Jewish sources pertaining to this tradition as follows: Yalqut Shimoni 1:135, Midrash Aggadah (ed. Buber) 13–14, MHG 1:127, Sefer ha-Yashar 1:31, Leqaḥ Tov 1:31 ('Why was Lamech Blind?', 92).

<sup>144</sup> Indeed, Ch. Milikowsky has explained: 'This aggadic narrative is found in the relatively late midrashic composition *Midrash Tanhuma* (Bereshit, 11), and also in several early Christian works' ('Why did Cain kill Abel?', 88). M.R. James refers to the tradition as belonging to one of his 'Lost Apocrypha of the Old Testament' which has been preserved in patristic quotations (*The Lost Apocrypha of the Old Testament: Their Titles and Fragments*, New York 1920, 10–11).

A number of aspects of the widely attested Christian tradition are also found in Tan *Bereshit* 11. First, a number of Christian authors refer to the accidental killing of Cain by Lamech, such as Didymus of Alexandria (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 4:24 [143]) and Ishodad of Merv (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 4:24), which is similar to the accidental nature of the killing of Cain by Lamech in Tan *Bereshit* 11.<sup>145</sup> Furthermore, the motif of blind or nearly blind Lamech is also evidenced in Christian sources. Notably, the *Cave of Treasures* VIII.2–10 preserves a tradition that is strikingly close to the tradition in Tan *Bereshit* 11. In both interpretations, Lamech not only kills Cain by mistake, but also his young son by clasping his hands together in despair when he realizes that he killed his ancestor. Indeed, apart from a few details in the description of Cain in Tan *Bereshit* 11 (namely Cain as an angel of death with a horn on his head), the two texts transmit a nearly identical tradition. In addition, as outlined above, versions of this tradition were also attested in other Christian writings of varied provenance, such as in a Greek catena fragment attributed to the second century Church Father, Hippolytus of Rome (Athens, Bibl. Nat. 2492, fol. 127v–128r), and the Ethiopic Book of Adam and Eve (ed. Malan, 122f.), which preserves a large amount of traditions also found in the *Cave of Treasures*.

Clearly, the tradition that Lamech killed Cain is widespread in Christian literature, despite the disagreement it provoked. Given that the tradition is also recorded in the late redacted Tanḥuma, it is possible that Tan *Bereshit* 11 reflects awareness of what was a popular and relatively early Christian tradition, but it is used and adapted by rabbinic exegetes in Tan *Bereshit* 11 to build upon earlier rabbinic interpretations of the Lamech story. As such, this may be an example of a direct encounter reflecting the awareness of Christian motifs in rabbinic tradition as presented in Tan *Bereshit* 11.

The influence of early pseudepigraphical traditions is an important consideration in this chapter, as many of the motifs discussed are found in the earliest texts. Also, many of the traditions under examination can be explained through the application of traditional hermeneutical principles to the biblical text by both rabbinic exegetes and Church Fathers. However, the evolution of exegetical traditions is complex and should not be seen in a linear way and with only a single trajectory of development.

---

<sup>145</sup> With respect to the tradition in Didymus of Alexandria, J.L. Kugel argues that 'the tradition attested in *Jubilees* (or something like it) survived through Didymus in the patristic writings' (*Traditions of the Bible*, 167); cf. *Jubilees* 4:31. However, although *Jubilees* describes the wall falling on Cain, Lamech is not involved.

Ultimately, all of the factors outlined in this chapter could have contributed in different ways to the development of the motifs on Cain and Abel discussed here, including the possibility of a relationship between rabbinic and Christian exegesis of Genesis 4.<sup>146</sup>

---

<sup>146</sup> It is clear that many of the motifs discussed as evidence of a possible exegetical encounter on Cain and Abel are all found in PRE 21. This represents a cluster of motifs in one text. It is often argued of *Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer* that it demonstrates a relationship with Christian exegesis, and, as such, the cluster of motifs in PRE 21 may reflect an awareness of a variety of Christian ideas on these topics. However, pseudepigraphical traditions are also important in the development of the traditions in *Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer*. Ultimately, any Christian influence would be part of a multifaceted development of motifs on Cain and Abel in *Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer*, which also build on earlier pseudepigraphical and rabbinic interpretations.



## CHAPTER THREE

### THE FLOOD STORY

*So the Lord said, 'I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them.'* (MT Gen 6:7)

*I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you.* (MT Gen 6:17–18)

*In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, on the seventeenth day of the second month—on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.* (MT Gen 7:11–12)

#### *Rabbinic Traditions*

In rabbinic exegesis, the Flood Story is a subject of significance for examining the relationship between God and humanity, and as a model for the consequences of human immorality. Rabbinic interpretations of the story often focus on the generation of the flood and manifestations of their wickedness. This wickedness is said to be exhibited through a variety of deeds, including robbery and murder, but the most prominent crime of humanity in rabbinic traditions is sexual immorality, as highlighted by Gen 6:1–7.<sup>1</sup> Contrasting ideas on the character of Noah are found, with a number of rabbinic traditions raising questions about the true nature of his righteousness or perfection as described in Gen 6:8–9.<sup>2</sup> The structure of the ark is also elaborated upon, with particular reference to the design of the ark and its interior arrangement.<sup>3</sup> Life in the ark is a substantial topic of analysis, including subjects such as the care of the animals and the practice of chastity.<sup>4</sup> A final key theme is the punishment of the Flood

---

<sup>1</sup> E.g. T Sot 3:6–9, GenR 27:1–4, LevR 23:9, BT Sanh 108a, Tan *Noah* 12.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. GenR 28:8, 29:1–5, PRK 12:1, BT Sanh 108a–b.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. BT Sanh 108a–b, PRE 23; on the structure of the ark, see H. Spurling – E. Grypeou, 'Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer and Christian Exegesis', 238–242.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. BT Sanh 108a–b, PRE 23.

itself, the form this took, and its consequences not only for the generation of the flood, but also for Noah and his family who were chosen to begin a new covenant relationship after the destruction.<sup>5</sup> Ultimately, as W.J. van Bakkum states, ‘rabbinic literary sources construe the Flood essentially as a warning to mankind’.<sup>6</sup>

### *The Descendants of Seth and Cain*

Descriptions of the generation of the flood dominate rabbinic exegesis of the Flood Story.<sup>7</sup> In particular, a number of rabbinic interpretations seek to explain the nature of the crimes of the generation of the flood that led to their destruction, with focus on the answer that the people of that generation were sexually immoral.<sup>8</sup> The examples discussed in this section contribute to analysis of rabbinic portrayals of that wicked generation.

One exegetical approach of interest is the division of the generation of the flood into the descendants of Seth and Cain. The formation of the generations of Seth and Cain is primarily discussed in exegesis of the genealogies of Gen 4:17ff and 5:1ff, which list the descendants of Cain and Seth respectively. It is well known that the genealogies actually present a contradiction, as, in Gen 4:18, Lamech the father of Noah is the descendant of Cain, whereas in Gen 5:25 he is recorded as the descendant of Seth. This presented a textual complication that rabbinic exegetes needed to explain.<sup>9</sup> As such, the focus of rabbinic interpretation of Gen 4:17ff is

<sup>5</sup> E.g. PRE 23, Tan *Noah* 7.

<sup>6</sup> ‘The Lesson of the Flood: מבוֹל in Rabbinic Tradition’, in: F. García Martínez – G.P. Luttikhuisen (eds), *Interpretations of the Flood*, Leiden 1999, 133. For an overview of rabbinic tradition on the Flood, see also J.P. Lewis, *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood*; J.L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 171–226; L.H. Feldman, *Remember Amalek! Vengeance, Zealotry and Group Destruction in the Bible according to Philo, Pseudo-Philo and Josephus*, N.Y. 2004, 84–113; idem, ‘Questions about the Great Flood, as Viewed by Philo, Pseudo-Philo, Josephus, and the Rabbis’, *ZAW* 115 (2003), 401–422; A. Amihay, ‘Noah in Rabbinic Literature’, in: M.E. Stone et al. (eds), *Noah and His Book(s)*, Atlanta 2010, 193–214.

<sup>7</sup> The generation of the flood will not have a share in the world-to-come according to M Sanh 10:3.

<sup>8</sup> E.g. GenR 26:5, LevR 23:9, TanB *Bereshit* 33, Tan *Bereshit* 12.

<sup>9</sup> The contradiction between the alternative genealogies of Seth and Cain are also discussed by Philo in Post. Cain 40–48. His solution is that people of wicked character deserve to be classed as a descendant of Cain, while righteous people should be classed as a descendant of Seth. For example, in discussion of the name ‘Lamech’, which he says means ‘humiliation’, he refers to two types of humiliation, one arising from weakness and one from perseverance. Philo draws a contrast between good and wicked in that those humiliated by perseverance are considered to be a descendant of Seth, whilst those humiliated by weakness are the descendants of Cain.

on the wicked nature of the descendants of Cain, whereas exegesis of Gen 5:1ff teaches that the genealogy here signals the true descendants of Adam.<sup>10</sup> This reflects the widespread tradition that Seth became the ‘foundation of humanity’, based on Gen 5:25ff where the genealogy indicates that Noah and his sons, and thus all humanity, are descended from Seth.<sup>11</sup>

However, although the generations of Seth and Cain are discussed in interpretation of the genealogies, the contrast between the generations after this time, and particularly with reference to who constituted the generation of the flood, is not a common theme of exegesis in rabbinic literature, as also outlined by A.J.F. Klijn.<sup>12</sup>

In exegesis of the genealogy in Gen 5:1ff, GenR 24:6 discusses to whom the genealogy in Genesis 4 could refer, given the true descendants of Adam are outlined in 5:1ff. The tradition refers to a separation between the descendants of Adam, and those who are not descended from Adam because they were destroyed by the Flood. Those destroyed by the Flood are Irad, Mehujael and Methushael, the descendants of Cain in Gen 4:18. However, the generations of Seth and Cain as the component parts of the generation of the flood are not explicitly discussed, as the focus is on who are the true descendants of Adam. GenR 26:7 also identifies the Nephilim of Gen 6:4 with Irad, Mehujael and Methushael, but again with no reference to the descendants of Seth.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> For example, in exegesis of Gen 4:17ff, GenR 23:1 describes how the wicked (i.e. Cain and his descendants) think they will live forever, but will not live or rise for judgement. GenR 23:2 outlines how Irad, Mehujael and Methushael will be wiped out and Lamech and his descendants are disowned, and GenR 23:2–3 also describes the wicked deeds of the descendants of Cain. Alternatively, in exegesis of Gen 5:1, GenR 24:2–5 explains that Adam’s descendants are those written in the book of the generations of Adam. They are identified with those in the book of the living in Ps 69:29, the twelve tribes will come from them and it is to them that the Torah will be given. Thus, precedence is given to the descendants of Adam through Seth in Gen 5:1ff rather than the alternative genealogy of Cain.

<sup>11</sup> The ancestry of Cain is further discredited by negating the paternity of Adam. This idea is based on the statement in Gen 5:3 that Seth was in the likeness of Adam, the implication being that as Cain did not look like him, then he was not truly Adam’s son. In fact, Cain’s father is to be sought amongst the demons, as outlined in GenR 24:6, and Tg PsJon Gen 4:1–2 contains the tradition that Cain was the child of Eve and Sammael; cf. PRE 21. As such, Cain and his descendants would naturally inherit the wicked nature of their demonic ancestor. See the chapter on ‘Cain and Abel’ in this volume, and also F. García Martínez, ‘Samma’el in Pseudo-Jonathan and the Origin of Evil’, 19–41.

<sup>12</sup> A. Klijn, *Seth in Jewish, Christian and Gnostic Literature*.

<sup>13</sup> See also the parallel tradition in TanB *Bereshit* 40. The Nephilim are mentioned in Gen 6:4. They were considered to be mighty men of renown (הגברים אשר מעולם אנשי), but the Nephilim could also be understood as the children of the union between the sons of god and the daughters of men. The Nephilim are also mentioned in Num 13:33



Exegesis of Gen 6:1–2, which describes the sons of god taking as wives the fair daughters of men, forms the basis of a description of the descendants of Seth and Cain in PRE 22. The Hebrew text of Gen 6:1–2 states:

ויהי כי החל האדם לרב על פני האדמה ובנות ילדו להם ויראו בני האלהים את  
בנות האדם כי טבת הנה ויקחו להם נשים מכל אשר בחרו

*And it came to pass that humanity began to multiply upon the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them. And the sons of god saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took wives for themselves from any they chose.*

PRE 22 is the first rabbinic tradition, in terms of date of redaction, that unambiguously elaborates on the contrast between the descendants of Seth and Cain, which is found specifically in the context of exegesis on Gen 6:1–8, and who formed the generation of the flood. PRE 22 also describes in more detail than earlier traditions the licentious nature of the generation of Cain:

רבי ישמעאל אומר משת עלו ונתיחסו כל הבריות וכל דורות הצדיקים ומקין עלו ונתיחסו כל דורות הרשעים והפושעים והמורדים שמרדו במקום ואמרו אין אנו צריכין לטיפת גשמיד ולא לדעת את דרכיך שנאמר ויאמרו לאל סור ממנו (איוב כא יד) רבי מאיר אומר גלוי בשר ערוה היו הולכין דורות של קין האנשים והנשים כבהמה ומטמאין בכל זנות איש באמו ובבתו ובאשת אחיו בגלוי וברחובות ביצר הרע ובמחשבות לבם שנאמר וירא יי' כי רבה רעת האדם (בראשית ו ה) רבי אומר ראו המלאכים שנפלו ממקום קדושתן מן השמים את בנות קין מהלכות גלויות בשר ערוה ומכחלות עיניהן כזונות ותעו אחריהן ולקחו מהן נשים שנאמר ויראו בני האלהים את בנות האדם

(ed. D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, 237–239 [118–119])

Rabbi Ishmael says: From Seth arose and were descended all the people and all the generations of the righteous. From Cain arose and were descended all the generations of the wicked, and the sinners and the rebels, who rebelled against God, and they said: 'We do not need the drops of your rain, or to know your ways', as it is said, *Yet they said to God, Depart from us* (Job 21:14). Rabbi Meir says: The generations of Cain were walking about naked, the men and the women, like animals, and they defiled themselves with all kinds of immorality, a man with his mother or his daughter or the wife of his brother, in public and in the streets, through the evil inclination and through the thoughts of their heart, as it is said, *And the Lord saw that the evil of man was great* (Gen 6:5). Rabbi says: The angels who fell from their holy place, from heaven, saw the daughters of Cain walking about naked, with their eyes painted like prostitutes, and they went astray after them,

---

where they are described as giants; cf. G.J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 142–143 who discusses the complexity of Gen 6:4.

and took wives from amongst them, as it is said, *And the sons of god saw the daughters of men* (Gen 6:2).

The passage contains a number of motifs found in earlier rabbinic traditions, but they are newly developed in light of the contrast between the descendants of Seth and Cain.

First, PRE 22 describes a clear separation between the righteous generation of Seth and the wicked generation of Cain, who rebelled against God. The rebellion is viewed as leading to separation from God, as proven by Job 21:14 and the instruction to God to '*depart from us*'. Furthermore, amongst other crimes, the people are so arrogant that they declare they do not need God to send rain because the earth already produces its own moisture.<sup>14</sup> As a result, God decides to punish them through the means of their rebellion, namely, through water. The use of Job 21 to describe the rebellion of the generation of the flood is very common in rabbinic literature.<sup>15</sup> However, the use of Job 21 is used to refer particularly to the rebellion of the descendants of Cain in Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer.

Secondly, PRE 22 emphasizes that the two generations followed a different way of life, especially with regard to moral practice. In particular, the seductive nature of the 'daughters of Cain' is highlighted, and they are said to walk about naked and defile themselves through sexual immorality. Sexual immorality as the primary sin of the generation of the flood is a widely attested rabbinic tradition.<sup>16</sup> However, none of these traditions discuss this topic in relation to the 'daughters of Cain' before PRE 22.

Thirdly, the sexual immorality of the 'daughters of Cain' is what led to the temptation of the sons of god, who are identified with angels. This is based on Gen 6:2: '*And the sons of god saw the daughters of men that they were fair*', so identifying the קִינ בְנוֹת 'daughters of Cain' with the בְנוֹת הָאָדָם 'daughters of men' of Gen 6:2.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> This is based on Gen 2:6: '*And a mist went up from the land and watered all the surface of the ground*'.

<sup>15</sup> See T Sot 3:6–9, Sifre Deut 43, LevR 4:1, PRK 26:2, EcclR 2:2 s.1, PR 42:8, Tan Beshallah 12 and NumR 9:24, which make use of Job 21 in describing the generation of the flood. Also see I. Jacobs, *The Midrashic Process*, 21–42 on the use of Job in connection with the generation of the flood.

<sup>16</sup> For example, GenR 26:5, LevR 23:9, TanB Bereshit 33, Tan Bereshit 12.

<sup>17</sup> Targum Pseudo-Jonathan parallels Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer in its description of the wickedness of the 'daughters of men' in Gen 6:2, but does not refer to the daughters of Cain. Later sources that contain a similar tradition include the Chronicle of Yerahmeel 24:10–12, which states that the daughters of men are the seed of Cain and the sons of god are the seed of Seth, and the introduction to Aggadat Bereshit in MS Oxford 2340, which identifies the sons of god with the sons of Cain.

Thus, Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer provides a significant development of earlier exegetical ideas on the generation of the flood, such as in the use of Job 21 and detailed descriptions of sexual immorality. However, PRE 22 also includes a distinctive elaboration on the motif of the descendants of Seth and Cain that is not found in earlier redacted rabbinic sources.

### *Repentance and the Ark*

The discussion now turns to the rabbinic traditions that God gave the generation of the flood time to repent before bringing their punishment.<sup>18</sup> Gen 6:1–8 describes how God sees the wickedness and corruption of humanity and therefore decides to destroy his creation. The biblical story raised a number of theological problems for rabbinic exegetes, such as why God would change his mind about creating humanity, or why he would create people only to destroy them in the Flood.<sup>19</sup> In dealing with these questions, a variety of rabbinic traditions explain how God proved ultimately merciful, as he still left humanity a window of opportunity for repentance.<sup>20</sup> This theological concept is outlined in a number of ways in a variety of traditions. First, God gave the generation of the flood 120 years to repent, based on exegesis of Gen 6:3. Secondly, the building of the ark gave people time to repent, as the generation of the flood would see Noah's building work and question him concerning the ark. This would provide the opportunity for them to see their errors and repent. Finally, seven days are given by God for the people to repent based on exegesis of Gen 7:10.<sup>21</sup>

The fact that God gave people 120 years to repent before bringing destruction is found in the early Mek *Shirata* 5:37–40:

<sup>18</sup> For example, T Sot 10:3, Mek *Shirata* 5:37–40, Tg Neofiti Gen 6:3 and 7:10, GenR 30:7 and 32:7, Tg PsJon Gen 6:3, 7:4 and 7:10, TanB *Bereshit* 37 and *Noah* 13, Tan *Noah* 5, MidrPss 26:7, and NumR 14:6 and 14:12.

<sup>19</sup> On the justification for the Flood, see L.H. Feldman, *Remember Amalek!*, 94–96.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. BT Pes 54a. For discussion of repentance in rabbinic tradition, see S.T. Katz, 'Man, Sin, and Redemption in Rabbinic Judaism', 925–945; J.P. Lewis, *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood*; E.E. Urbach, 'Redemption and Repentance in Talmudic Judaism', in: R.J. Zwi Werblowsky – C. Jouco Bleeker (eds), *Types of Redemption; Contributions to the Theme of the Study-Conference Held at Jerusalem*, Leiden 1970, 190–206; idem, *The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs*, Jerusalem 1975, 462–471.

<sup>21</sup> An overview of these approaches is also provided by L.H. Feldman, *Remember Amalek!*, 100–101.

נאדרי בכח נאה אתה ואדיר בכח שנתת ארכה לדורו של מבול לעשות תשובה  
ולא עשו תשובה שנאמר ויאמר יי לא ידון רוחי וגו' ולא גמרת עליהן כלייה עד  
שהשלימו רשען לפניך

(ed. J.Z. Lauterbach, *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael*, vol. 2, 39–40)

*Glorious in power* (Exod 15:6). You are fair and mighty in power as You gave an extension to the generation of the flood in order to make repentance, but they did not make repentance, as it is said: *And the Lord said: 'My spirit shall not abide'*, etc. (Gen 6:3). But You did not decree destruction upon them until they were completely wicked before You.

This tradition is based on interpretation of Exod 15:6, which describes the power of God when he destroyed his enemies at the Red Sea: '*your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power; your right hand, O Lord, shattered the enemy*'. The verse is understood to refer to the fairness of God when he uses his power in enacting judgement, which is emphasized in Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael by the fact that the generation of the flood was given time to repent before punishment. The fact that God gave time for repentance is proven by Gen 6:3 which states: '*my spirit shall not abide (ידון) in man forever for he is flesh and his days shall be one hundred and twenty years*'. The use of Gen 6:3 as a proof text teaches that the generation of the flood received 120 years to repent, the time to which their lifespan was reduced.<sup>22</sup> After this time, they will be 'judged', which is based on word-play of the Hebrew ידון which can mean both 'judge' and 'abide'.<sup>23</sup> However, in Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael, ultimate destruction was not declared until they had displayed their utmost wickedness. The message of this tradition is that God is always fair in his punishments, as, even when he destroys, he gives people the maximum opportunity to repent.

This tradition is transmitted in a number of rabbinic texts, which may be indicative of its popularity.<sup>24</sup> Time for repentance is represented in the targumic traditions, which simply link the 120 year lifespan of humanity

<sup>22</sup> For discussion on Gen 6:3 and the lifespan of humanity as 120 years, see J.L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 213–214.

<sup>23</sup> As J. Bowker notes, 'the transformation of this verse into one concerned with judgement came about because of the verb in the Hebrew text—yadon. The word din came increasingly to refer to legal decisions and judgements. Hence the interpretation of this verse to refer to judgement' (*The Targums and Rabbinic Literature*, 154). See J.L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 212–213 for discussion of Gen 6:3 and the understanding of ידון to mean judgement. Kugel highlights a similar usage in M Sanh 10:3.

<sup>24</sup> J.L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 183–185 describes a number of these texts, and see Mek Shirata 5:37–40, MRS 32, ARN A 32, Tg PsJon Gen 6:3, Tan Beshallah 15. In contrast to the connection of Gen 6:3 with repentance, EcclR 1:35 includes a *peshat* interpretation of Gen 6:3. It states that the evil deeds of the generation of the flood were never rectified, and the punishment of 120 years as a reduced lifespan has never been revoked.

with the opportunity to repent. Tg Neofiti Gen 6:3 gives: 'Behold I have given an extension of one hundred and twenty years lest they make repentance (יעבדון תתובה), but they have not done so'. This tradition is similarly found in Tg Onqelos Gen 6:3 and Tg PsJon Gen 6:3.<sup>25</sup> ARN A 32 focuses on a period of seven days to repent, which will be discussed shortly, but refers to this time as a further extension of the original period of 120 years, so that the generation of the flood might repent. As such, the motif of 120 years for repentance is assumed in the tradition in ARN A. Furthermore, Tan *Beshallah* 15 contains a close parallel to the tradition found in Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael, again using Exod 15:6 to highlight God's fairness in allowing time for repentance.

The opportunity for the generation of the flood to repent is described in a number of ways in rabbinic traditions. Indeed, another approach to the 'time for repentance' motif is that God allowed seven days for the generation of the flood to repent. This period of seven days is based on Gen 7:10: '*And after seven days the waters of the flood were upon the earth*'. This verse concludes a description beginning in Gen 7:1 of the seven days it took for Noah to enter the ark along with the animals. The rabbinic tradition that this period of seven days offered an opportunity for the generation of the flood to repent is represented in T Sot 10:3–4:

כל זמן שהרשעים בעולם חרון אף בעולם, אבדו מן העולם פורענות נסתלק וחרון אף מן העולם. ולא שהצדיקים תולין לעולם בחייהם בלבד, אלא אף במיתה, שנ' ויהי לשבעת הימים ומי המבול וגו', מה טיבן של אילו שבעת הימים, אילו שבעת ימי אבולו של מתושלח הצדיק שערכו את הפורענות מלבוא לעולם, לכך נאמ' ויהי לשבעת הימים. דבר אחר, מה טיבן של שבעת הימים הללו, מלמד שנתן להם המקום שבעת ימים לאחר גזירה, שמא יעשו תשובה, ולא עשו, לכך נאמ' ויהי לשבעת הימים. (ed. S. Lieberman, *Tosefta: Seder Nashim*, 214–215)

All the time that the wicked are in the world, fierce anger is in the world. They perish from the world, and retribution and fierce anger is called away from the world. It is not that the righteous support the world during their lifetime only, but even in death, as it is said, *And after seven days the waters of the flood*, etc. (Gen 7:10). What is the nature of these seven days? These are the seven days of mourning for Methuselah, the righteous man, which hindered the retribution from coming to the world. Therefore it is said, *And after seven days* (Gen 7:10). Another interpretation: What is the nature of these seven days? It teaches that God gave them seven days after the decree, lest they should make repentance, but they did not. Therefore it is said, *And after seven days* (Gen 7:10).

<sup>25</sup> See notes in M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 38.

T Sot 10:3f is part of a description of the righteous in which Gen 7:10 is used to show that even after death the righteous support the world. In particular, the seven days of Gen 7:10 are understood to be the seven days of mourning for Methuselah. Methuselah was a righteous man but with his death, there were no longer enough righteous people to hold back the destruction of the Flood. However, the mourning over his death prevented punishment from coming upon the world for a further seven days. In an alternative interpretation, a more literal interpretation of Gen 7:10 is adopted, namely that the seven days of Gen 7:10 is related to the seven days following God's decree of judgement. These seven days provided further time for the generation of the flood to repent, but, as with all the traditions of repentance discussed, they refused to do so.

There are a number of traditions that clearly understand the seven days to be a time for repentance, sometimes also connected to the mourning for Methuselah, as in T Sot 10:3f.<sup>26</sup> GenR 32:7 states that during the period of mourning for Methuselah the generation of the flood was given a respite in case they would repent. BT Sanh 108b describes a variety of functions for the seven days. The first interpretation given is that they were the days of mourning for Methuselah; this indicates that lamenting for the righteous postpones retribution. Another interpretation states that God 'appointed a long time for them, and then a short time'. This is a reference to 120 years for repentance, which is followed by a second chance for the generation of the flood through the opportunity of a further seven days to repent. ARN A 32 also presents a variety of interpretations, including both the mourning for Methuselah and, alternatively, the

---

<sup>26</sup> The period of seven days in Gen 7:10 is most commonly understood to be the period of mourning for Methuselah, without reference to repentance, in rabbinic sources. In other words, God delayed the start of the Flood for seven days out of respect for Methuselah; cf. Tg Neofiti Gen 7:10, GenR 3:6, PT MQ 3:5, MidrPss 26:9. The seven days of mourning is understood in another exegetical approach to refer to the mourning of God for seven days over his destruction of humanity. Discussion of God's reaction to bringing the Flood, with particular emphasis on the sorrow he feels, is closely linked to Gen 6:6: '*And the Lord regretted that he made humanity upon the earth and he was grieved to his heart*'. For the anthropomorphic vision of God mourning over the generation of the flood, see GenR 27:4, 32:7, BT Sanh 108b, TanB *Bereshit* 30, TanB *Noah* 4, 21 and TanB *Shemini* 1. The targumic traditions play down the anthropomorphic imagery. For example, Tg PsJon Gen 6:6 says that God regretted making humanity and debated with himself about it. According to J. Bowker, the changes in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan are 'a sign of uneasiness about predicting grief of God. To do so might imply that God had made a mistake' (*The Targums and Rabbinic Literature*, 158). Tg Neofiti Gen 6:6 also avoids the implications of the Hebrew ׀ַן: there was regret 'before' the Lord not 'by' him and God is described as impatient and quieted in his heart.

seven days as a second chance for repentance after the first opportunity of 120 years. Finally, Tg PsJon Gen 7:4 notes that the seven days were a further opportunity for repentance, which would allow for the forgiveness of that generation, but failure to repent during the seven days would result in the Flood.<sup>27</sup>

The traditions discussed above present a variety of exegetical arguments, which demonstrate that the generation of the flood was granted time to repent. These approaches emphasize the opportunities given to the wicked generation so that they might recognize the error of their ways and make atonement for their past behaviour. Despite the diversity of traditions describing the opportunities for repentance, all the traditions indicate the failure of the generation of the flood to take them up. This reflects a widespread notion of the high level of wickedness in that generation. Furthermore, in emphasizing time for repentance, the traditions discussed here illustrate the theological point that God does not punish unnecessarily. The rabbinic interpretations explain the necessity of God's actions and emphasize the lengths that God will go to in order to give humanity a chance to behave properly. In this way, the justice of God and the fairness of his actions at the time of the Flood are highlighted and explained.

### *Mocking of Noah and the Building of the Ark*

Connected to the concept of 'time for repentance' in rabbinic traditions is the description of the mocking of Noah by the generation of the flood particularly while he was building the ark. GenR 30:7 presents one of the earliest forms of this tradition in rabbinic sources, and also builds on the idea that the people had 120 years to repent:

איש בכל מקום שנ' איש צדיק ממחה שכל ק"כ שנה היה נח נוטע ארזים וקוצצן אומ' לו למה כדון, אמר להון כן אמר לי מריה דעלמא דמייתי מבולא על עלמא, אמ' ליה אין אתי מבולא לא אתי אלא על בייתיה דאבוה דההוא גברא, ה"ה לפיד בוז לעשתות שאגן נכון למועדי רגל (איוב יב ה) אמר ר' אבא אמר הקב"ה כרוז אחד עמד לי בדור המבול זה נח, תמן אמ' כרוז ליה לפיד ליה, בוז שהיו מבזין עליו וקרו ליה ביזה סבא, לעשתות שאגן שהיו קשים כעשתות, נכון למועדי רגל שהיו מוכנים לשני שברים לשבר מלמעלה ולשבר מלמטן:

(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 1, 272–273)

*A man* (Gen 6:9). In every place that it is said '*a man*', it indicates a righteous man who gave warning. For a whole 120 years Noah planted cedars

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Tg PsJon Gen 7:10, which reiterates this point but also that the generation of the flood did not repent. See notes in M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 40–41.

and cut them down. They said to him: 'Why are you doing this?' He said to them as follows: 'The Master of the World has said to me that he will bring the Flood upon the world'. They said to him: 'If the Flood does come, it will come only upon your father's house'. Thus it is written, *A despised torch in the thought of the one that is at ease, a thing ready for those whose feet slip* (Job 12:5). R. Abba said: The Holy One, blessed be He, said: 'One herald arose for me in the generation of the flood; this is Noah'. Elsewhere, instead of 'he has a herald', they say 'he has a torch'. '*Despised*': this teaches that they made a mockery of him and called him, 'Contemptible old man!'. '*In the thought of the one that is at ease*': this teaches that they were as hard as metal. '*A thing ready for those whose feet slip*': this teaches that they were ready for two disasters: for a disaster from above and for a disaster from below.

GenR 30:7 focuses on Noah as a person who warned his generation about the impending punishment of the Flood.<sup>28</sup> The primary verse under consideration here is Gen 6:9: '*Noah was a man (איש) righteous and perfect in his generations*'. The explanation of the verse is that wherever the word 'איש' occurs, it refers to a person who warned their generation about some impending doom. For 120 years, an allusion to Gen 6:3, Noah planted trees and cut them down for building materials for the ark. This was also a way of drawing attention in order to warn people about the Flood and give them an opportunity to repent. However, the people that saw him and questioned him about his activity mocked him, as proven by Job 12:5: '*A despised torch in the thought of the one that is at ease, a thing ready for those whose feet slip* (לפיד בוז לעשתות שאנן נכון למועדי רגל)'. The generation of the flood are those who are at ease and have contempt. Noah is the despised torch (לפיד בוז). He is a beacon or herald who warned his generation, but is reviled by those who have prosperity. The explanation of Job 12:5 is then developed further. 'בוז' indicates that they despised Noah. 'לעשתות שאנן' teaches that they were hard as metal (עשתת pl. עשתות) in this, namely unremorseful.<sup>29</sup> 'נכון למועדי רגל' speaks of their impending punishment. It will be a disaster from above for the windows of the heaven were opened, as in Gen 7:11, and a disaster from below for the fountains of the great deep burst forth, also in Gen 7:11. Thus, the generation of the flood are described as unremorseful and arrogant, refusing to acknowledge that they deserve punishment. This tradition explains the events leading up to the Flood and particularly why God told Noah to

<sup>28</sup> See J.L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 185–186, which outlines traditions on how Noah warned the generation of the flood.

<sup>29</sup> On עשתת, see D. Levene – B. Rothenberg, *A Metallurgical Gemara: Metals in the Jewish Sources*, London 2007, passim.



build the ark rather than simply spirit Noah away to safety. The focus of the tradition is twofold: the wickedness of the people, and their ridicule of the righteous Noah. It is also related to the concept of time for repentance as GenR 30:7 teaches how God acts fairly as he gives the people time to repent while Noah is building the ark, in this instance 120 years based on Gen 6:3.

The mocking of Noah is a widespread image in rabbinic tradition and is developed in a variety of ways. For example, BT Sanh 108b describes the mocking of Noah also using Job 12:5. However, the tradition in this source is more focused on the debate between Noah and the generation of the flood. The stubbornness of that generation is highlighted with greater emphasis on their derision of Noah and their arrogance in thinking that they would be able to overcome any difficulties imposed by the Flood. The conflict with Noah is also harsher, and Noah is said to rebuke the people with words 'hard as flint', thus using the play on עשת and לעשותות differently to GenR 30:7.<sup>30</sup>

Furthermore, the building of the ark itself was another means by which time for repentance was given. This was due to the delay in punishment caused by time taken for the building. Such a tradition is found in a developed form in TanB *Bereshit* 37:

ד"א וירא ה'. זש"ה אנשי רע לא יבינו משפט (משלי כח ה), אילו דור המבול, שהיו חוטאין ולא היו מסתכלין שהפורענות באה עליהן, ומבקשי ה' יבינו כל (שם), זה נח ובניו, ששמעו מהקב"ה שהוא מביא מבול ונתייראו מהקב"ה, בא וראה למה אמר הקב"ה לנח שיעשה תיבה, כדי שיראו אותו שהוא עוסק בה ויעשו תשובה, ואלמלי כך לא היה הקב"ה יכול להציל את נח בשמים או בדברים, אחרי שאמר לו עשה לך תבת עצי גופר (בראשית ו יד). צהר תעשה לתבה (שם שם טז), ולמה כך, אמר הקב"ה מתוך כך שאני אומר לו עשה תבה והוא עוסק בה, והם מתכנסים אצלו ואומרים לו נח מה אתה עושה, והוא אומר להם תבה, שאמר לי הקב"ה שהוא מביא מבול לעולם שהן מכעיסין אותו, ומתוך כך עושין תשובה, כך הקב"ה מחשב, אבל הן לא היו משגיחין עליו, הוי אומר אנשי רע לא יבינו משפט: (ed. S. Buber, *Midrash Tanhuma: Seder Bereshit*, 25)

<sup>30</sup> LevR 27:5 describes how Noah was pursued by his generation, but Noah was the one chosen by God. This can also be compared to the persecution of Noah by his generation in PRK 9:4 and TanB *Emor* 12. In EcclR 9:17, Noah's rebuke to the generation of the flood is met with the retort that Noah's house will be punished first, which that generation believed came to pass with the death of Methuselah. In addition, Tan *Noah* 5 also contains a version of the tradition of the mocking of Noah, but it is based on exegesis of the instruction to build the ark in Gen 6:14. This interpretation focuses on the planting, growing and chopping down of the trees to make lumber for the ark. These three stages represent the three times that the generation of the flood questioned Noah and mocked his warnings.

Another interpretation: *And the Lord saw* (Gen 6:5). This is what Scripture says on the matter: *Men of evil do not understand judgement* (Prov 28:5). These are the generation of the flood, who sinned and did not reflect that the retribution was coming upon them. *But those who seek the Lord understand everything* (Prov 28:5). This is Noah and his sons, who heard from the Holy One, blessed be He, that he was bringing a flood and were afraid of the Holy One, blessed be He. Come and see why the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Noah that he should make an ark: In order that they would see him working on it and make repentance. If not thus, was not the Holy One, blessed be He, able to deliver Noah through heaven or through words? Whereas he said to him: *Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood* (Gen 6:14). *A window you will make for the ark* (Gen 6:16). And why so? The Holy One, blessed be He, said: 'Because of this: When I say to him "make an ark" and he is working on it, they will gather near him and say to him: Noah, what are you making? Then he will say to them: An ark, as the Holy One, blessed be He, said to me that he is bringing a flood to the world because they are provoking him. And because of this they will make repentance'. Thus the Holy One, blessed be He, calculated, but they did not pay attention to him. This is meant by saying: *Men of evil do not understand judgement* (Prov 28:5).

The primary verse under analysis in this tradition is Gen 6:5 regarding the extent of the wickedness of humanity: '*The Lord saw that the wickedness of humanity* (רעת האדם) *was great upon the earth*'. The verse is explained in light of Prov 28:5, which in full teaches: '*Men of evil* (אנשי רע) *do not understand judgement, but those who seek the Lord understand everything*'. Those who 'do not understand' are taken to refer to the generation of the flood who did not consider that punishment was coming. Those who 'understand' are Noah and his children who recognized that the Flood was coming. The tradition goes on to explain that Noah was instructed to build the ark so people could see him building it, become aware of their mistakes and repent. As such, the ark represents visual proof that the Flood is coming, and this was another way of giving people time for repentance. The people would ask Noah why he was building the ark, but although Noah explained that they were provoking God and would be destroyed in a Flood, they did not take any notice and did not repent. Hence, explaining the verse of Prov 28:5: '*Men of evil* (אנשי רע) *do not understand judgement*'. Again, here is the idea that God gave the generation of the flood time to repent, but the means of allowing for repentance is different. In TanB *Bereshit* 37, rather than specifying a period of time, God gives people time to repent while Noah builds the ark. The focus has become the generation of the flood and their reaction to events, and they simply ignore the warnings given by Noah. In fact

they are described as evil because they do not understand, or attempt to understand, the judgement that God is bringing.<sup>31</sup>

Overall, in the varied use of the motif of the mocking of Noah and the associated building of the ark, rabbinic exegetes have emphasized the great wickedness of the generation of the flood, and their inability to understand what they have done wrong or show remorse for their actions despite the warnings delivered by Noah. As such, the generation of the flood is presented as fully deserving of the punishment that God justly meets out.

### *Noah and Chastity*

The extent of Noah's righteousness is a well debated theme in rabbinic traditions.<sup>32</sup> There are a variety of exegetical approaches to this question. For example, one approach reflects the idea that Noah was *not* worthy to be saved from the Flood, and a range of rabbinic traditions conclude that Noah was not entirely righteous.<sup>33</sup> Another approach represents the idea that Noah was considered righteous only because he belonged to the generation of the flood, and his behaviour was righteous when compared with the actions of that generation.<sup>34</sup> These traditions can be contrasted with those that emphasize the righteousness of Noah, often based on

---

<sup>31</sup> The building of the ark as a means of granting time and opportunity for repentance is also found with reference to different time frames. For example, the building of the ark as giving time to repent is also found in PRE 23 which teaches that Noah took fifty-two years to build the ark in order to encourage repentance among the generation of the flood, but they did not repent. Sefer ha-Yashar 5:34 also states that Noah took five years to build the ark.

<sup>32</sup> See J.L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 186–187, 219–220; N. Koltun-Fromm, 'Aphrahat and the Rabbis on Noah's Righteousness in light of the Jewish-Christian Polemic', in: J. Frishman — L. van Rompay, *The Book of Genesis in Jewish and Oriental Christian Interpretation*, 57–71; J.P. Lewis, *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood*; J.C. VanderKam, 'The Righteousness of Noah', in: J.J. Collins – G.W.E. Nickelsburg (eds), *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism; Profiles and Paradigms*, Chico CA 1980, 13–32.

<sup>33</sup> The idea that Noah was not worthy to be saved but was given grace by God is found in GenR 31:1; cf. GenR 28:8, 29:1 PRK 12:1. The lack of faith of Noah is described in GenR 32:6, as he did not enter the ark until the water reached his ankles. Similarly, GenR 26:6 states that Noah was not saved because of his own merit, but because Moses would descend from him.

<sup>34</sup> GenR 30:9 explains in exegesis of Gen 6:9 that Noah was considered righteous only because he belonged to the generation of the flood; cf. TanB *Noah* 6, Tan *Noah* 5 and MidrProv 31.

exegesis of Gen 6:9 which describes Noah as 'a man righteous and perfect' (איש צדיק תמים).<sup>35</sup>

The discussion of Noah's righteousness provides a broader exegetical context for analysis of Noah's practise of chastity, which itself revolves around exegesis of Gen 5:32:<sup>36</sup>

ויהי נח בן חמש מאות שנה ויולד נח את שם את חם ואת יפת

*Noah was five hundred years old and Noah begot Shem, Ham and Japhet*

A number of rabbinic interpretations seek to explain why, in Gen 5:32, Noah is first described as producing children at the age of 500. The fact that Noah did not have children until later in life was clearly a controversial issue for rabbinic authorities who stressed the duty of marriage and procreation.<sup>37</sup> As such, Gen 5:32 raised the question of why Noah waited until the age of 500 to fulfil his duty.<sup>38</sup>

Two key interpretations on this issue in rabbinic sources will be discussed. The first, and apparently earlier tradition, is represented by GenR 26:2:

[ויהי נח בן חמש מאות שנה וגו'] אמר ר' יודן כל דורו מוליד לק' שנה ולר' וזה מוליד לת"ק שנה, אלא אמר הקב"ה אם רשעים הן אין רצוני שיאבדו במים, אם צדיקים הם אטריח עליו ויעשה תיבות הרבה, וכבש הקב"ה על מעינו והוליד לת"ק שנה, ר' נחמיה בשם ר' אליעזר בנו שלר' יוסי הגלילי אפילו יפת שהוא גדול לכשיבוא המבול אינו בן ק' שנה ראוי לעונשים:

(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 1, 244–245)

<sup>35</sup> For example, GenR 30:6 describes the offspring of Noah as life, religious actions, and good deeds, and Tg PsJm Gen 6:9 describes the innocence (cf. 7:1) and good works of Noah and his fear of the Lord. Noah is often said to be perfect because he was born circumcised; cf. BT Sot 12a, ARN A 2, TanB *Noah* 6, Tan *Bereshit* 11, and *Noah* 5, MidrPss 9:7. See also the chapter on 'Abraham and Melchizedek' for discussion of the broader motif.

<sup>36</sup> For example, exegesis of Gen 5:32 in GenR 26:1 teaches that Noah does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, based on Ps 1:1. An interpretation in the name of R. Yehudah explains that Noah maintained his righteousness throughout all the wicked generations (Enosh, the Flood and the Separation of Languages), although an alternative interpretation in the name of R. Nehemiah suggests that Noah was only a child in the generation of Enosh and so this cannot count as an example.

<sup>37</sup> The duty of marriage and propagation, based on Gen 1:22, 27–28, 2:18, 22–24, 9:1 and Isa 45:18, is an important responsibility in rabbinic literature. This demand is widely discussed in both Palestinian and Babylonian sources and is a particularly dominant concept in rabbinic exegesis of Genesis 2 (e.g. GenR 17:2, EcclR 9:8, BT Yeb 61b and MidrPss 59:2). See M.L. Satlow, 'Rabbinic Views on Marriage, Sexuality, and the Family', in: S.T. Katz, *The Cambridge History of Judaism*. Vol. 4, 612–626.

<sup>38</sup> Pseudo-Philo, Bib. Ant. 1:22 states that Noah had Shem, Ham and Japhet after 300 years.

[*Noah was five hundred years old, etc. (Gen 5:32).*] R. Yudan said: All his generation begot at a hundred or two hundred years old, but this one begot at five hundred years old. But, the reason is that the Holy One, blessed be He, said: 'If they are wicked, I do not desire that they perish in the water; if they are righteous, shall I trouble him and get him to make many arks?' Therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, suppressed his fountain and he begot at five hundred years old. R. Nehemiah said in the name of R. Eliezer the son of R. Yose the Galilean: Even Japhet, who was the eldest at the coming of the Flood, was not a hundred years old so as to be designated for punishment.

In this tradition, the question is raised as to why Noah waited until the age of 500 to procreate.<sup>39</sup> The answer is that God did not want Noah to have wicked children and then destroy them in the Flood, or, alternatively, if they were righteous, he did not want Noah to have to build many arks for them all. Therefore, God's solution was to make Noah sterile until the age of 500. The emphasis here is that it was God's decision to make Noah sterile, rather than the choice of Noah.

An alternative exegetical approach is found in the later TanB *Bereshit* 39, which offers a different explanation for the delay in Noah's procreation; he was chaste for 500 years to avoid producing wicked offspring:

ד"א וירא ה'. מה כתיב למעלה מן הענין, ויהי נח בן חמש מאות שנה (בראשית ה לב), בא וראה כל הרשעים שלפני נח היו מולידים בן שבעים, ובן שמונים שנה, ובן מאה, ונח בן חמש מאות שנה הוליד, ולמה כן, נסתכל נח בבני אדם שהן עתידין עומדין ומכעיסין להקב"ה, ואמר למה לי להזקק לפריה ורביה, לכך לא הוליד עד חמש מאה שנה, ואחר כן אמר וכי ימות אותו האיש בלא בניס, והקב"ה צוה לאדם על (ידי) פריה ורביה, שנאמר ויברך אותם אלהים [ויאמר להם אלהים פרו ורבו] (בראשית א כח), ואני מת בלא בניס, מה עשה נח, נזקק לפריה ורביה לאחר חמש מאות שנה, שנאמר ויהי נח בן חמש מאות שנה [ויולד נח את שם את חם ואת יפת] (שם ה לב):

(ed. S. Buber, *Midrash Tanhuma Seder Bereshit*, 25–26)

Another interpretation: *And the Lord saw* (Gen 6:5). What is written above on the subject? *Noah was five hundred years old* (Gen 5:32). Come and see all the wicked who were before Noah. They begot at seventy, eighty, and a hundred years, but Noah begot at five hundred years. And why was this? Noah observed the sons of Adam who would rise and provoke the Holy One, blessed be He. He said: 'Why is it for me to be engaged in fruitfulness and multiplying?' Therefore, he did not beget until five hundred years old. But after that he said: 'But shall this man die without sons? For the Holy One, blessed be He, commanded Adam concerning fruitfulness and multiplying, as it is said: *And God blessed them [and God said to them: Be fruitful and multiply]* (Gen 1:28). But, I am dying without children'. What did Noah do?

<sup>39</sup> The ancestors of Noah in the genealogy of Genesis 5 have children at a much younger age. The closest to Noah in age of procreation is Methuselah at 187 in Gen 5:25.

He was engaged in fruitfulness and multiplying after five hundred years, as it is said: *Noah was five hundred years old [and Noah begot Shem, Ham, and Japhet]* (Gen 5:32).

In the above tradition, TanB *Bereshit* 39 takes Gen 6:5 as its primary verse for exegesis: '*And the Lord saw that the wickedness of humanity was great upon the earth*', and connects it with Gen 5:32: '*Noah was five hundred years old and Noah begot Shem, Ham and Japhet*'. The wickedness that God saw in Gen 6:5 was the reason Noah did not have children until the age of 500, as Noah did not want to produce wicked offspring. However, when he was 500 he started to consider the prospect of his death and, as such, not fulfilling the command to marry and procreate, given first to Adam as stated in Gen 1:28. Therefore, he began to have children, as stated in Gen 5:32. In this tradition, Noah decides himself to remain chaste so as to avoid creating wicked children, but the ultimate importance of the command to procreate is highlighted.<sup>40</sup>

The subject of chastity is continued in explanation of the activities of Noah and his family and the animals while in the ark. A number of rabbinic interpretations explain that, during their confinement, Noah and his family observed chastity and certain traditions claim that this even extended to the animals.<sup>41</sup> PT Taan 1:6, 64d is one of the earliest traditions, in terms of date of redaction, to discuss chastity in the ark. This tradition states that Noah and his family were forbidden to have sexual relations while confined on the basis of Gen 6:18. This interpretation is derived from rearranging the structure of the Hebrew sentence. Gen 6:18 states: '*and you shall come into the ark, you and your sons* (אתה ובניך), *and your wife and your sons' wives* (ואשתך ונשי בניך) *with you*'. Rather than understand the sentence to refer to all those in the ark, the way the sentence is constructed allows a division to be made between the male and female members of the group, namely the wives of Noah and his sons are mentioned after, and therefore separately to, the men themselves. This grammatical separation was then given a physical level through a sexual separation in the ark. Sexual relations were permitted again once they

<sup>40</sup> Cf. NumR 14:12. The marriage and procreation of Noah is also outlined in Jubilees 4:33, which notes: 'And in the twenty-fifth jubilee Noah took a wife for himself and her name was 'Emzara, daughter of Rake'el, daughter of his father's brother, as a wife, in the first year, in the fifth week. And in its third year she bore for him Shem. And in its fifth year she bore for him Ham. And in the first year of the sixth week she bore for him Japheth' (trans. O.S. Wintermute, *OTP* 2, 64).

<sup>41</sup> Cf. GenR 31:12, 34:7, 34:8, PT Taan 1:6, 64d, PRE 23, Tan *Noah* 11 and TanB *Noah* 17.

had left the ark, as shown by the instruction in Gen 8:16, which mentions Noah and his wife, followed by Noah's sons and their wives: *'go out from the ark, you and your wife (אתה ואשתך), and your sons and your sons' wives (ובניך ונשי בניך) with you'*.<sup>42</sup> In this way, Noah and his family preserved their family lineage and merited freedom from the ark.

The practice of chastity in the ark both by people and animals is clearly a widely transmitted tradition in rabbinic sources. For example, GenR 31:12 simply quotes the two verses as proof of the prohibition on sexual relations for people in the ark, while GenR 34:7 quotes Gen 6:18 and Gen 8:16 but explains that the prohibition was due to the existence of want and famine in the world.<sup>43</sup> Gen 6:18 and 8:16 are also quoted in BT Sanh 108b as proof that cohabitation in the ark was forbidden. BT Sanh 108b describes Noah's rebuke to the raven, who stated that Noah desired to dispense with the species of ravens by sending away one of only two aboard the ark. Noah points out that he also is forbidden relations with his wife, and on a *qal wa-ḥomer* argument this should apply even more to the raven.<sup>44</sup> The chastity of Noah and his family, along with the animals, in the ark is also discussed in PRE 23, TanB *Noah* 17 and Tan *Noah* 11, but using Gen 7:7 as proof of the separation of male and female in the ark.<sup>45</sup> Both TanB *Noah* 17 and Tan *Noah* 11 explain that sexual relations are prohibited if the world is experiencing disaster or hardship.

Rabbinic traditions present a variety of explanations for the sexual activities of Noah. The issue of the delay in Noah's procreation, raised by Gen 5:32, led to suggestion either of divinely imposed sterility (GenR 26:2)

<sup>42</sup> Another exegetical approach to exegesis of Gen 8:16 describes time spent in the ark as time in prison. TanB *Noah* 14 uses wordplay to link Gen 8:16 on the exit from the ark (צא) to Ps 142:8 and the 'bringing out' (הוציא) of the soul from prison. The analogy is particularly appropriate as in the Psalm the soul is leaving prison to praise God, just as Noah leaves the ark and offers sacrifices to God; cf. GenR 32:8, TanB *Noah* 14, 17, Tan *Noah* 9, 11 and PRE 23. In another approach, Noah was ordered to go into the ark and, as such, received permission to enter it. Therefore, Noah could not leave the ark until he had also been commanded to leave; cf. TanB *Noah* 13, 15, 17, Tan *Noah* 8, 9, 11 and EcclR 10:4 s.1.

<sup>43</sup> GenR 34:8 also describes chastity in the ark, but this is due to the prohibition on cross-breeding.

<sup>44</sup> Ham, the dog and the raven were said to have practised sexual relations in the ark and therefore were punished; cf. GenR 31:12, 34:7–8, 36:7, PT Taan 1:6, BT Sanh 108b, BT Taan 11a, PRE 23, TanB *Noah* 17 and Tan *Noah* 5, 11, 12. This tradition has been much discussed; cf. D.M. Goldberg, *The Curse of Ham: Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, Princeton 2003 and D.H. Aaron, 'Early Rabbinic Exegesis on Noah's son Ham and the so-called "Hamitic myth"', *JAAR* 63.4 (1995), 721–759.

<sup>45</sup> For detailed comparison of the traditions discussed here, see N.G. Cohen, *Philo Judaeus*, 37–65. See also GenR 28:8–9, 34:7, 36:7, PRE 23, TanB *Bereshit* 36, 45 and Tan *Noah* 12.

or the choice of chaste behaviour on the part of Noah (TanB *Bereshit* 39). Both of these approaches connect to broader discussion on the righteousness of Noah and prevention of the production of wicked children, or children that have to mingle with the generation of the flood. In addition, the idea that Noah practised chastity in the ark is widely transmitted. This illustrates different approaches in the rabbinic traditions over the practice of chastity as highlighted by Noah; one line of argumentation accepts the chastity of Noah as the right choice given the circumstances (TanB *Bereshit* 39 and traditions on chastity in the ark), whilst the tradition preserved in GenR 26:2 removes the choice from Noah and, as such, implies that chastity should not be chosen only imposed. Clearly, the issue of Noah's chastity and the need to explain his delay in procreation was important for those rabbinic exegetes who saw Noah as a model of behaviour.

### *The Christian Tradition*

Christian exegesis applies a multi-faceted symbolism to the Flood Story.<sup>46</sup> The Flood Story already served in the New Testament as a powerful metaphor for fundamental Christian concepts. The two epistles of Peter focus on God's patience during the preparation of the ark (1 Pet 3:20–21) and on the redeeming role of water both in the Flood Story and in baptism. As J. Danielou has pointed out, baptism already exemplified the 'antitype of the deluge' in the New Testament.<sup>47</sup> This idea was further developed by the Church Fathers. Accordingly, the Deluge was widely understood as a prefiguration of Christian baptism. In addition, the ark commonly represents the Church, while the wood of the ark becomes a type of the Cross.<sup>48</sup>

In patristic tradition, Noah represents the 'new Adam', who hails the beginning of a new humankind (Justin, Dial. CXXXVIII). Noah symbolizes above all the true 'new Adam', Christ, the only one who can really give rest and a new birth through the waters of baptism (cf. Ephraem, Hymn.Nat. I.55–58; Cyril of Alexandria, Glaphyra ii.5 [PG 69:65]).

<sup>46</sup> For an overview of early exegesis of the Flood Story, see J.P. Lewis, *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood*.

<sup>47</sup> *Sacramentum Futuri*, Paris 1950, 69f.

<sup>48</sup> Justin, Apol. I.55; Dial. CXXXVIII; Origen, Hom.Gen. IV; Cyril of Jerusalem, Cat.Hom. 13:20; Romanos Melodos, On Noah; see J.P. Lewis, 'Noah and the Flood', 167f.; cf. Y. Frot, 'L'interprétation ecclésiologique de l'épisode du déluge chez les pères des trois premiers siècles', *Aug* 26 (1980), 335–348.



Christ is accordingly depicted as the 'true Noah' (Cyril of Jerusalem, Cat. Hom. XVII.10).

2 Pet 2:5 stresses the idea that Noah was saved by God on account of his righteousness. In various contexts in the patristic tradition, it is stressed that Noah was righteous and pleased God and that he was uncircumcised.<sup>49</sup> This exegetical point is made in the general context of polemics against the observation of the Jewish law and it serves to prove that circumcision is pointless and unnecessary (Justin, Dial. XLVI; cf. Irenaeus of Lyons, Adv. haer. IV.16.2). Aphrahat epitomizes the patristic approach, and he additionally emphasizes that Noah received the second world because of his chastity and not because he kept the Sabbath or because he was circumcised (Dem. XIII.7).

Moreover, in the New Testament the Story of the Flood is placed in an eschatological frame of reference, paralleled by the days of the coming of the Son of Man when sinners ignored the signs of the time (Matt 24:35–38; Luke 17:27). The story of the Flood is thus treated in the context of an eschatological typology, as emphasized also in 2 Pet 3:6–9.<sup>50</sup> This line of interpretation is also followed by the early Church Fathers. Irenaeus of Lyons associates the Deluge with the time of the Antichrist (Adv. haer. V.29.2).<sup>51</sup>

### *The Descendants of Seth and Cain*

The Flood Story begins with the moral decadence of humankind, which causes God's indignation. According to Gen 6:5, God's decision to extinguish humanity was motivated by the increase of the wicked actions of the people. The wickedness is associated with the intermarriage of the 'sons of god' with the 'daughters of men' as in Gen 6:2 and Gen 6:4b:

ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ τὰς θυγατέρας τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὅτι καλαὶ εἰσιν, ἔλαβον ἑαυτοῖς γυναῖκας ἀπὸ πασῶν, ὧν ἐξελέξαντο

*The sons of God having seen the daughters of men that they were beautiful, took to themselves wives of all whom they chose*

<sup>49</sup> Cf. H.S. Benjamins, 'Noah, the Ark, and the Flood in Early Christian Theology: The Ship of the Church in the Making', in: F. García Martínez – G.P. Luttikhuisen, *Interpretations of the Flood*, 134–149.

<sup>50</sup> See J. Danielou, *Sacramentum Futuri*, 63.

<sup>51</sup> Irenaeus' approach focuses on a numerological explanation; accordingly Noah was 600 years old when the Flood took place (see below p. 177), similar to the sixty cubits in height and breadth of the image set up by Nebuchadnezzar, and the name of the Antichrist which adds up to the number six hundred and sixty-six.

ὡς ἂν εἰσεπορεύοντο οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ πρὸς τὰς θυγατέρας τῶν ἀνθρώπων  
*When the sons of God used to go in to the daughters of men*

The interpretation of this fateful event by Christian exegetes was linked to the understanding of the identity of the main protagonists of the story, namely the ‘sons of god’ and the ‘daughters of men’. A stream of thought in early Christian exegesis understood Gen 6:2 to refer to the intermarriage of ‘daughters of men’ with ‘angels of God’.<sup>52</sup> This interpretation might have originated from alternative versions of the Septuagint text, which reads ‘angels of God’.<sup>53</sup> This reading is already alluded to by Philo of Alexandria (De Gig. II [6.1]).<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, other Christian exegetes perceived the ‘angels of God’ as ‘fallen angels’. Significantly, the tradition that the Flood was the result of ‘angels that sinned’ was attested by Irenaeus of Lyons (Adv.haer. IV.36.4).<sup>55</sup> This understanding was probably linked to the Enochic tradition of the fall of the angels and of the seduction of humankind

<sup>52</sup> Justin, Apol. II.5; Irenaeus, Adv.haer. IV.36.4; Irenaeus, Dem. 18; Athenagoras, Legation 24.5–6; Clement of Alex., Strom. V.10.2; Ps.-Clement. Homilies VIII.12–15; Rec IV.26; Eusebius, Praep.Ev. 5.4.

<sup>53</sup> A.Y. Reed observes that ‘Although the old Greek translation reads “sons of God” (Gen 6:2 and Gen 6:4), primary and secondary witnesses attest the existence of Mss that read “angels of God” for Gen 6:2’ (*Fallen Angels*, 117); see *ibid.* n.85 for an extensive list of the mss evidence. On the variant readings of ‘sons of god’, see M. Harl: ‘La leçon primitive du grec était “anges de Dieu” (attestée notamment par Philon et les témoins antérieurs à Origène)’ (*La Genèse*, 125); cf. M. Rösel, *Übersetzung als Vollendung*, 145ff; M. Dexinger, *Sturz der Göttersöhne oder Engel vor der Sintflut?*, Wien 1966, 122, 131; G. Stroumsa, *Another Seed: Studies in Gnostic Mythology*, Leiden 1984, 127; P.S. Alexander, ‘The Targumim and Early Exegesis of “Sons of God” in Genesis 6’, *JJS* 23 (1972), 63.

<sup>54</sup> “Ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ θεοῦ τὰς θυγατέρας τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ὅτι καλαὶ εἰσιν, ἔλαβον ἑαυτοῖς γυναῖκας ἀπὸ πασῶν, ἃν ἐξελέξαντο” (Gen. VI, 2). οὓς ἄλλοι φιλόσοφοι δαίμονας, ἀγγέλους Μωυσῆς εἶωθεν ὀνομάζειν ψυχαὶ δ’ εἰσὶ κατὰ τὸν ἀέρα πετόμεναι. “And when the angels of God saw the daughters of men that they were beautiful, they took unto themselves wives of all of them whom they chose”. Those beings, whom other philosophers call demons. Moses usually calls angels; and they are souls hovering in the air” (trans. Colson-Whitaker, 448). As A.Y. Reed argues, both Philo (Gig. 6.1) and Josephus seem to have used a copy of the LXX Genesis that rendered ‘sons of god’ with ‘angels of God’ (*Fallen Angels*, 107). Further, she quite boldly suggests that: ‘Interestingly, the Enochic myth of angelic descent may have also influenced the text-history of LXX-Genesis’ (op. cit., 116).

<sup>55</sup> For variations and later attestations of this tradition, see the Homily on Noah’s Ark, which is preserved in Coptic under the name of Basil of Caesarea, where the idea of the ‘angels’ is still mentioned as ‘angels who have become satans’ (ἐν ηἰεσοῦγ ἑτεμμαγ ἀρεηκοτ ηε ηιαγγελος εταγερ σατανας) implying that they were ‘fallen angels’ according to the Enochic tradition, see ‘Homélie sur l’Arche de Noé, attribuée à Saint-Basile, évêque de Césarée’, in: H. de Vis, *Homélie Coptes de la Vaticane*, Hauniae 1929, 219 (203–241); cf. Cyril of Jerusalem, Cat.Hom. 2.8 who notes that ‘the giants sinned’ (“Ἠμαρτον οἱ γίγαντες).

by them (1Enoch 7–8).<sup>56</sup> Indeed, the pseudepigraphical origin of this tradition is confirmed by some Church Fathers. Significantly, Origen argues against Celsus' angelic interpretation of the passage, which he attributes to Celsus' familiarity with apocryphal books (Contr.Cels. V.52–55). Jerome reports of a tradition, which he read in an 'apocryphal book', according to which the sons of god, who are identified with angels, came down from heaven on Mount Hermon in order to unite themselves with the daughters of men (Tract. de Psalmo CXXXII.3).<sup>57</sup> The information on the descent of the 'angels' on Mount Hermon is a clear reference to 1Enoch 6:16.<sup>58</sup>

J.C. VanderKam has demonstrated that the 'Christian employment of the Watcher myth is attested throughout the Roman world in all the leading centers of the church. The story in various forms was used in different ways but a prominent purpose was to account for the angels or demons (Justin, Tatian, Athenagoras, Clement, Tertullian, Gnostic texts, the Pseudo-Clementines, and Lactantius), who gave rise to false teachings including idolatry (Justin, Athenagoras, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Gnostic works, the Pseudo-Clementines, Commodian and Lactantius).'<sup>59</sup>

However, this approach was not uncontroversial. Justin reports of reactions to this interpretation from his Jewish contemporaries. In his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, Trypho 'who was somewhat angry' (ὕπαγανακτῶν) appears to say: 'The words of God are indeed holy, but your interpretations are not only artificial, as is evident from those you have given, but evidently even blasphemous, for you affirm that the angels have sinned and have apostatized from God' (Dial. LXXIX). Obviously, Justin's Jewish interlocutor accuses Justin of blasphemy on account of his angelological views. As it appears, the idea that angels sinned and, even more, that they rebelled against God sounded ungodly to Trypho.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>56</sup> As M. Dexinger notes: 'Die Väter haben in der Zeit vor dem 4. Jh die in der apokalyptischen Literatur beheimatete Engeldeutung bereitwillig übernommen' (*Sturz der Göttersöhne*, 119).

<sup>57</sup> See A.F.J. Klijn, *Seth in Jewish, Christian and Gnostic Literature*, 66f.

<sup>58</sup> Interestingly, this motif lives on in later Syriac historiographic tradition; see Bar Hebraeus: 'the sons of God came down from Mount Hermon' (Chronicle, trans. Budge, 4); cf. Michael the Syrian (Chronicle, ed. Chabot, 4; quoting Annianus).

<sup>59</sup> '1Enoch, Enochic Motifs, and Enoch in Early Christian Literature', in: idem – W. Adler, *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity*, 87.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. also Justin Apol. V.2: 'in ancient times wicked demons appeared and defiled women'; see on this P.S. Alexander, 'The Targumim and Early Exegesis of "Sons of God"', 63. As observed in the chapter 'In Paradise', similar views about fallen angels were popular in Christianity around that time.

From the late second century onward, objections to the understanding of the 'sons of god' as 'angels' and in particular as 'fallen angels' are documented also in Christian literature. Julius Africanus<sup>61</sup> in the late second century is the earliest Christian source that attests to the identification of the 'sons of god' with the 'Sethites'.<sup>62</sup> According to Julius Africanus:

Πλήθους ἀνθρώπων γενομένου ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ἄγγελοι τοῦ οὐρανοῦ θυγατράσιν ἀνθρώπων συνήλθον. Μυθεύεται δὲ, ὡς οἶμαι, ἀπὸ τοῦ Σήθ, ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος, οἱ υἱοὶ Θεοῦ, προσαγορεύονται, διὰ τοὺς ἀπ' αὐτοῦ γεναλογομένους δικαίους τε καὶ πατριάρχας, ἄχρι τοῦ Σωτήρος, τοῦ δ' ἀπὸ Κάιν ἀνθρώπους ἀποκαλεῖν σποράν, ὡς οὐδέτι θεῖον ἐσχηκότας διὰ πονηρίαν γένους, καὶ διὰ τῆς φύσεως ἀνόμοιον, ἐπιμιχθέντων αὐτῶν, τὴν ἀγανάκτησιν ποιήσασθαι τὸν Θεόν. Εἰ δὲ ἐπ' ἀγγέλων νοοῖτο ἔχειν τοὺτους, τοὺς περὶ μαγείας καὶ γοητείας, ἔτει δὲ ἀριθμῶν κινήσεως, τῶν μετεώρων ταῖς γυναίξει τὴν γνώσιν παραδεδωκένας, ἀφ' ὧν ἐποίησαν τοὺς παῖδας τοὺς γίγαντας, δι' οὓς τῆς κακίας ἐπιγενομένης, ἔργω πᾶν ἀφανίσει ζῶων γένος ὁ Θεὸς ἐν κατακλυσμῷ ἄπιστον. (PG 10:66)

When men multiplied on the earth, the angels of heaven came together with the daughters of men. I believe that, what the Spirit means, is that the descendants of Seth are called the sons of god because of the righteous men and the patriarchs who descended from him, even the Saviour Himself; but the descendants of Cain are called the generation of men, as they have nothing divine in them, because of the wickedness of their generation and the inequality of their nature, because they are a mixed people, and they have caused God's indignation. But if it is assumed that these refer to angels, then these should be those who deal with magic and jugglery, who taught the women the knowledge about the motions of the stars, by whose power the giants were their children, by who wickedness came into being, so that God realized that the whole impious race of the living souls should perish in the deluge.

Julius Africanus suggests that, although the 'ἄγγελοι' reading of the LXX was generally current, the biblical passage actually meant 'sons of Seth'.<sup>63</sup> He further suggests that the 'daughters of men' are the offspring of Cain.

<sup>61</sup> Little is known about Julius Africanus' biography. However, there is evidence that he came originally from Palestine and that he spent some time in Edessa; see G. Broszio, 'Julius Africanus', in: S. Döpp – W. Geerlings (eds), *Lexikon der antiken christlichen Literatur*, 363. As M. Wallraff maintains: 'He certainly knew some Hebrew, and probably quite well (...) it is not impossible that he knew some Syriac as well' (*Julius Africanus, Chronographiae: the extant fragments*, Berlin 2007, xv).

<sup>62</sup> See L.W. Wickham, 'The Sons of God and the Daughters of Men: Genesis VI.2 in Early Christian Exegesis', *Oudtestamentische Studien* 19 (1974), 144f.; A.F.J. Klijn, *Seth in Jewish, Christian and Gnostic Literature*, 61f.; M. Dexinger, *Sturz der Göttersöhne*, 106.

<sup>63</sup> J.C. Vanderkam suggests that his analysis of the passage was informed by manuscript study. Julius Africanus was aware that the copies that he had did not agree ('sons' or 'angels') ('Enoch, Enochic Motifs, and Enoch', 80); cf. C. Lawlor, 'Early Citations from the Book of Enoch', *JP* 25 (1897), 167–225, esp. 212f.

According to Julius Africanus, the generation of Seth was the one that propagated after the Flood, as it is the generation from which the Saviour comes. This view is linked to traditions that believed that humanity before the Flood was divided into two generations: the righteous generation of Seth and the wicked generation of Cain. Cain's descendants were thought to be corrupt and evil, since Cain was cursed by God (Gen 4:12).<sup>64</sup> Moreover, the various inventions of his descendants contributed to the corruption of humankind.

The separation of the Sethites from the Cainites became a topos in the Christian literature.<sup>65</sup> Similarly, the identification of the 'daughters of men' with the attractive 'daughters of Cain' developed as a common motif in Christian tradition.<sup>66</sup> According to G. Stroumsa, Josephus in Ant. I.69–71 already identified the 'angels of God' with the 'fallen' Sethites of the seventh generation, while Noah was a pure Sethite.<sup>67</sup>

Julius Africanus testifies to a stage of transition in Christian exegesis of Gen 6:2–4. His interpretation clearly demonstrates knowledge of the Enochic tradition, and, significantly, he mentions the angels teaching magic to the women. However, he questions the reading 'angels of God' at the same time, a reading that could have implied Enochic associations. Obviously, Julius Africanus wished to stress the existence and preservation of a fully righteous 'seed', a blessed generation, which originated with Seth and culminated in Jesus Christ. The connection between the 'sons of god' and the 'Son of God' would have been conspicuous.

Interestingly, the alternative reading 'angels of God' persisted until later in Christian literature, as attested to by Didymus of Alexandria (Comm. Gen. ad Gen 6:2 [150]) in the fourth century. As Didymus reports, 'many people' doubted the possibility of an intercourse of angels with women. However, there were also those who believed that lascivious demons would desire female bodies, or that they would use the bodies of lewd

<sup>64</sup> As analyzed in the previous chapter, Cain was associated with the devil, as opposed to Seth, who was the only 'pure' son of Adam (cf. Gen 4:25; Gen 5:2).

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Athanasius of Alex., *Quaest.* LXV, (PG 28:740); Cyril Alex. *Glaphyra*, (PG 69:53); Cosmas Indicopleustes, *Christian Topography* III; *Cat. Petit* 613 (anon.); 617 (anon.); Anastasius of Sinai, *Viae Dux* IV. 38–42; XIII.8.71–74. On the Christian tradition of the Sethides, see further: C. Robert, 'Les Fils de Dieu et les Filles de l'homme', *RB* IV (1895), 340–373; M.E. Stone, 'Report on Seth Traditions in the Armenian Adam Books', in: B. Layton (ed.), *The Rediscovery of Gnosticism* II, 459–471 (esp. 467); cf. R. Kraft, 'Philo on Seth', in: *op. cit.*, 457–458; J. Turner, 'The Gnostic Seth', in: M.E. Stone – T.A. Bergren (eds), *Biblical Figures Outside the Bible*, Harrisburg 1998, 34–58, esp. 35–38.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Ephraem, *Comm.Gen.* VI.2; Theodoret of Cyrillus, *Quaest.* XLVII; Anastasius of Sinai, *Viae Dux* IV.38–42.

<sup>67</sup> See *Another Seed*, 131.

men, in order to satisfy their own debauchery.<sup>68</sup> Thus, the acceptance or dismissal of the ‘angelic interpretation’ was based on angelological speculations of the time, and a major objection was that it was impossible for angelic incorporeal beings to have intercourse with corporeal, mortal human beings.<sup>69</sup>

Cyril of Alexandria follows a similar exegetical approach and also rejects the idea that incorporeal ‘demons’ could unite themselves bodily with humans. Cyril argues that the ‘sons of god’ derive their ancestry from Enosh; the one who was called God (ὀνομάζεται γὰρ ἤδη καὶ Θεός; Glaphyra, PG 69:48). Interestingly, Cyril stresses in a letter probably written in 433–441 that: ‘This additional point is to be noted: some of the copies have ‘the angels of God seeing the daughters of men’. But it is an interpolation put there from outside; the true (text) is: ‘the sons of God seeing the daughters of men’.<sup>70</sup> As Wickham observes: ‘he (Cyril) had persuaded himself that ἄγγελοι was an interpolation in the text of the Septuagint. That idea had apparently not occurred to him, when he wrote Glaphyra’.<sup>71</sup> Indeed, Cyril mentions in the Glaphyra that some copies read ‘angels of God’ and not ‘sons of god’.<sup>72</sup> Significantly, in his polemical text ‘Contra Julianum’ (ix), Julian reads ‘υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ’ ‘sons of god’ but applies it to angels, not men. Cyril replies that it means ‘men’ as in Ps 71:6 (LXX Ps 72:6).<sup>73</sup>

Similarly, on the same grounds, the Antiochean tradition rejected the idea that the biblical text referred to angels. John Chrysostom dismisses categorically all claims that the biblical text refers to angels and not to human beings. As he argues: ‘Let them demonstrate firstly where angels

<sup>68</sup> Ad Gen 6:2: [150]. Ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ Θεοῦ τὰς θυγατέρας τῶν ἀνθρώπων [ὅτι καλαὶ εἰσιν]. [152] ζητεῖται παρὰ πολλοῖς ἄγγελοι φύσει συνεμίγησαν ταῖς γυναῖξιν... (...) ἔνιοι μὲν οὖν φασιν ἡδυπαθεῖς δαίμονας ἐρασθέντας σωματῶν γυναῖξιν συνευνάσθαι, ἀλλὰ τοῦτο νοεῖν κωλύει ἡ γενομένη ἐξ’ αὐτῶν σύλληψις (...) εἰσι δ’ οἱ φάσκοντες ὡς δαίμονες δι’ ἡδυπαθείας ὀργάνῳ χρῶνται φαῦλοις ἀνθρώποις.

<sup>69</sup> John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 22.7; Theodoret of Cyrrhus, Quaest. XLVII; Basil of Seleucia, Orat VI: On Noah (PG 85:88).

<sup>70</sup> Cyril of Alexandria, ‘Responsiones ad Tiberium Diaconum Sociosque’, ed. Pusey, in: Sanctis Patri nostri Cyrilli... in Joannis evangelium. Accedunt fragmenta varia necnon tractatus ad Tiberium diaconum duo III, Oxford 1872, 557–608; cf. L.W. Wickham, ‘The Sons of God and the Daughters of Men’, 135.

<sup>71</sup> ‘The Sons of God and the Daughters of Men’, 136f.

<sup>72</sup> Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ εἰς πολλὴν ἤδη πληθὺν τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐξετείνετο γένος, εἰς ἐπιθυμίαν ἐκπορωτάτην γυναῖων ἐκπεπτωκότες οἱ υἱοί, φησὶ, τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἔλαβον ἑαυτοῖς γυναῖκας ἀπὸ πασῶν ὧν ἐξελέξαντο. Οἶδαμεν οὖν ὅτι τῶν ἀντιγράφων τινὰ περιέχει σαφῶς: Ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ Θεοῦ τὰς θυγατέρας τῶν ἀνθρώπων. Glaphyra II.2. (PG 69:52); cf. Procopius, Comm.Gen. PG 87:265: “γράφεται καὶ Ἄγγελοι θεοῦ”; cf. Cat. Petit 611; 612.

<sup>73</sup> See L.W. Wickham, ‘The Sons of God and the Daughters of Men’, 137.

are called sons of God (...) while humans are called sons of God, angels are nowhere so called'. Moreover, incorporeal and intellectual creatures could not have intercourse with human bodies. Further, he explains that: 'since these people took their origin from Seth and from his son named Enosh (cf. Gen 4:26), those descended from him in future were called sons of God by Sacred Scripture. (...) On the other hand, he gave the name sons of men to those born after Seth, the descendants of Cain and those taking their descent from him.' (John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 22.7; cf. Basil of Seleucia, Oratio V [PG 85:90]).

G. Stroumsa remarks that: 'the two conflicting interpretations coexisted in Christian literature; and from the 4th century on, the 'Sethite' interpretation tended to predominate and became the commonly accepted interpretation'.<sup>74</sup> Significantly, according to the testimony of Theodoret of Cyrrhus (Quaest. XLVI), this discussion was still current in the fifth century. Theodoret explains that 'some mad fools' (ἐμβρόντητοι τινες καὶ ἄγαν ἡλίθιοι) assumed that the 'sons of god' were angels. Theodoret argues that the designation 'sons of god' referred to the virtuous men of Seth's lineage, who were seduced by the beauty of Cain's daughters and their musical instruments, intermarried with them and corrupted their generation. The polemical tone against the identification of the 'sons of god' with angels is remarkable. Considering the fact that major Church Fathers of the past, such as Justin and Irenaeus of Lyons, suggested this identification, the vehemence of the rejection by later Church Fathers is striking.

Furthermore, a major stream in Christian exegesis suggests instead that the text refers explicitly to 'sons of god', that is the 'sons of Seth' or 'Seth's generation', based on Gen 4:26: '*Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh. At that time men began to call on the name of the LORD.*' According to Eusebius of Emesa: '*This one hoped to be called upon the name of God.* In the Hebrew, he does not say thus, but 'this one hoped to be called by the name of the Lord God', that is to be named son of God and God. For the (descendants) of Seth have become righteous ones, whence Scripture, consistent with itself, says after these things: *And the sons of God saw the daughters of men*; this refers to the righteous ones, for there have been

---

<sup>74</sup> *Another Seed*, 128; see John Malalas 1.3.83 (ed. Dindorf); George Syncellus (ed. Dindorf, 17; 26) and George Cedrenus (ed. Bekker, 19). Syncellus does mention the Watchers on Mount Hermon, however, he explicitly quotes 1 Enoch for this (ed. Dindorf, 20). In a way, Syncellus testifies to the transformation from the Enochic tradition to the Sethite tradition, but he also quotes several other relevant traditions. Thus, the Enochic tradition of the fall of the angels was preserved until late in Christian sources of varying provenance.

no intermingling of the sons of Seth with those of Cain' (Cat. Petit 577; trans. Romeny, 243; cf. Procopius, *Comm.Gen.*, PG 87:261). Eusebius actually suggests a slightly different reading of the wording of LXX Gen 4:26 that would modify the meaning of the verse as outlined above and explain Enosh as the one 'who was called God'. As Romeny notes: 'the descendants of Seth were called 'sons' of God in full agreement with Gen 4:26'.<sup>75</sup>

Alternatively, exegetical approaches are also encountered according to which the 'descendants of Seth' or more generally all god-fearing and righteous people may be called 'angels'. Procopius stresses that 'the elected generation of Seth and Enosh are called both angels and sons of god' (PG 87:265–268).<sup>76</sup> This approach is also linked to LXX Ps 81:6–7: 'I have said you are gods; and all (of you) children of the Most High. But you die as men'.<sup>77</sup> Accordingly, these exegetical approaches both understand the 'sons of god' and the 'angels' as referring to humans and not to supernatural beings.

The interpretation of the 'sons of Seth' as the 'sons of god' is also attested in the Syriac tradition. As G. Stroumsa emphasizes, Aphrahat was the first Syriac Father in the fourth century to adopt the 'Sethite' interpretation (Dem. XIII.5; Dem. XVIII.9).<sup>78</sup> Ephraem the Syrian explains that Seth himself was like the son of God. Moreover, he also rejects the idea that Gen 6:2 refers to angels (*Comm.Gen.* VI.3).<sup>79</sup> According to Ephraem, the virtuous descendants of Seth lived at the foothill of the mountain of Eden, while Cain and his wicked descendants lived in the plain below or somewhere far from, Paradise.<sup>80</sup> However, the 'fair' and lascivious

<sup>75</sup> *A Syrian in Greek Dress*, 244.

<sup>76</sup> Cat. Petit 614 (anon.): 'Πάντες ἐνόησαν τοῦτο ἐπὶ τῶν υἱῶν τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ Σήθ, ἀρξαμένων μίγνυσθαι τῷ γένει τοῦ Κάιν. Διὸ σημειωτέον ὅτι οἱ ἀνθρωποὶ οἱ θεοσεβεῖς, ἄγγελοι καλοῦνται'; Cat. Petit 616 (anon.): 'Ἀγγέλους φησὶν, θεοῦ καὶ υἱοῦς θεοῦ καλεῖ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς οὕτως ἀμέπτους καὶ καθαρούς ὀφείλοντας εἶναι'; cf. *Ps.-Clem. Rec.* I.29; Anastasius of Sinai, *Quaest.* XXV; XIII.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. also a similar approach by John Chrysostom, *Hom.Gen.* 22.2.

<sup>78</sup> *Another Seed*, 128; Significantly, Aphrahat argues that the divine blessing was preserved through Seth and then handed down and ultimately saved through Noah (Dem. XXIII.14); cf. R. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 117.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. *Contr. Haer.* 7.2; 19.4–5; *De Fide* XLVI.8; *De Ieiunio* II.2; see R. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 221; cf. Ishodad of Merv, *Comm.Gen.* ad Gen 6:1, who quotes Henana of Adiabene.

<sup>80</sup> See Ephraem, *Hymn Paradis.* 1.10–11; 7.11; cf. *Cave of Treasures* VI.22ff. The *Cave of Treasures* emphasizes that the descendants of Cain live in the plain, where Cain killed Abel (V.24); cf. G.A. Anderson, 'The Cosmic Mountain: Eden and Its Early Interpretation in Syriac Christianity', in: G.A. Robbins (ed.), *Genesis 1–3 in the History of Exegesis*, N.Y. – Ontario 1988, 186–222; cf. also J.B. Glenthøj, *Cain and Abel*, 279. Already in Josephus, the



daughters of Cain seduced the mighty sons of Seth. The moral weakness of the Sethites results in a general wantonness and moral corruption that eventually brings the Flood (Comm.Gen. VI. 3–7).

The *Cave of Treasures* follows a similar exegetical pattern and describes the lasciviousness of Cain's offspring in graphic detail: 'For all the devils were gathered together in that camp of Cain, and unclean spirits entered into the women, and took possession of them. The old women were more lascivious than the maidens, fathers and sons defiled themselves with their mothers and sisters, sons respected not even their own fathers, and fathers made no distinction between their sons [and other men]. And Satan had been made ruler (or prince) of that camp. And when the men and women were stirred up to lascivious frenzy by the devilish playing of the reeds which emitted musical sounds, and by the harps which the men played through the operation of the power of the devils, and by the sounds of the tambourines and of the sistra which were beaten and rattled through the agency of evil spirits, the sounds of their laughter were heard in the air above them, and ascended to that holy mountain' (XII. 4–8). Interestingly, here the seduction of the sons of Seth takes place with the help of music that was played by the Cainites.<sup>81</sup>

As observed, the 'Sethite' interpretation was widespread in Christian exegesis, especially from the fourth century onward. P.S. Alexander argues that the identification of the 'sons of god' with the 'righteous line of Seth' goes back to views supported in texts such as Wisdom 2:13–18, in which 'the righteous man' is called also 'son of God' (cf. Philo, *Quaest.Gen.* I.92). Furthermore, Seth was viewed as an antitype of the evil Cain, after the

---

children of Seth who are of a good disposition continually inhabit the same country, which is where they prosper (Ant. I.3.67f.).

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Cat. Petit 617. According to Gen 4:21, Jubal, a descendant of Cain, is the 'father of all musical instruments'. Early Christianity associated musical instruments with moral corruption; cf. Ephraem, *De ieuinio* II.2; Ethiopic Book of Adam and Eve XX (ed. Malan, 133ff.); cf. Pseudo-Philo, LAB 2.8 for a similar attitude in the Jewish context; see Su-Min Ri, *Commentaire*, 227). Musical instruments were used in pagan, mainly fertility, cults to induce ecstatic frenzy, which could involve orgiastic activity; see S. Benko, *The Virgin Goddess*, Leiden 2004, 65, 68, 73, 77. Thus, they were banned in Christian services, see: J. Quasten, *Music and Worship in Pagan and Christian Antiquity*, Washington D.C. 1973; James McKinnon, *Music in Early Christian Literature*, Cambridge 1978; see E. Benz, *The Eastern Orthodox Church. Its Thought and Life*, Garden City N.Y. 2009, 146ff, who discusses the prohibition of the use of musical instruments during services in Eastern Christian Churches to this day. The description in the *Cave of Treasures* alludes to pagan cults and associates the Cainites with idolatry.

murder of the righteous Abel. Accordingly, Seth was the prototype and progenitor of all righteous people, i.e. of the 'sons of god'.<sup>82</sup>

Alternatively, in a note to the text of George Syncellus, W. Adler suggests that the development of the Christian interpretation of the 'sons of god' (Gen 6:2) as the Sethite represents 'a convergence of two streams—(1) the impulse to demythologise Gen 6 (...), and (2) the belief that Seth was the first link in a chain of purity, extending down to the Messiah'.<sup>83</sup> Indeed, this exegetical approach highlighted the preservation of the divine blessing, and established a righteous lineage for the Messiah.

The rejection of traditions that were common in pseudepigraphical texts might be linked to the association of these texts with heretical views and their condemnation by the Church authorities in the fourth century.<sup>84</sup> Furthermore, the identification of the 'angels of God' with the 'sons of god' would have had implications for the christological debates of the time. L.G. Wickham argues that the rejection of the view that the angels of God mixed with daughters of men 'would not have come to dominate Christian exegesis, had it not been for 4th century debates about the deity of Christ'.<sup>85</sup> Significantly, the reading 'angels of God' was considered by some authors of the late fourth century as heretical.<sup>86</sup> Accordingly, the history of the exegesis of Gen 6:2–4 should be viewed in the context of the development of angel christology and especially against the background of the Arian controversy.<sup>87</sup>

### *Repentance and the Ark*

Patristic sources expand upon the biblical narrative of the events that preceded the coming of the Flood. A common idea in Christian literature is that God granted a certain period of time to the generation of the flood for repentance. As Christian authors argue, even though God had decided

<sup>82</sup> "The Targumim and Early Exegesis of "Sons of God", 66.

<sup>83</sup> 'Notes to the text of George Syncellus and Pseudo-Malalas', SBL-Seminar paper quoted by M.E. Stone, 'Report on Seth traditions', 467.

<sup>84</sup> As A.Y. Reed notes: 'Athanasius represents our first known example of a proto-orthodox Christian author, who categorizes Enochic 'pseudepigrapha' as 'apocrypha' and associates them with 'heretics', (*Fallen Angels*, 201); Reed refers to Athanasius' notorious 39th Easter letter written in 367 CE.

<sup>85</sup> 'The Sons of God and the Daughters of Men', 145.

<sup>86</sup> See Philastrius, *De Haer.* 108; cf. M. Dexinger, *Sturz der Göttersöhne*, 106.

<sup>87</sup> See C.A. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, Leiden 1998, 187ff; W. Michaelis, *Zur Engelchristologie im Urchristentum*, Basel 1942; J. Barbel, *Christos Angelos*, Bonn 1941; D. Hannah, *Michael and Christ: Michael Traditions and Angel Christology in Early Christianity*, Tübingen 1999, 163ff.

to wipe out humanity, he still gave the wicked generation an opportunity for repentance and, thus, a last possibility to be saved. Accordingly, God's mercy and magnanimity was emphasized. More specifically, God announced the Deluge beforehand through Noah, so that Noah could warn the generation of the flood. The delay of the beginning of the Flood due to God's patience and loving kindness is stressed already in the New Testament (1 Pet 3:20).

According to Gregory of Nyssa (*Oratio Catechetica Magna XXIX*), God waited until the wickedness of the people had reached its utmost height and was fully developed before carrying out the punishment. Similarly, John Chrysostom stressed that the Flood happened when the excess of their sins reached its limit (*Hom.Gen 24.7*). John Chrysostom compares the Flood Story with the story of the Ninevites (*Jonah 3*). The Ninevites are warned by Jonah of the impending destruction that is planned by God, and as such repent. On this account, God shows compassion to the Ninevites and refrains from exacting punishment. According to John, the story of the Ninevites provides a counter-example to the Flood Story. It teaches that the world might not have been destroyed by the Deluge, if the generation of the flood had heeded God's signs and Noah's warnings (*Hom. Gen. 25.5*). This exegetical approach is paralleled by Basil of Seleucia (*Oratio V: On Noah; PG 85:77*).

According to a major approach in patristic literature, 120 years referred to the lifespan granted to the generation of the flood. This was based on *Gen 6:3*, which implied that the duration of the life of the people at the time was 120 years:

Ὁὐ μὴ καταμείνη τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τούτοις εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα διὰ τὸ εἶναι αὐτοὺς σάρκας, ἔσονται δὲ αἱ ἡμέραι αὐτῶν ἑκατὸν εἴκοσι ἔτη.

*My spirit will certainly not remain in these people because they are flesh, but their days will be 120 years.*

Jerome attests to the controversial exegesis of this verse: '(...) they shall live 120 years to do penance. So human life is not shortened to 120 years, as many mistakenly suppose; but 120 years were given to that generation for repentance' (*Hebr. Quest. 6:3*).<sup>88</sup>

<sup>88</sup> See C.T.R. Hayward, *Hebrew Questions*, 131: 'There are those who, like Josephus, *Ant. I.75,152*, used this verse to argue that 120 years was the span of human life: see, for example, Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* 6.11; and compare Hippolytus, *Comm. In Psalm. fr.4* (*PG 10: 714–15*); cf. Gennadius of Constantinople, who explicitly quotes Josephus (*Ant. I.152*) as the source of this interpretation (*Cat. Csl 138*).

Ephraem the Syrian interprets the lifespan of 120 years as a punishment when compared with the longevity of the previous generation who lived for 900 years (Comm. Gen. VI.4). Similarly, in a fragment attributed to Diodore of Tarsus, it is argued that the announced time period of 120 years was a punishment for those 'giants' who lived for 950 years before the Flood (Cat. Csl 142). The shortening of lifespan is also mentioned in the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies VIII.17. Here, the premature death of people in that generation is regarded as a consequence of the defiled air and of the polluted environment due to the shedding of large amounts of blood.<sup>89</sup>

However, the sum of 120 years between God's decision to destroy the world and the final coming of the Flood did not agree with biblical chronology. Gen 7:6 states that Noah was 600 years old when the Deluge started, whereas Gen 5:32 in connection with Gen 6:9–10 suggest that Noah was 500 years old at the time of the Flood. In Gen 5:32, it is said that Noah was 500 years old when his three sons were born. This can be linked to Gen 6:9–10, which mentions God's decision to extinguish his creation and especially humankind, his election of Noah as the only righteous person on earth *and* Noah's begetting of three sons, thus affecting calculations of the timing of the Flood:

Gen 6:9–10: 'καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς Ἀπαλείψω τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ὃν ἐποίησα, ἀπὸ προσώπου τῆς γῆς ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπου ἕως κτήνους καὶ ἀπὸ ἐρπετῶν ἕως τῶν πετεινῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ὅτι ἐθυμώθητι ὅτι ἐποίησα αὐτοῦς. Αὐταὶ δὲ αἱ γενεαὶς Νωε· Νωε ἄνθρωπος δίκαιος, τέλειος ὢν ἐν τῇ γενεᾷ αὐτοῦ· τῷ θεῷ εὐηρέστησεν Νωε. ἐγέννησεν δὲ Νωε τρεῖς υἱούς, τὸν Σημ, τὸν Χαμ, τὸν Ιαφεθ'.

*And God said, I will blot out man whom I have made from the face of the earth, even man with cattle, and reptiles with flying creatures of the sky, for I am grieved that I have made them. 8 But Noah found grace before the Lord God. 9 And these [are] the generations of Noah. Noah was a just man; being perfect in his generation, Noah was well-pleasing to God. 10 And Noah begot three sons, Sem, Cham, Japheth.*

Thus, certain exegetes assumed that God ordered Noah to start building the ark at the age of 500 years old. Accordingly, Noah built the ark for 100 years, which was also the time granted to the generation of the flood

---

<sup>89</sup> As J.C. VanderKam remarks, the Pseudo-Clementines demonstrate here a direct Enochic influence: In '1 En 7:3–4; 9:9 'the bastards (gigantic men) preferred blood and eventually turned to cannibalism. The impure air produced by bloodshed was the cause for diseases and poisonous creatures. God decided to intervene with a flood to rid the earth of the demons' (1 Enoch, Enochic Motifs and Enoch', 79).

before the Deluge. Notably, it is argued that the building of the ark should have been the most obvious sign of the need for repentance.<sup>90</sup>

Julius Africanus, *Chronography* (IV), applies a literal interpretation of this verse, namely that God commanded that the generation of the flood should not live for more than 120 years.<sup>91</sup> More specifically, the time for repentance granted to the sinners was 100 years, and they were 20 years old at that time.

However, John Chrysostom emphasizes that the verse does not refer to the lifespan of the generation of the flood, rather the intention was to stress God's longsuffering up to this point' (*Hom.Gen.* 22.12). As he argues: '100 years had passed in the meantime and yet they gained no benefit from those 100 years, despite the advantage given them of so much instruction from Noe's building of the ark' (*Hom.Gen.* 25.6), and further: 'the Lord, seeing their unrepentant attitude, reduced the period he had promised to allow in his longsuffering' (*Hom.Gen.* 25.8; cf. *Hom.Gen.* 22.4).<sup>92</sup>

An anonymous fragment (*Cat. Petit* 623) maintains that the period of 120 years was offered by God as a 'benevolent act', but humanity quickly reached extreme evil instead and that is why God precipitated the punishment. This interpretation connects this episode to *Jer* 18:7–10, where repentance is a sign that God will change his plans about punishment.

A slightly different approach is proposed by Maximus the Confessor in the seventh century. Maximus suggests that God gave the people 120 years to repent, but also that it took Noah 20 years to start building the ark and another 100 years to finish building it. Thus, the duration of the lifespan of the people was also 120 years by means of a different calculation (*Quaest.* 181).

The idea of a shortening of the time available for repentance can be found again in the Syriac literature, namely, in Aphrahat's *Demonstrations* (VII.8; II.9) and in Ephraem the Syrian's *Commentary on Genesis* (VI. 6–7). Aphrahat and Ephraem both stress that, although the time granted

<sup>90</sup> See Didymus Alex., *Comm.Gen.* ad *Gen* 7:6; John Chrysostom, *Hom.* 1. *Thess* VIII.2 stresses that Noah built the ark for 100 years and he called aloud (to encourage repentance) but no one believed him (*PG* 62:442).

<sup>91</sup> Ἔγνω πᾶν ὁ Θεὸς ἀφανίσαι ζῶων γένος ἐν κατακλυσμῷ, ἀπειλήσαν ρκ' ἔτη οὐχ ὑπερβήσεσθαι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, Μηδὲ νομιζέσθω ζήτημα, διὰ τὸ πλείονα χρόνον τινὰς ὕστερον βιώναι. Τὸ γὰρ διάστημα τοῦ χρόνου γέγονες ἑκατὸν ἔτη μέχρι τοῦ κατακλυσμοῦ κατὰ τῶν ἀμαρτωλῶν τῶν τότε, ἦσαν γὰρ εἰκοσαεταίς. (*PG* 10:68).

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Didymus Alex., *Comm.Gen.* ad loc.; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.Hom.* 2.8.; *Cat. Petit* 626 (anon.); (ps.-) Basil of Caesarea, *Homily on Noah's Ark* (224f.); John Chrysostom also includes the 500 years before Noah's election in the total time of Noah's long efforts to admonish his wicked contemporaries (*Hom.Gen.* 21.18).

was 120 years, when God saw that the generation of the flood did not show any signs of repentance, he brought the Flood after just 100 years.<sup>93</sup> Moreover, Ephraem emphasizes that instead of taking advantage of the time left to them to repent, this generation even increased their sins, which they committed incessantly (Comm.Gen. VI.6). Still, Ephraem defends God's creation, pointing out that God did not make a new world, as if his creation was blemished, but cared for the preservation of his creation in the ark (Comm.Gen. VI.7).<sup>94</sup>

According to Gen 7:10, the Flood takes place seven days after the completion of the building of the ark. These last seven days before the Flood, while the ark was ready, were also understood as a last chance given by God to the people to repent. This idea is mentioned by a number of Christian authors, such as Didymus of Alexandria (Comm.Gen. ad loc.) and John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 25.8. Furthermore, this motif is stressed by (ps.)-Basil of Caesarea, in the bohairic Homily on Noah's ark:

ⲁ ⲛⲟⲉ̅ ⲉ̅ⲣ ⲛ̅ ⲛ̅ⲣⲟⲙⲛⲓ ⲉ̅ϥⲉⲣⲉⲱⲃ ⲉ̅ϥⲕⲅⲃⲱⲧⲟⲥ. ⲙ̅ⲛⲉ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲣⲱⲙⲓ ⲧⲁⲥⲉ  
ⲱⲟⲅ ⲉ̅ⲃⲟⲗⲃⲉⲛ ⲛⲟϥⲛⲟⲃⲓ. ⲁϥⲓ̅ ⲉ̅ϫⲉⲛ ⲕⲉⲗ̅ ⲛ̅ⲉⲣⲟⲟⲅ. ⲁϥⲉⲓⲱⲓⲱⲩⲱ ⲛⲱⲟⲅ ⲟⲛ.  
ⲧⲉ ⲁⲣⲛⲟϥ ⲥⲉⲛⲁⲉⲣⲙⲉⲧⲁⲛⲟⲓⲛ ⲙ̅ⲛⲟⲅⲓⲣⲓ. ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲗⲉ ⲧⲁⲭⲱⲛⲧ ⲛⲁⲓ̅ ⲉ̅ϫⲱⲟⲅ  
ⲁⲛ ⲛⲉ. (de Vris, *Les Homelies Coptes*, S. Basile, Homélie sur l' Arche de Noé, 225f.)

Noah spent 100 years working on the ark and the people would not turn away from their sins. Even when he came to seven days and he tried once more to warn them, because they might have gained insight but they did not do so at all. But I think that if they have showed repentance in those seven days, the wrath would not have come upon them.

Finally, this motif is also attested in the Syriac tradition. As Ephraem the Syrian mentions: 'He who granted one hundred years while the ark was being made to that generation, and still they did not repent, (...) delayed yet seven more days for them (...)' (Comm.Gen. VI.10).

The exact chronology of the Flood Story puzzled Christian exegetes. However, there was a common agreement that the time period that elapsed between God's decision to extinguish humanity and the actual start of the Flood was meant as a gesture of the love of God for a sinful generation that still missed every chance to repent.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. Ishodad of Merv, Comm.Gen. ad Gen 6:3, who quoting Henana agrees with Ephraem that the shortening of the period of 120 years was due to the iniquity of that generation.

<sup>94</sup> See also De Fide LVI.2 and Memra on Nicomedia V. 95–114.

*Mocking of Noah*

The reluctance of the evil generation to regret its conduct was a widespread motif in Christian literature. The building of the ark by Noah was commonly perceived as a vivid sign and an exhortation to repentance. Christian sources emphasize Noah's efforts to admonish his contemporaries and encourage them to repent so preventing the destruction of the world.

The preaching activity of Noah is already mentioned in the New Testament (2 Pet 2:5). Heb 11:7 emphasizes Noah's faith and the fact that he urged his generation to repent: 'By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.' Noah's 'condemning of the world' apparently refers to his moral superiority in comparison to the moral corruption of the rest of humankind.

Similarly, the Church Fathers stress in this context the call to repentance. Clement of Alexandria argues that repentance is assigned by God to each generation (Strom. I.21.135). Theophilus of Antioch understands Noah as a prophetic figure, who foretells to his generation the coming of the Flood (Ad Autolyc. III.19). Methodius of Olympus (Banquet X.3) mentions Noah's preaching activity, as well as the unwillingness of the people to listen to him until they were surrounded by the waters of the Flood and only then did they begin to repent.

According to John Chrysostom, Noah preached for 100 years but the generation of the flood treated him contemptuously. As John Chrysostom graphically suggests: 'Naturally, you see, they all mocked and ridiculed him, treated him like an idiot and abused him in their drunken violence, and perhaps would have even liked to tear him limb from limb, if that were possible' (Hom.Gen. 23.5).<sup>95</sup> This idea is paralleled by Basil of Seleucia, who adds that while the corrupted generation of the flood was mocking Noah, the animals entered the ark in fear and in a great hurry (Oratio V [PG 85:80]).

This motif was also common in the Syriac tradition. Ephraem the Syrian describes how Noah was mocked for building the ark, and also for his intention to gather all the animals into the ark (Comm.Gen. VI.8.2-9).

---

<sup>95</sup> John Chrysostom reiterates this argument in several places, see Hom. I Thess VIII.2, (PG 62:442); De statuis hom. 20.8 (PG 49:210); cf. also (Ps.-)Athanasius of Alexandria, Sermo de Patientia 4; Cat.Petit (anon.) 608.

As he writes: 'When those of that generation gathered [to see] this novel sight, it was not to repent, but rather to amuse themselves. Then, in their very presence, the lions began to enter the ark and the bulls, with no fear, hurried in right on their heels to seek shelter with the lions' (Comm.Gen. VI.9.3; cf. Adv. Scrut. Rhythmus 56.2). In the *Cave of Treasures* XIV.11–14, God commands Noah to manufacture a wooden bell, which he is told to ring three times a day in order to draw the attention of the people and urge them to repent.

Finally, this motif is also developed in the pseudepigraphical Apocalypse of Paul. Paul encounters Noah on his journey to heaven. Noah narrates how the people scoffed at his warning, arguing that this was not a time for repentance and abstinence but for play and sin because God neither cares about nor knows of men's actions.<sup>96</sup>

The biblical text focuses on Noah's relationship with God, but does not elaborate on the interactions between Noah and his contemporaries. However, Christian exegetical imagination envisioned the Flood Story as a drama in which 'these people' had a very active role in their own downfall. Accordingly, they are portrayed as despicable and lewd sinners, who defy God and torment the innocent and noble protagonist, Noah. Of course, the story has its expected happy end according to classical narrative patterns: the maltreated protagonist is vindicated and good triumphs over evil.

### *Noah and Chastity*

According to Gen 5:32, Noah was 500 years old and begat three sons, Shem, Cham and Japhet (Καὶ ἦν Νωε ἐτῶν πεντακοσίων καὶ ἐγέννησεν Νωε τρεῖς υἱούς). Christian exegetes emphasized, on the basis of Gen 5:32, that Noah remained chaste for 500 years in contrast to the moral decay of his generation.<sup>97</sup> The moral decadence of this generation was widely perceived as sexual debauchery. Christian sources present Noah as a model of chastity both before and after the Flood. As Eusebius of Caesarea stresses: 'And Noah, that just man, who was saved alone with his family when the whole world was destroyed, after the birth of his children, though he lived many

---

<sup>96</sup> The Apocalypse of Paul was probably written in Greek in the mid-third century and became extremely popular in Eastern and Western Christianity, see J.K. Elliott, *Apocryphal New Testament*, Oxford 1993, 616; cf. T. Silverstein – A. Hillhorst, *Apocalypse of Paul: a New Critical Edition of Three Long Latin Versions*, Indiana 1997.

<sup>97</sup> See F. Bolgiani, 'L'asceti di Noe. A proposito di Theoph., *ad Autol.*, III.19', in: *Forma Futuri. Studi in Onore del Cardinale Michelle Pellegrino*, Torino 1975, 295–333.



years more, is not related to have begotten more children' (Dem.Ev. I.53). Similarly, John Chrysostom suggests that Noah remained chaste for 500 years and did not engage in sexual activity after the birth of his sons (Hom.Gen. 24.4).<sup>98</sup> Already in the second century, Theophilus of Antioch implies that Noah was considered to be a 'eunuch' on account of his abstinent way of life: 'Noah had three sons (...) Some persons call this man a eunuch' (τοῦτον τὸν ἄνδρα ἔνιοι εὐνούχον προσηγορεύεουσιν; Ad Autolyc. III.19 (1.)).<sup>99</sup> Significantly, in the Apocalypse of Paul 50, Noah is described as a prototypical ascetic.<sup>100</sup>

Moreover, the ideal of chastity, as exemplified by Noah, is extended to the members of his family while in the ark, and, according to some sources, it also applies to the animals. The motif of chastity in the ark is already attested in Christian literature by Julius Africanus (Chronographia IV) in the late second century. More precisely, Christian tradition suggests that the sexes lived in segregation in the ark until the end of the Flood. As Origen explains, on the basis of Gen 6:18, God ensured that the men entered the ark separately to their wives, because he wanted them to remain pure and abstain from intercourse while in the ark (Sel. in Gen. vi.1f.; PG 12:105).<sup>101</sup>

The chastity of the animals as well as of the people in the ark is also emphasized by Procopius of Gaza (Comm.Gen., PG 87:280). As Procopius explains, it would not have been proper for people and animals to occupy themselves with intercourse during the Flood. John of Damascus in the early eighth century explains that the command of chastity in the ark was

<sup>98</sup> See H. Amirav, *John Chrysostom on Noah and the Flood*, Louvain 2003, 196f.

<sup>99</sup> For the various meanings attached to the word 'eunuch' in Late Antiquity, and specifically in Early Christianity, see the chapter on 'Joseph and Potiphar'.

<sup>100</sup> Notably, it is mentioned that Noah has not changed his clothes or cut his hair during the building of the ark, and he lived in abstinence from his wife. However, Noah's hair would not grow and his clothes did not get dirty during those 100 years.

<sup>101</sup> "Ἐπεὶ καθαρὸς ἦθελε διαμῆναι τοὺς εἰσελθόντας ἀνθρώπους εἰς τὴν κιβωτὸν ἀπὸ μίξεως, οὕτως αὐτοὺς εἰσάγει, κατὰ τὴν εἰσαγωγὴν κελεύων αὐτοῖς τὴν διατριβὴν ποιῆσθαι τὴν ἐν τῇ κιβωτῷ. Οὐ γὰρ ἔπρεπε, τῶν ὁμοίων ἀπολυμένων, τοὺτους κοίταις καὶ παιδοποιίαις σχολάζειν. Ὅτε μέντοι τὰ δεῖνὰ παρήλθε, καὶ χρεῖα ἐκάλει τὴν γῆν ἀνθρώπων πληρωθῆναι, κατὰ γαμικὴν αὐτοὺς συζυγίαν ἐκβάλλει, λέγων: "Ἐξέλθε σὺ, καὶ ἡ γυνὴ σου, καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ σου, καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες τῶν υἴων σου"; cf. Julius Africanus IV, PG 10:68; Didymus Alex., Comm.Gen. ad 6:18 [175]; Eusebius, Praep.Ev. I.9.16ff; Gennadius of Constantinople, Fragments on Genesis (PG 85:1641); cf. L. Ginzberg, 'Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern', 8f; idem, *Legends of the Jews*, vol. 5, 188, n.54. N. de Lange remarks, however, that the same tradition is found in Philo (Quaest.Gen. II.49 ad Gen 8:18), and was apparently well known in the third century (*Origen and the Jews*, 127f.); cf. A.C. Geljon, 'Philo's Interpretation of Noah', in: M.E. Stone, *Noah and his Books*, 183–191.

a necessity for salvation, since 'promiscuity was the reason for the flood' (De Fide Orthodoxa IV.24).

The theme of Noah's chastity was particularly popular in Syriac literature. Syriac exegetes elaborated on the theme of Noah's election by God, because he was righteous in the midst of an unjust generation. Since the main sin of this generation was thought to be sexual immorality, it was logical to conclude that Noah stood out because of his chastity. As Aphrahat explains, Noah remained chaste during that time because he did not want himself or his sons to mix with the evil generation of Cain. As in the Greek tradition, discussed above, Aphrahat's interpretation is based on the description of Noah's family given in Gen 5:32. Aphrahat explains that Noah only decided to get married when God revealed to him the plan about the imminent destruction of the world. Thus, he chose a woman from Seth's blessed seed in order to ensure that only Seth's righteous generation would be preserved after the Flood (Dem. XIII.5–7, Neusner, 44). Accordingly, Noah only followed God's command because of the necessity of the propagation of humankind after the Flood, but he remained chaste otherwise. Aphrahat argues further that the renewal of the world and the preservation of the just generation are both connected to Noah's abstinence. N. Koltun-Fromm notes that Noah's righteousness (Gen 6:9) is understood as sexual innocence or perfection.<sup>102</sup>

In the Syriac literature, Noah's chastity in the exegetical context of the Flood Story apparently reflects contemporary ideals regarding community life.<sup>103</sup> Thus, the emphasis on Noah's abstinent way of life is related to the strong ascetic tendencies that were dominant in Syriac Christianity of the fourth century. J. Tubach even claims that: 'Aphrahat would certainly have preferred Noah to scorn marriage and lead an ascetic life, like the 'sons of the covenant''.<sup>104</sup> However, the biblical text does mention Noah's

---

<sup>102</sup> 'Aphrahat and the Rabbis on Noah's Righteousness', 59; see *ibid.* for an overview of Aphrahat's use and understanding of the concept of virginity as righteousness. The main points of Aphrahat's description of Noah's chastity, its motivation and realisation can be found again in Ishodad of Merv, *Comm.Gen. ad Gen 6:10*.

<sup>103</sup> Cf. S. Naeh: 'The celibacy of Noah and his sons in the ark is the model for the community's life of celibacy and purity in the writings of Ephraem' ('Freedom of Celibacy', in: J. Frishman – L. van Rompay, *Book of Genesis in Jewish and Oriental Christian Interpretation*, 86, n.50); cf. also P. Féghali, 'Note sur l'exégèse de Saint-Ephrem commentaire sur le déluge (Gn 6,1–9,17)', *Parole de l'Orient* 8 (1977/78), 67–86, esp. 70 and 84.

<sup>104</sup> 'Seth and the Sethites in Early Syriac Literature', in: G.P. Luttikhuisen, *Eve's Children*, 192. On the sons of the covenant, see A.J. Wensinck, 'Qejama and Benai Qejama in der älteren christlichen Literatur', *ZDMG* 63 (1909), 561–564; cf. *idem*, 'Weiteres zu Qejamā

wife and children, and so Christian authors had to adapt their own ascetic ideals to the facts of the biblical narrative.

Similarly to Aphahat, Ephraem the Syrian in his Commentary on Genesis (VI.1) stresses that Noah preserved his virginity while amongst the corrupt generation for five hundred years, setting an example for his sons. Furthermore, he also understands Noah's righteousness as synonymous for chastity.<sup>105</sup> R. Murray remarks that Ephraem regarded Noah 'as the father of those who live in chastity'.<sup>106</sup> Significantly, Ephraem the Syrian also suggests that both animals and people lived in chastity in the ark, although they were expected to procreate after the Flood: 'Those whom he has brought in *one by one* in order to maintain the chastity on the ark, he brought out *two by two* so that *they might be fruitful and multiply in creation*' (Comm.Gen. VI.12).<sup>107</sup> As T. Kronholm observes: 'In addition to its role as a prefiguration of *ecclesia crucis* and *ecclesia pacis*, the ark is conceived of by Ephraem as a prototype of *ecclesia castitatis*, an idea inextricably related to the chastity of Noah as an aspect of his justice/righteousness typologically delineating the chaste Son of God'.<sup>108</sup>

The importance of the ideal of chastity is also reflected in the *Cave of Treasures*, in which the segregation of the sexes in the ark is emphasized. The separation between men and women in the ark represents the separation of men and women in a church in this text (XVII. 15–17; XVIII.2–8).<sup>109</sup> Accordingly, the ark is conceived as an image of a church, which saves the righteous from a flood of sins. The text adds that just as in a church there is silence and peace, so was it also in the ark (XVIII.7).<sup>110</sup> Moreover, after

---

und Benai Qejāmā', *ZDMG* 64 (1910), 812; F.C. Burkitt, *Early Eastern Christianity*, London 1904, 136ff.

<sup>105</sup> De Fide I.4, I.6; Hymn.Eccl. 34.6.2; Hymn.Nat. I.22.1; Comm.Gen. LV.22; Serm. I.6.22; see T. Kronholm, who further suggests that 'This stress on the sexual holiness of Noah, connecting him with the figure of Enoch in his perfect bodily consecration, is in Ephrem's exegesis the natural antipode of the extreme corporeal defilement of the antediluvian generations. The *interpretatio virginitatis* is advocated in even greater detail in a *Carmen Nisibenum*: 'Because Noah had overcome the waves of desire (...)' (*Motifs from Genesis 1–11*, 179f.).

<sup>106</sup> *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 50.

<sup>107</sup> Cf. Commentary on the Diatessaron 2.6; Carm.Nis. 1.9, 1.4; Hymn.Nat. 28.1, I.22; see T. Kronholm, *Motifs from Genesis 1–11*, 142, n.297.

<sup>108</sup> *Motifs from Genesis 1–11*, 188.

<sup>109</sup> On the separation of the sexes in Christian public worship, see W. Horbury: 'Their segregation by various means is widely attested from the third century onward' ('Women in the Synagogue', in: W. Horbury et al. (eds), *The Cambridge History of Judaism. Vol. 3: The Early Roman Period*, Cambridge 1999, 373); cf. K. Thraede, 'Frau', *RAC* 8 (1972), 197–269.

<sup>110</sup> D. Vigne regards the abstinence that lasted for forty days in the ark as the first Lent in history ('Origène et l'exégèse juive: l'Homélie II sur la Genèse', *BLE* 105 (2004), 105–146, esp. 139).

the Flood, Noah is appointed to continue to serve God in the ark in purity and holiness for all the days of his life (XVI.19–21).

As mentioned above, in patristic literature the Flood was commonly understood as a prefiguration of baptism or as a symbol of the Christian Church. Notably, celibacy was probably a requirement for baptism in the early Syriac Church. As R. Murray remarks, Noah's ark is already compared to a 'qyama' (that is, a Christian community or Church, a 'covenant') in Pseudo-Melito of Sardis' third century apology.<sup>111</sup> Moreover, purity was an additional condition for entrance into a holy place, and especially in connection with certain priestly functions. Noah, in particular, was often viewed as a prototypical priest on account of his performing an altar sacrifice to God in Gen 8:20.<sup>112</sup> Accordingly, an abstinent way of life conformed to current Christian ideals and practices with regard to preparations before baptism (i.e. the Flood) and in church (i.e. the ark).

### *The Exegetical Encounter*

The focus of this chapter is a detailed analysis of traditions that discuss the generation of the flood and the topics of repentance and chastity. These concepts are well discussed in both rabbinic and Christian sources, although expounded with variety in argumentation. The examples under analysis all illustrate motifs that are not found or alluded to in the biblical text of Gen 5:32–10:32, and yet both the rabbinic and Christian traditions discussed here share the use of these motifs, albeit with diversity in theological aims.

Rabbinic and Christian traditions on the descendants of Seth and Cain as constituting the generation of the flood provide particularly strong evidence of exegetical encounter.<sup>113</sup> In rabbinic literature, this motif is found

<sup>111</sup> *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 15; cf. A. Vööbus, *Celibacy, a Requirement for Admission to Baptism in the Early Syriac Church*, Stockholm 1951.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 35.16 where he describes how Noah acts as a priest. The ritual purity of ministering priests was a prerequisite for the Eucharistic sacrifice, but was also required of the attending laymen; see Origen, Hom.Lev. 4.6; Hom.Num. 23.3; see D.G. Hunter, *Marriage, Celibacy and Heresy in Early Christianity*, Oxford 2007, 126f.; see H. Strathmann, *Geschichte der frühchristlichen Askese I*, Leipzig 1914, 210f.; in the Jewish pseudepigraphic literature, there are also references to a priestly function for Noah (cf. Jubilees 6:10; 6:17–31 and 7:34–39), which is at times associated with ritual purity, see W. Baxter, 'Noachic Traditions and the Book of Noah', *JSP* 15.3 (2006), 179–194, 191; see further, M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, London 2002, 52; cf. Lev 21:17–21.

<sup>113</sup> A point of shared exegetical approach, although not necessarily encounter, is found in the emphasis in both rabbinic and patristic sources on the righteous lineage of Seth, as discussed above.

in PRE 22, which identifies the ‘daughters of men’ of Gen 6:2 with the ‘daughters of Cain’ and emphasizes their immoral behaviour. It is clear that PRE 22 utilizes earlier rabbinic traditions, such as on the interpretation of Job 21 and descriptions of sexual immorality, to describe the generation of the flood.<sup>114</sup> The tradition in *Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer* also appears to have been influenced by early pseudepigraphical texts that identify the ‘sons of god’ with angels.<sup>115</sup> However, the description of the generation of the flood in terms of the contrast between the generations of Seth and Cain is not directly paralleled in rabbinic sources with a date of redaction earlier than *Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer*. Indeed, A.F.J. Klijn has noted, ‘In PRE for the first time, we read that the Sethites were righteous and the Cainites were wicked, the two generations being compared with each other’.<sup>116</sup>

The developments presented in PRE 22 can be closely related to points in Christian exegesis on the subject of the generation of the flood. In particular, the identification of the ‘daughters of men’ in Gen 6:2 with the ‘daughters of Cain’ is found in *Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer*, but is well established in Christian sources of varying provenance from the time of Julius Africanus in the late second century onwards.<sup>117</sup> As an illustrative example, the *Cave of Treasures* uses argumentation that is particularly close to that found in PRE 22. The *Cave of Treasures* describes the separation between the generation of Seth and the ‘murdering’ generation of Cain (VI.22–24). Then, *Cave of Treasures* XII reports that ‘The old women were

<sup>114</sup> See discussion of PRE 22 above, and T Sot 3:6–9, Sifre Deut 43, LevR 4:1, PRK 26:2, EcclR 2:2 s.1, PR 42:8, Tan *Beshallah* 12, NumR 9:24, which make use of Job 21 in describing the generation of the flood.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. Jubilees 4:15, which states that ‘the angels of the LORD, who were called Watchers, came down to the earth’, and 4:21–22 which further expands: ‘And he wrote everything, and bore witness to the Watchers, the ones who sinned with the daughters of men because they began to mingle themselves with the daughters of men so that they might be polluted’ (trans. O.S. Wintermute, *OTP* 2, 62); cf. 1 Enoch 6–10 and especially 6:1–2: ‘In those days, when the children of man had multiplied, it happened that there were born unto them handsome and beautiful daughters. And the angels, the children of heaven, saw them and desired them; and they said to one another, “Come, let us choose wives for ourselves from among the daughters of man and beget us children”’ (trans. E. Isaac, *OTP* 1, 15). Indeed, G. Friedlander emphasizes the connection between *Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer* and pseudepigraphical works stating: ‘There seems to be reasonable ground for assuming that the author of our book was acquainted not only with Jubilees, but also with the pseudepigraphic Books of Enoch’ (*Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, xxii); cf. also Jubilees 5:1, 1 Enoch 6–16, 19 and 64, 2 Enoch 18 and Josephus Ant. 1.73. See P.S. Alexander, ‘The Targumim and Early Exegesis of “Sons of God”’, 60–71 for a full outline and discussion of this material.

<sup>116</sup> *Seth in Jewish, Christian and Gnostic Literature*, 12. However, Klijn goes on to say that ‘All this, however, seems to be a simple development of already known traditions’.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Ephraem, *Comm.Gen.* VI.2, Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Quaest. XLVII*, Anastasius of Sinai, *Viae Dux* IV.38–42.

more lascivious than the maidens, fathers and sons defiled themselves with their mothers and sisters, sons respected not even their own fathers, and fathers made no distinction between their sons [and other men]'. Similarly, PRE 22 describes the generation of Seth as righteous and the generation of Cain as wicked. The tradition then goes on to describe the seductive nature of the daughters of Cain. They are identified with the 'daughters of men', who walk about naked and practise sexual immorality and in particular 'they defiled themselves with all kinds of immorality, a man with his mother or his daughter or the wife of his brother, in public and in the streets'. Thus, not only do both traditions refer to the generation of the flood as consisting of descendants of Seth and Cain, but they both describe the sexual immorality of that generation in terms of incest.<sup>118</sup>

Despite the close parallels to Christian literature on the identification of the 'daughters of men', Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer identifies the 'sons of god' in Gen 6:2 as angels. This is in direct opposition to the prevailing Christian view held after the fourth century that such an identification was unacceptable,<sup>119</sup> and also differs from the widely attested Christian interpretation that the 'sons of god' were Sethites.<sup>120</sup> Furthermore, the

---

<sup>118</sup> The Cave of Treasures also describes how the playing of musical instruments stirred up a 'lascivious frenzy' amongst the men and women of that generation; cf. the corrupting nature of music in GenR 26:5, LevR 23:9, LamR Proem 24 and TanB *Bereshit* 21.

<sup>119</sup> Although, as noted in the discussion on patristic sources, the alternative reading 'angels of God' did persist in later Christian literature, as attested to and condemned by Didymus of Alexandria (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 6:2) and Theodoret of Cyrrhus (Quaest. XLVI).

<sup>120</sup> Ultimately, there are no existing rabbinic traditions from Late Antiquity that explicitly refer to this identification. However, S. Brock describes a Syriac tradition which identifies the 'sons of god' with the sons of Seth, who descended from Paradise to the place where the daughters of Cain resided. He states that 'This interpretation, which represents the dominant understanding of Gen. 6:2 in Syriac writers of all periods, would seem likely to be of Jewish origin, even though it is not found explicitly in extant Jewish sources until very much later: a clear hint that already by the later first century AD the Sethites had taken over the former role of the Watchers or Angels in at least some Jewish circles is provided by Josephus *Ant.* I.69–71 (on the Sethites and astronomy)' ('Jewish Traditions in Syriac Sources', 226). This passage in Josephus describes how the sons of Seth fell into depravity, followed by a statement that angels consorted with women, but the sons of Seth and the angels are not explicitly identified. Similarly, as P.S. Alexander notes of the equation of the 'sons of god' as Sethites, 'this interpretation is first explicitly applied to Gen 6 by Christian exegetes. Only much later does it appear in Jewish writings, a fact which may indicate that it entered Jewish thought from the Christian tradition' ('The Targumim and Early Exegesis of "Sons of God"', 66; cf. L. Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, vol. 5, 172, n.14). Ginzberg refers to the Chronicle of Yerahmeel 24:10–12 in this note, which is commonly dated to the medieval period and so discusses sources beyond the scope of this book in terms of date of redaction.

association between angels and ‘sons of god’ is criticized in other rabbinic traditions. For example, GenR 26:5 outlines how R. Shimon b. Yoḥai stated that the ‘sons of god’ (בני האלהים) of Gen 6:2 were the ‘sons of judges’ (דייניא), and cursed those who called them the ‘sons of god’. Targum Neofiti also calls the ‘sons of god’ the sons of judges, whereas Targum Onqelos refers to the ‘sons of the great ones’ (רברביא). In this approach, the ‘sons of god’ are identified as earthly men disassociated from heavenly beings, just as the majority of Christian sources identified the ‘sons of god’ with earthly beings—the Sethites. Interestingly, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, which contains parallels with Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer, also mentions the ‘sons of the great ones’ (רברביא) in Tg PsJon Gen 6:2, but connects them with the fallen angels, Shemhazai and Azazel, in Tg PsJon Gen 6:4. As such, there was a controversy over the identification of the ‘sons of god’ in both rabbinic and Christian sources, although this represents shared exegetical questions over a biblical text that is difficult to interpret rather than evidence of encounter.<sup>121</sup> Indeed, with regard to the identification of the ‘sons of god’ as angels in PRE 22, as already noted, it seems likely that PRE 22 is following the identification as found in early pseudepigraphic sources.<sup>122</sup>

It is clear that PRE 22 builds on early Jewish tradition as found in the pseudepigrapha. However, the motifs found in PRE 22 are unparalleled in earlier redacted rabbinic sources with regard to the contrast between the generations of Seth and Cain in the context of Gen 6:1–8, and the identification between the ‘daughters of men’ and the ‘daughters of Cain’. These motifs are found in different versions in various Greek and Syriac Christian sources from the second century onwards, while PRE 22 is the first rabbinic text, in terms of redaction, to explicitly include these traditions. In this respect, there is a strong possibility in PRE 22 of a direct encounter with the Christian exegetical tradition. However, this should be seen as one of many possible influences on the development of the traditions, and the importance of earlier pseudepigraphic and related rabbinic traditions should be taken into account, alongside the fact that aspects of the traditions in Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer diverge from the mainstream Christian approaches.

<sup>121</sup> Indeed, M. Maher states: ‘From the second century C.E. rabbinic and Christian authors, probably reacting against esoteric groups that gave excessive importance to angels, rejected the view that the ‘sons of God’ were angels’ (*Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 37).

<sup>122</sup> See n.115 above.

The second set of examples discussed in this chapter is on the theme of repentance. The concept that God gave the generation of the flood 120 years to repent is clearly an early and widely transmitted rabbinic tradition based on close reading of the Hebrew biblical text (as indicated, for example, by Mek *Shirata* 5:37–40, T Sot 10:3–4 and the targumic traditions). The natural conclusion is that this was an internally developed rabbinic tradition designed to explain the justice of God's actions. Indeed, this tradition also circulated in early Jewish circles, as supported by the fact that 120 years for repentance is found in Philo's Questions and Answers on Genesis I.91:

But perhaps a hundred and twenty years are not the universal limit of human life, but only of the men living at that time, who were later to perish in the flood after so great a number of years, which a benevolent benefactor prolonged, allowing repentance for sins. However, after this limit they lived a more abundant life in later generations (trans. R. Marcus, 60).

It is clear that both Philo and rabbinic exegetes have linked Gen 6:3 with repentance.<sup>123</sup> Indeed, the early rabbinic approach describing how God allowed time for repentance can be compared with Philo's assertion that God left the generation of the flood space for repentance.<sup>124</sup> However, the tradition in Philo differs from those in rabbinic sources in that the focus of Philo's interpretation is study of the length of time people lived in that generation. For Philo, the 120 years was actually a lengthening of the lifespan of the generation of the flood in order that they may have extra time to repent, as opposed to a reduction in lifespan as in rabbinic traditions.

---

<sup>123</sup> It should be noted that D. Winston argues that Philo has been influenced by rabbinic traditions with regard to the doctrine of repentance especially in instances where this cannot logically be understood from the biblical text (such as in Gen 6:3). He argues that this is based on the fact that Philo is following a deeply entrenched rabbinic tradition that 'cannot be harmonized with the Stoic ethical thinking that he espouses' ('Philo and Rabbinic Literature', 237–238 and 251–253). However, the fact that rabbinic sources substantially post-date the work of Philo in terms of date of redaction needs to be taken into account. N.G. Cohen argues that there is not a direct relationship between the works of Philo and rabbinic exegetes, but rather a 'common ancient midrashic pool' that they both drew upon (*Philo Judaeus*, 33–37); cf. D. Winston, 'Philo's Doctrine of Repentance', in: J.P. Kenney (ed.), *The School of Moses: Studies in Philo and Hellenistic Religion*, Atlanta 1995, 29–40 and L.H. Feldman, *Remember Amalek!*, 96–101 for discussion of exegesis of the Flood Story on the theme of repentance in the works of Philo and rabbinic exegetes.

<sup>124</sup> For example, Mek *Shirata* 5:37–40, Tg Neofiti Gen 6:3, Tg PsJon Gen 6:3 and Tan *Beshallah* 15.



Furthermore, the idea that the seven days of Gen 7:10 were set aside for repentance is also found in Philo, Questions and Answers on Genesis II.13:

Why, after (their) entering the ark, did seven days pass, after which (came) the flood? The benevolent Saviour grants repentance of sins in order that when they see the ark over against them, which had been made as a symbol of time, and the genera of animals placed in it, which the earth bore in itself, in accordance with their several particular species, they may have faith in the announcing of the flood; (and that) fearing destruction, they may first of all turn back (from sin), breaking down and destroying all impiety and evil (trans. R. Marcus, 88–89).

Again, here is evidence of a shared interest in the virtue of repentance in both Philo's writings and in a number of rabbinic traditions. Indeed, the widely attested rabbinic approach describing how Noah attempted to bring about the repentance of his generation, such as through the building of the ark, can be compared to Philo's explanation that seeing the ark may help the generation of the flood to repent.<sup>125</sup> However, Philo and the traditions transmitted by rabbinic exegetes differ in their understanding of the context of opportunity for repentance during the seven days of Gen 7:10. As has been discussed, the rabbinic traditions primarily connect the seven days of repentance to the time of mourning for Methuselah or the mourning by God for his world, whereas, as L.H. Feldman notes, Philo found significance in the number seven as it would remind people that God had created the world in seven days and would now destroy it.<sup>126</sup>

This leads to the question of why similar ideas are also found in the work of Church Fathers when there is no mention of repentance in the biblical text. In Christian traditions, the interpretation of the 120 years in Gen 6:3 was a matter of controversy centred on whether the 120 years was a reduction in lifespan and a punishment,<sup>127</sup> or whether the 120 years referred simply to the remaining time for repentance and not a change in lifespan,<sup>128</sup> naturally with variations in the details of these arguments. For

---

<sup>125</sup> E.g. the role of Noah is prominent in GenR 30:7, BT Sanh 108b, PRE 23, Tan *Noah* 5, TanB *Bereshit* 37; cf. Josephus, Ant. I.3.1 [74] which states of the union between angels and women: 'But Noah, indignant at their conduct and viewing their counsels with displeasure, urged them to come to a better frame of mind and amend their ways' (trans. H.St.J. Thackeray, 35). For discussion of Josephus, see L.H. Feldman, *Remember Amalek!*, 98–100.

<sup>126</sup> See L.H. Feldman, 'Questions about the Great Flood as viewed by Philo, Josephus and the Rabbis', *ZAW* 115 (2003), 408–412 for discussion.

<sup>127</sup> As suggested, for example, by Ephraem (Comm.Gen. VI. 4), Diodore of Tarsus (Cat. Csl 142) and Ps.-Clem. Hom. VIII.17.

<sup>128</sup> As exemplified by Jerome, Hebr. Quest. 6:3.

those who argued that 120 years represented the lifespan of that generation, the time for repentance within that lifespan varies, with 100 years frequently cited.<sup>129</sup> In addition, the seven days for repentance, based on Gen 7:10, is also found in a range of Christian sources.<sup>130</sup> Importantly, despite variations in interpretation and approach, the inclusion of the broad theme of time for repentance is frequently attested in a wide variety of Christian sources.

There is a strong possibility that the Christian sources from the Greek tradition have been influenced by the Philonic exegesis of the passage, as outlined above, and particularly those Church Fathers who drew on Jewish Hellenistic literature.<sup>131</sup> Furthermore, the interpretations in Christian sources are informed by numerical calculations based on Scripture, and by general concepts about the mercy of God, as described above, which could have led to the development of these traditions without any knowledge of other older sources. As such, the use of the repentance motif in the Greek tradition can at best be described as an indirect encounter.

However, it is striking that the motif appears in the Syriac literature where the idea of time for repentance is found in Aphrahat's *Demonstrations* VII.8 and in Ephraem the Syrian's *Commentary on Genesis* VI.<sup>132</sup> The question of knowledge of Philo's works by the Syriac Fathers, such as Aphrahat and Ephraem, remains open, but, in general, knowledge of Jewish Hellenistic literature is not sufficiently documented. The interpretation of 120 years for repentance in Syriac writings is unlikely to have been influenced by Philo directly on linguistic grounds, although the tradition could have been transmitted by bilingual fellow Christians. As such, it is possible that this motif represents the influence of rabbinic traditions on certain Syriac Church Fathers, such as Aphrahat and Ephraem. This is supported

---

<sup>129</sup> This is also based on calculations of biblical chronology through the connection of Gen 5:32 and Gen 6:9–10; cf. Julius Africanus, *Chronography* (IV) and John Chrysostom (*Hom.Gen.* 25.6).

<sup>130</sup> E.g. Didymus Alex. (*Comm.Gen.* ad.loc.), John Chrysostom, *Hom.Gen.* 25.8; (ps.)-Basil of Caesarea, *bohairic Homily on Noah's ark* and Ephraem the Syrian (*Comm.Gen.* VI.2).

<sup>131</sup> Although, as L.H. Feldman remarks: '(...) only once (*Quaest. in Gen.* 1.91) in the extant treatises is Philo concerned with the question of whether God or Noah had made any attempt to correct the ways of mankind and to warn them before destroying them' (*'Questions about the Great Flood'*, 409). This is an interesting remark, considering the popularity of the idea in the Christian literature.

<sup>132</sup> Both Aphrahat and Ephraem state that 120 years was given for repentance, but then go on to say that this time was reduced to 100 years because the iniquity of that generation was so great.

by the fact that the motif is widely transmitted in rabbinic traditions from the third century onwards, as indicated by interpretations such as T Sot 10:3–4, Mek *Shirata* 5:37–40, Tg Onqelos Gen 6:3 and Tg Neofiti Gen 6:3. Furthermore, the tradition of time for repentance cannot be understood to be a logical conclusion from exegesis of the biblical text; there is no mention or hint of the possibility of repentance in Genesis 6 and 7. As such, this may represent evidence of direct encounter, although the possibility that the tradition could have been known to the Syriac authors from the Greek Christian tradition needs to be considered.

Connected to the theme of repentance, there are rabbinic traditions that describe the mocking of Noah, which is often said to have occurred while he built the ark (e.g. GenR 30:7; PRE 23; TanB *Bereshit* 37; Tan *Noah* 5). Despite reporting different lengths of time for Noah's building of the ark, the range of rabbinic traditions are in agreement that the delay caused by the building project allowed an opportunity for the generation of the flood to repent. In particular, the fact that the ark was visible to all represented a chance for that wicked generation to appreciate and understand what was to come. It is clear that the building of the ark as a call to repentance and sign of the impending Flood was a widely transmitted rabbinic tradition, particularly connected to the theme of time for repentance, which has been established as an early Jewish development.<sup>133</sup> There is also an early precedent for the motif of the mocking of Noah, as the persecution of Noah is found in the work of Josephus. In Ant. I.74, Josephus states that Noah tried to persuade the generation of the flood to behave correctly, but, at their refusal, Noah is afraid that they will try to kill him and his family:

But Noah, indignant at their conduct and viewing their counsels with displeasure, urged them to come to a better frame of mind and amend their ways, but seeing that, far from yielding, they were completely enslaved to the pleasure of sin, he feared that they would murder him and, with his wives and sons and his sons' wives, quitted the country (trans. H.St.J. Thackeray, 35).

In Josephus' description of Noah being afraid for his life, L.H. Feldman sees an apology for Noah against the criticism that he separated himself from the generation of the flood. Furthermore, in his discussion of Josephus'

---

<sup>133</sup> It is already noted above that Philo teaches that the ark served as a visual aid for the generation of the flood to prompt them to believe the predictions of destruction and repent (Quaest.Gen. II.13).

portrayal of Noah and its parallels, Feldman accepts a degree of similarity with the rabbinic idea of Noah trying to bring his wicked contemporaries to 'a better frame of mind'. As Feldman notes, however, rabbinic exegetes do not mention threats against Noah's life.<sup>134</sup>

A number of Christian traditions also highlight the mocking of Noah (e.g. John Chrysostom, Hom. 1 Thess. VIII.18; Basil of Seleucia, Oratio V; Ephraem the Syrian, Comm.Gen. VI.8.2–9). Furthermore, in a number of Christian traditions, the mocking of Noah is often related to his role as a prophet or preacher who attempts to convince the generation of the flood to repent (e.g. Theophilus of Antioch, Ad Autolyc. III.19 and *Cave of Treasures* XIV.11–14).<sup>135</sup> This can be compared to the rabbinic interpretation that Noah was a herald to warn his generation, as often, although not exclusively, illustrated through the building of the ark (e.g. GenR 30:7; BT Sanh 108b; TanB *Bereshit* 37; Tan *Noah* 5).

Clearly, the ridiculing of Noah represents shared use of distinctive imagery in both rabbinic and Christian traditions, which is connected to the theme of repentance. This motif presents a shared moral argument on the wickedness of the generation of the flood and their inability to comprehend or assess the extent of their sin. The role of Noah as a herald also serves to further highlight the mercy of God in attempting to save that wicked generation from punishment. Furthermore, there is no hint that Noah was mocked by his contemporaries in the biblical text. However, the interpretation presented by Josephus illustrates the existence of a form of this motif in early Jewish circles, which may have served to influence rabbinic and Christian exegesis independently. Indeed, the portrayal of threats against Noah's life in the work of Josephus is paralleled in John Chrysostom (Hom.Gen. 23.5). As such, the mocking of Noah provides evidence of an indirect encounter.

The topic of chastity in rabbinic and Christian interpretations of the Flood Story provides the next examples of exegetical encounters. In particular, interpretations of the fact that Noah was 500 when he had children, as described in Gen 5:32, provide potential evidence of dialectic and direct encounter between rabbinic and Christian traditions. This is particularly

---

<sup>134</sup> 'Josephus' Portrait of Noah and Its Parallels in Philo, Pseudo-Philo's 'Biblical Antiquities', and Rabbinic Midrashim', *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 55 (1988), 41–42.

<sup>135</sup> For the combination of these approaches on the mocking of Noah and his role as a prophet see Methodius of Olympus (Banquet X.3), John Chrysostom (Hom.Gen. 23.5, Hom. I Thess. VIII.2; PG:62:442); De statuis hom. 20.8 (PG 49:210), (Ps.-) Athanasius of Alexandria, Sermo de Patientia 4; Cat.Petit (anon.) 608.

highlighted in GenR 26:2; in this tradition, God enforces the sterility of Noah in light of his potentially wicked offspring, and so Noah's choice to act righteously and abstain from procreation was removed. This exegetical approach may represent an attempt to minimize the significance and role of Noah due to his prominence in the Church, and provide a response to Christian ascetic ideals as practised especially in the Syriac tradition.<sup>136</sup> The emphasis on the righteousness of Noah, as demonstrated by his chastity such as in the works of Ephraem and Aphrahat, could have prompted rabbinic exegetes to provide an alternative reason for the delay in Noah's procreation, namely, the divinely ordained sterility of Noah.<sup>137</sup> This point has also been raised by N. Koltun-Fromm, who states: 'In perhaps indirect reaction to Noah's 'christianization', the rabbis demote him from righteous man to castrate; a judgment, perhaps, not only on Noah, but on those Christians who idealize him'.<sup>138</sup>

Furthermore, there are alternative traditions on the chastity of Noah preserved in later rabbinic sources. Indeed, TanB *Bereshit* 39 promotes an explanation similar to that found in the work of Church Fathers such as Aphrahat and Ephraem the Syrian.<sup>139</sup> According to TanB *Bereshit* 39, the reason why Noah postponed carrying out the duty of procreation was

---

<sup>136</sup> For example, N. Koltun-Fromm has stated: 'The Christian exegetes adopt Noah as a role model for their way of life; the Syriac Church, in particular, portrays Noah as an exemplary ascetic. In perhaps indirect response to this 'christianization' of Noah, the rabbinic commentators challenge and deflate Noah's righteousness' ('Aphrahat and the Rabbis on Noah', 57). In the Greek tradition, see Theophilus of Antioch (Ad Autolyc. III.19 (1.); John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 24.4; Eusebius of Caesarea, Dem.Ev. I.9. Whilst emphasizing that a tradition of asceticism can be traced to the beginning of Christianity, S. Brock argues that there was a rise in asceticism in the Syriac church from the fourth century partly as a response to the degradation of Christian life after persecutions ended ('Early Syrian Asceticism', in: idem, *Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity*, London 1984, 1–19).

<sup>137</sup> It is worthy of mention that, following the description of Noah's sterility in GenR 26:2, the text presents an apologetic argument on the status of Israel and the nations in the future world. It states that in the future messianic age it is only the children of Noah who will face death. This represents the start of a debate between R. Hanina and R. Yehoshua b. Levi over the fate of the Gentiles in the messianic age, prompted by discussion over the 'sons of Noah'. A variety of rabbinic opinions are stated but the parashah closes with the statement that the sons of Noah will not receive life because of their actions towards the Temple. A typical example of the identification between the sons of Noah and the 'nations of the world' is found in RuthR proem 3, which describes how the nations of the world are descended from Noah. They are said to scheme evil decrees against Israel and serve strange gods; cf. MidrPss 49:2.

<sup>138</sup> 'Aphrahat and the Rabbis on Noah', 71. Interestingly, Theophilus of Antioch notes that some called Noah a eunuch due to his chaste way of life (Ad Autolyc. III.19).

<sup>139</sup> E.g. Aphrahat, Demonstrations XIII.5–7, Ephraem the Syrian, Comm.Gen. VI.1; cf. the *Cave of Treasures* XVII.15–17 and XVIII.2–8.

because of the iniquity of his generation, which he constantly beheld. This state of affairs continued until God revealed to him the matter of the ark. Then he decided to take a wife and she gave birth to children. Thus, Noah was prompted to have children because he had been warned of the impending Flood. Noah did not even take a wife until the matter of the ark was revealed to him and, as such, was an example of one who chose to observe chastity.

The tradition in TanB *Bereshit* 39, and parallels, focuses on the chastity of Noah in exceptional circumstances; Noah needed to protect his potential offspring from the wicked generation of the flood.<sup>140</sup> The argument against mixing with that generation is also found in Aphrahat. The ideal of chastity was central for Aphrahat's work, as he was himself one of the leading representatives of strict Syriac asceticism. Interestingly, not only do both Aphrahat and the tradition represented by TanB *Bereshit* 39 argue that Noah was chaste to avoid mixing with the generation of the flood, but both interpretations also note that Noah decided to procreate when God told him about the coming Flood, as he did not want to die without children. However, the two approaches are motivated differently. In TanB *Bereshit* 39, and parallels, the chastity of Noah is due to exceptional circumstances caused by the wickedness of Noah's contemporaries, whereas Aphrahat (and Ephraem) supported the practice of chastity in general and indeed often describe Noah as chaste both before and after the Flood. Indeed, N. Koltun-Fromm argues that 'The subtle variations between Aphrahat and the rabbinic material reflect the growing divisions between Jews and Christians concerning issues of chastity and marriage. According to Aphrahat, Noah is chaste and single before God calls him. (...) For the Christians, a chaste biblical hero supplied the necessary religious support for a new social model. The Jewish Noah, however, stands in marked contrast to the Christian Noah, who as a man of faith becomes a 'proto'-monk in the Syriac Church'.<sup>141</sup>

---

<sup>140</sup> The idea of the avoidance of intermarriage between the evil generation and Seth's descendants is also found in Jubilees. As R.V. Huggins observes: 'Prior to the Flood, Jubilees is careful to indicate that there was no marriage outside the Sethian line; each generation taking as wives either a sister or the daughter of the paternal uncle (4:7–28,33). Noah's ancestry and that of his three sons are thus represented as free from gigantic and angelic intrusions. The same is also true of 1 Enoch's Animal Apocalypse, where Seth and his offspring are white bulls (85:8–9) (...) when Noah names his appearance at 89:1, he is a white bull like Seth' ('Noah and the Giants: A Response to John C. Reeves', *JBL* 114.1 (1995), 107).

<sup>141</sup> 'Aphrahat and the Rabbis on Noah', 61.

Thus, exegetical encounters on the issue of chastity are manifested in different ways, corresponding to the different approaches in rabbinic and Christian literature. The possibility of encounter is strengthened by the fact that there is no discussion of Noah's delay in procreation in the biblical text of Gen 5:32. One rabbinic approach, represented by GenR 26:2, rejects Noah as an example of chastity, such as found in the Syriac tradition, instead emphasizing the role of God in the delay in procreation. However, traditions such as represented by TanB *Bereshit* 39 follow a similar argumentation regarding the chastity of Noah to that found in Christian sources, such as the writings of Aphrahat. However, there is a divergence in theology as ultimately this shared approach is against the backdrop of the ultimate duty of procreation in rabbinic sources and the ideal of chastity in the Church, especially in the Syriac tradition. This encounter represents evidence of establishing respective theological boundaries on a controversial issue. Indeed, it should be noted that Aphrahat uses Noah's chastity in the Flood Story in order to defend the ideal of celibacy against criticism by Jewish contemporaries.<sup>142</sup>

Finally, the practice of chastity by both Noah and his family and the animals in the ark also presents evidence of encounter. This was certainly a widely transmitted rabbinic tradition,<sup>143</sup> and it is also an idea that circulated in early Jewish circles as indicated by the exegesis of Philo in Questions and Answers on Genesis II.49:

Why, when they entered the ark, was the order (of words) 'he and his sons' and then 'and his sons' wives,' but when they went out, was it changed? For (Scripture) says, 'Noah went out and his wife' and then 'his sons and his sons' wives.' In the literal sense, by 'going in' (Scripture) indicates the non-begetting of seed, but by 'going out' it indicates generation (trans. R. Marcus, 129).

With regard to the chastity of Noah and his family in the ark, it is clear that both Philo and certain rabbinic exegetes use the same argumentation based on the order people entered and left the ark, although Philo utilizes Gen 7:7 and 8:18 rather than Gen 8:16 as the second proof text. The early nature of this tradition indicates that this was an internally developed Jewish tradition, based on careful reading of the biblical text.<sup>144</sup> However,

<sup>142</sup> See S. Brock, 'Jewish Traditions in Syriac Sources', 226.

<sup>143</sup> Cf. PT Taan 1:6, 64d, GenR 31:12, 34:7, 34:8, Tan *Noah* 5, 11, 17, PRE 23.

<sup>144</sup> For detailed comparison of Philo with the midrashic tradition, see N.G. Cohen, *Philo Judaeus*, 37–65.

as N.G. Cohen states, 'This point is not stated in Scripture, nor can it be dismissed as obvious and easily deduced there from the verses. On the contrary, it must be read *into* the text'.<sup>145</sup>

Going further, J.P. Lewis suggests an influence of the Jewish tradition on the Christian with respect to this motif: 'This ascetic note had a certain appeal to ascetic tendencies in the church and is commented on by a number of church fathers'.<sup>146</sup> Interestingly, Origen makes the same argument about chastity in the ark on the basis of Gen 6:18. Whilst a rabbinic influence on Christian tradition is possible, the motif was frequently attested in Christian sources from the Greek and Syriac tradition from the second century onwards, as highlighted above. With respect to the Syriac tradition, it was a natural extension of the ideal of chastity to apply this principle to the time in the ark. Furthermore, it is also likely that Church Fathers from the Greek tradition arrived at this interpretation independently from the rabbinic exegesis based on influence from Philo.

Building on this exegetical context, rabbinic and Christian traditions also emphasize the chastity of the animals during the time in the ark. For example, in interpretation of Gen 8:18, GenR 34:8 describes the prohibition on procreation for animals in the ark (cf. PRE 23; TanB *Noah* 17; Tan *Noah* 11). This interpretation is maintained despite the fact that animals of both sexes entered the ark together in Gen 7:9. This approach may also reflect Gen 8:18, which teaches that the animals were saved in order that they may multiply on the earth, that is, on the earth but not in the ark. Similarly, the chastity of the animals in the ark is found in both Greek and Syriac Christian traditions (e.g. Procopius of Gaza, Comm. Gen., PG 87:280, and Ephraem the Syrian, Comm.Gen. VI.12). This line of argument could simply be an extension of the concept of the chastity of people in the ark, but ultimately there is no clear cut basis for this motif in the Flood Story narrative. At the very least, these examples represent a shared approach to chastity in the ark in rabbinic and Christian biblical interpretation, although based on different theological presuppositions; rabbinic exegetes again stress the exceptional circumstances that allowed cessation from procreation, whereas, for the Christian authors in both the Greek and Syriac tradition, chastity was an ideal to be upheld.<sup>147</sup>

---

<sup>145</sup> *Philo Judaeus*, 50.

<sup>146</sup> *Interpretations of Noah and the Flood*, 144.

<sup>147</sup> However, D. Vigne has claimed of the interpretation of the practice of chastity in the ark: 'Entre commentaires rabbiniques et patristiques, peut-on trouver plus exacte convergence?' ('Origène et l'exégèse juive', 140).



Overall, the key examples discussed here indicate both the possible influence of Christian motifs on rabbinic traditions, such as in the discussion of the descendants of Seth and Cain in PRE 22, and awareness of rabbinic traditions by the Church Fathers, particularly from the Syriac tradition, on the theme of time allowed for the generation of the flood to repent. Discussion of a controversial issue is found in the example of the chastity of Noah, with a potential rabbinic response to the widespread Christian ideal of the righteous Noah who chose chastity in the interpretation of the divinely imposed sterility of Noah in GenR 26:2.<sup>148</sup> As such, the legendary nature of the Flood Story and the theological challenges it posed allowed for a diverse range of types of exegetical encounter as part of the wider development of the respective traditions on Noah and the Flood.

---

<sup>148</sup> A number of the examples of exegetical encounter discussed throughout this chapter are found in a cluster in BT Sanh 108a–b. The gemara begins with a description of the generation of the flood, the extent of their corruption and their ultimate fate. This is followed by a number of points relevant to the exegetical encounter, namely, the mourning of God, the extent of Noah's righteousness, Noah's preaching with the aim of repentance by his generation, the mocking of Noah, the period of time given to the generation of the flood to repent, the structure of the ark, and finally chastity in the ark and the consequences of failure in this regard for the dog, the raven and Ham. The presence of a cluster of motifs is noteworthy, but again the fluid development of exegetical motifs should be stressed, including transmission of interpretations from within the rabbinic corpus and pseudepigraphical traditions, alongside awareness of Christian ideas on these topics.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ABRAHAM AND MELCHIZEDEK

*And Melchizedek, King of Salem, brought out bread and wine, and he is a priest of God Most High. (MT Gen 14:18)*

#### *Rabbinic Traditions*

The description of Melchizedek in the Hebrew Bible only consists of three verses, however, his position, status and activities raised a large number of questions for rabbinic exegetes, which led to a diverse set of interpretations regarding this enigmatic figure.<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew Bible describes Melchizedek in Gen 14:18–20:

ומלכי צדק מלך שלם הוציא לחם ויין והוא כהן לאל עליון ויברכהו ויאמר ברוך אברם לאל עליון קנה שמים וארץ וברוך אל עליון אשר מגן צריך בידך ויתן לו מעשר מכל

*And Melchizedek, King of Salem, brought out bread and wine, and he is a priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and he said: 'Blessed be Abram of God Most High, creator of heaven and earth. And blessed be God Most High, who delivers your enemies into your hand'. And he gave to him a tenth of everything.*

Rabbinic exegetes needed to explain the origins and nature of the priestly role of Melchizedek, which predated the priesthood in biblical chronology.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> The bibliography on Melchizedek in rabbinic literature is extensive but some key works include C.T.R. Hayward, 'Shem, Melchizedek, and Concern with Christianity in the Pentateuchal Targumim', in: K.J. Cathcart – M. Mayer (eds), *Targumic and Cognate Studies*, Sheffield 1996, 67–80; F.L. Horton, *The Melchizedek Tradition*; J.L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 275–293, M. McNamara, 'Melchizedek: Gen 14:17–20 in the Targums, in Rabbinic and Early Christian Literature', *Biblica* 81 (2000), 1–31; and M. Poorthuis, 'Enoch and Melchizedek in Judaism and Christianity: A Study in Intermediaries', in: M. Poorthuis – J. Schwartz (eds), *Saints and Role Models in Judaism and Christianity*, Leiden 2004, 97–120.

<sup>2</sup> The call of Aaron and his descendants to be priests is found in Exodus 28–29. The Levites were 'given to Aaron and his sons' as found in Num 3:9, 8:19 and 18:6. The contrasting role and responsibilities of priests and Levites is outlined in Num 18:1–7. As W. Horbury notes, 'It is a familiar fact that in the Pentateuch as now preserved the Levites, 'given to Aaron and his sons' (Num. 8.19; cf. 3.9, 18.6), take second place to the priests,

The biblical text needed further explanation, such as on questions of from where Melchizedek came, and the meaning of his name. A controversial question was the relationship of Abraham to this priestly figure, which led to detailed analysis of their interaction and discussion of Abraham's own status in relation to Melchizedek.<sup>3</sup> The practice of the tithe was also raised, although the biblical text is ambiguous on who gave the tithe to whom.<sup>4</sup> These questions are addressed in the following discussion of rabbinic traditions.

### *Melchizedek identified with Shem*

The first motif for discussion is not based on exegesis of a specific biblical verse, but reflects an attempt to understand the origins and function of Melchizedek. A variety of rabbinic traditions explore in some detail the identity of Melchizedek and his priestly role, as the biblical story gives little detail on this ambiguous character. Melchizedek was of particular interest because of the priestly role assigned to him prior to the establishment of the Israelite priesthood. Furthermore, the fact that Abraham deferred to him made Melchizedek a character of note within the biblical narrative, whose role and status needed further explanation. In an attempt to expand on the person of Melchizedek, a famous and often repeated tradition in rabbinic sources is that Melchizedek is to be identified with Shem, the son of Noah and ancestor of Israel.<sup>5</sup> The most renowned passage to contain this tradition is BT Ned 32b:

אמר רבי זכריה משום רבי ישמעאל ביקש הקב"ה להוציא כהונה משם שנאמר  
והוא כהן לאל עליון  
(*Talmud Bavli: Nedarim*, Vilna 1880–86, repr. Jerusalem 1968, 64)

R. Zechariah said in the name of R. Ishmael: The Holy One, blessed be He, sought to bring out the priesthood from Shem, as it is said, *And he is a priest of God Most High* (Gen 14:18).

In BT Ned 32b, the identification between Shem and Melchizedek is made by describing Shem as a priest with reference to Gen 14:18, in which verse

---

whose appointment and dues are mentioned first' (*Messianism among Jews and Christians*, London-N.Y. 2003, 236). Horbury further discusses the understanding of the priesthood in post-biblical sources, *ibid.*, 227–254.

<sup>3</sup> Although 'Abram' does not become 'Abraham' until Gen 17:5, rabbinic exegetes prefer the use of 'Abraham' and so this name is used in discussion of this figure in this chapter.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. C. Westermann, *Genesis 12–36: A Commentary*, London 1986, 203–208.

<sup>5</sup> Shem, the son of Noah, is first introduced in Gen 5:32 and features throughout the Flood Story along with details of his descendants in Genesis 10.

Melchizedek is described as priest of God Most High.<sup>6</sup> Thus, Shem is Melchizedek, priest of God Most High. The identification between Shem and Melchizedek is widely attested also within Palestinian midrash, although the various traditions provide different explanations for the nature of the priesthood of Melchizedek and his fate in this role, as outlined below.<sup>7</sup>

This identification has been much discussed with scholars such as M. McNamara and F.L. Horton claiming that the association of Shem and Melchizedek is attested at an early date in rabbinic Judaism.<sup>8</sup> Their arguments are based on BT Ned 32b, in which the tradition identifying the priesthood of Shem with that of Melchizedek in Gen 14:18 is transmitted by R. Zechariah from the fourth century in the name of R. Ishmael from the second century. On the basis of this, both McNamara and Horton propose that the identification of Melchizedek and Shem was current from the first half of the second century. However, as discussed in the introduction to this volume, the dating of a tradition on the basis of attributions cannot be accepted without extreme caution and appropriate qualification. Indeed, the earliest sources in terms of redaction to make the identification between Melchizedek and Shem are Tg Neofiti Gen 14:18 from the third or fourth century, followed by GenR 44:7 and LevR 25:6 from the fifth century.

A number of scholars, such as C.T.R. Hayward, argue that the identification of Melchizedek and Shem is an internally developed Jewish tradition. There are two key lines of argument to consider in this regard.

First, the internal development of this motif is supported by the fact that the Hebrew text of Gen 11:10 says that Shem lived for 500 years after the birth of his son Arpachshad. Therefore, according to the genealogies, Shem lived for 210 years after the birth of Abraham.<sup>9</sup> Ultimately, there is no existing rabbinic tradition which explicitly outlines these genealogical calculations. However, such methods are typical of the rabbinic

<sup>6</sup> BT Ned 32b is closely paralleled in LevR 25:6 and both traditions go on to teach how the priesthood was taken away from Shem/Melchizedek, as discussed in the next example: 'Priesthood of Abraham'. The only other reference to Melchizedek in the Hebrew Bible is in Ps 110:4, which also identifies Melchizedek as a priest: *'The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: you are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek* (אתה כהן לעולם על (דברתי מלכי צדק).

<sup>7</sup> E.g. Tg Neofiti Gen 14:18, GenR 44:7, 56:10, LevR 25:6, BT Ned 32b, ARN A 2, PRE 8, 27, Tg PsJon Gen 14:18, SOR 21, Tan *Lekh Lekha* 15, MidrPss 76:3 and 27, NumR 4:8.

<sup>8</sup> M. McNamara, 'Melchizedek', 11; F.L. Horton, *The Melchizedek Tradition*, 118.

<sup>9</sup> This means that he even outlived Abraham by 35 years, as, in Gen 25:7, Abraham dies at the age of 175.

mindset and it is highly likely that rabbinic exegetes would have calculated that the Hebrew biblical text implies that Shem was still alive in the time of Abraham, and this was a factor in the exegesis identifying Melchizedek and Shem.<sup>10</sup>

Secondly, it is necessary to consider early Jewish sources, such as found in Jubilees and Philo. If there is evidence that Shem was viewed as a righteous priest then this could have led to a straightforward association of Shem with Melchizedek, especially as Shem was still alive in Melchizedek's day.<sup>11</sup> However, the idea that Shem was already considered to be a righteous priest in early Jewish tradition has little explicit evidence to support it. In Philo's Questions and Answers on Genesis Shem is described only as a wise man worthy of the blessing given to him in Gen 9:23 (Quaest.Gen. II.72). The discussion of Shem in On Sobriety refers to his goodness and virtue, his kingship, power, blessings and his status as ancestor of the patriarchs, but nothing on the priesthood of Shem (Sobr. 51–69). Indeed, Sobr. 66 describes Shem as the foundation of the twelve tribes: 'Once more Jacob is the source of the twelve tribes, of whom the oracles say that they are 'the palace and priesthood of God' (Exod. xix.6), thus following in due sequence the thought originated in Shem, in whose houses it was prayed that God might dwell' (trans. F.H. Colson, 479).<sup>12</sup> However, being an ancestor of the tribes that held the office is not the same as holding the priestly office.<sup>13</sup>

With regard to Jubilees, again Shem is not explicitly described as a priest. The closest that the text comes to such a designation is the fact that Shem is in the line of those who acted as a priest. Thus, Adam is given

---

<sup>10</sup> J.J. Petuchowski notes that the identification of Melchizedek and Shem is taken for granted in the sources, but argues that it is a 'midrashic conceit which in the absence of any clear cut chronology, identifies any number of biblical personages with one another' ('The Controversial Figure of Melchizedek', *HUCA* 28 (1957), 129). He bases this on other such instances, e.g. Putiel is identified with Jethro in Tg PsJon Exod 6:25, and there is a connection between Phinehas and Elijah in Tg PsJon Num 25:12.

<sup>11</sup> Indeed, C.T.R. Hayward has argued that the identification of Melchizedek with Shem belongs to the continuation of an early internal Jewish tradition represented by Jubilees and Philo, which can provide background to the idea that Shem was a righteous priest. This, in addition to the fact that by reasoning from the genealogies Shem would still be alive, led for Hayward to an easy equation of Melchizedek and Shem ('Shem, Melchizedek', 67–80).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Exod 19:6.

<sup>13</sup> This point is also made in the late NumR 4:8, which describes Shem as a 'type' of priest; cf. C.T.R. Hayward, who presents the clear evidence that Philo 'glorifies the ancestor of the Jewish people'. However, Hayward goes on to draw a connection between Shem and priesthood due to the fact that he is described by Philo as the ancestor of the twelve tribes and therefore the ancestor of the priesthood ('Shem, Melchizedek', 76).

a priestly function in Jubilees 3:26–27, Enoch in 4:25 and Noah in 6:1–3.<sup>14</sup> It is interesting, however, that despite the priestly role given to these characters in Jubilees, Shem is *not* explicitly assigned a priestly function in the text. It is, therefore, not until the rabbinic era that Shem is given an overt priestly function through his identification with Melchizedek.

The questions then become: what was behind the equation of Melchizedek and Shem in particular, and what was the motivation for such exegesis in the development of rabbinic ideas?

Even if the material from Philo and Jubilees is considered to be sufficient evidence of a priestly role for Shem, there is no identification between Shem and Melchizedek in these texts. As such, it seems very likely that at least part of the impetus for the rabbinic traditions, as noted above and as M. Poorthuis also suggests, was that the identification of Melchizedek and Shem ‘may have served an exegetical purpose, explaining Shem still being alive at the time of Abraham’.<sup>15</sup> However, this does not fully explain why the rabbinic traditions outline the identification of Shem with Melchizedek in particular. Another outcome of this exegesis is that the association between Melchizedek and Shem in the rabbinic traditions gives Melchizedek a place in the lineage of the biblical patriarchs and in this way he becomes part of the history of Israel. Thus, the identification gives Melchizedek a genealogy and he becomes a priest of Israelite history.<sup>16</sup>

Indeed, there is a prominent rabbinic exegetical approach on the historical role of Shem/Melchizedek, illustrated in the first place through the identification of these two figures, but taken further in the discussion of the role of Shem/Melchizedek.<sup>17</sup> Tg Neofiti Gen 14:18 describes how the

---

<sup>14</sup> This is no doubt inferred from the Hebrew Bible at Gen 8:20 where Noah builds an altar and sacrifices burnt offerings upon it.

<sup>15</sup> ‘Enoch and Melchizedek in Judaism and Christianity’, 113.

<sup>16</sup> J.L. Kugel argues that the idea of a priesthood through Shem ‘was less disturbing to Jews than the notion of a “priest of God Most High” who lacked any connection to the Jewish people or the later levitical priesthood’ (*Traditions of the Bible*, 289).

<sup>17</sup> The historical approach is also found in early Jewish tradition. For example, 1QApGen 22.14ff follows the Hebrew biblical text quite closely, thus focusing on Melchizedek as a historical figure. However, an alternative approach to Melchizedek as an eschatological figure is also found in PRK 5:9, PR 15:14/15, CantR 2:13, BT Suk 52b and ARN A 34, which contain versions of a rabbinic tradition that explicitly preserves an eschatological role for Melchizedek. This tradition includes Melchizedek alongside Elijah, the Messiah and the War Messiah, as the four craftsmen of Zech 2:3. A similar approach is found in the Qumran material in 11Q13, which describes Melchizedek as an eschatological redeemer who passes judgment at the end of time. As such, an eschatological interpretation of Melchizedek can be found alongside the approach that treats him as a historical figure;

righteous king, also known as Shem the son of Noah, was ministering before God Most High.<sup>18</sup> GenR 43:6 describes how Melchizedek instructed Abraham in the laws of the priesthood and revealed Torah to him,<sup>19</sup> while GenR 44:7 outlines how Shem blessed Abraham based on Gen 14:19.<sup>20</sup>

The historical ancestry of Melchizedek/Shem is further emphasized in the later PRE 8, which contains an interesting development of the subject of the priestly succession from Noah to Shem/Melchizedek. The chapter contains the tradition that Melchizedek is Shem on the basis of Gen 14:18. However, Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer goes into more detail on how Shem received his priestly office. It teaches that Shem was a priest by virtue of the fact that he was the firstborn son of Noah and he ministered to God.<sup>21</sup> Noah passed on the principle of intercalation to Shem/Melchizedek, who passed it to Abraham. Thus, in PRE 8, the genealogy of Melchizedek/Shem is also emphasized through the succession of the priesthood to a firstborn son of Noah. This tradition is also transmitted in other late redacted texts. TanB *Toledot* 12 describes, in interpretation of Lev 14:4, how garments of the high priesthood came to Esau; God clothed Adam in garments of high priesthood, as he was the firstborn of the world. Then Noah passed them on to Shem who passed them on to Abraham. In this tradition, the inheritance of the role of priest also comes to Abraham from Shem.<sup>22</sup>

---

cf. R.S. Boustán who states: 'AdRN A 34 provides unequivocal proof for the active association between Melchizedek and the priestly messiah in rabbinic literature' (*From Martyr to Mystic: Rabbinic Martyrology and the Making of Merkavah Mysticism*, Tübingen 2005, 138). However, B.A. Pearson argues that the historical approach is far more prominent than the eschatological interpretation ('Melchizedek in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Gnosticism', in: M.E. Stone – T.A. Bergren (eds), *Biblical Figures Outside the Bible*, 185–186).

<sup>18</sup> Tg Neofiti Gen 14:18 is closely paralleled in Tg Psjjon Gen 14:18.

<sup>19</sup> The identification between Shem and Melchizedek is not explicit in this tradition, but was widely understood, and indeed the identification is explicit in GenR 44:7.

<sup>20</sup> GenR 44:7 is paralleled in Tan *Lekh Lekha* 15 and TanB *Lekh Lekha* 19.

<sup>21</sup> The reason Shem may have been considered the firstborn of Noah (and the preferable choice for the eldest child due to his being ancestor of the Jewish people) is because of the Hebrew of Gen 10:21, which is ambiguous in its use of the adjective הַגֶּדוֹל 'the elder'; this could apply to either Japhet or Shem; cf. Jubilees 4:33 where Shem is introduced as firstborn son.

<sup>22</sup> See also the following examples on the 'Priesthood of Abraham'. NumR 4:8 also contains a parallel to this tradition. Although late, NumR 4:8 describes how priestly garments were passed from firstborn to firstborn, and, particularly of interest here, from Noah to Shem, who is again identified with Melchizedek. In this text, it is stressed that it is not the actual priesthood that is passed on through succession, but high priestly garments for the use of those key figures who acted *like* a priest. NumR 4:8 also explains that Shem was considered to be the firstborn son of Noah, rather than Japhet, because the patriarchs would descend from Shem.

In summary, a prominent exegetical approach identifies Melchizedek as Shem, a human historical figure with a genealogy.<sup>23</sup> This identification and approach was probably motivated by a number of factors. First, the need to explain the fact that Shem was still alive at the time of Abraham, according to the biblical text. Secondly, the need to explain a priestly role for Melchizedek as Shem, an ancestor of Israel in such a role before the legitimate priesthood was established.

### *Priesthood of Abraham*

The next point of exegesis for discussion is the contrast between the priesthood of Abraham and the priesthood of Melchizedek. A key tradition on this subject matter is again found in BT Ned 32b, which builds on the identification of Shem and Melchizedek, as already discussed, to examine the relationship between the priestly roles of Melchizedek and Abraham:

אמר רבי זכריה משום רבי ישמעאל ביקש הקב"ה להוציא כהונה משם שנאמר והוא כהן לאל עליון כיון שהקדים ברכת אברהם לברכת המקום הוציאה מאברהם שנאמר ויברכהו ויאמר ברוך אברהם לאל עליון קונה שמים וארץ וברוך אל עליון אמר לו אברהם וכי מקדימין ברכת עבד לברכת קונו מיד נתנה לאברהם שנאמר גם ה' לאדני שב לימיני עד אשית אויביך הדום לרגליך ובתריה כתיב נשבע ה' ולא ינחם אתה כהן לעולם על דברתי מלכי צדק על דיבורו של מלכי צדק והיינו דכתיב והוא כהן לאל עליון הוא כהן ואין זרעו כהן  
(*Talmud Bavli: Nedarim*, Vilna 1880–86, repr. Jerusalem 1968, 64)

R. Zechariah said in the name of R. Ishmael: The Holy One, blessed be He, sought to bring out the priesthood from Shem, as it is said, *And he is a priest of God Most High* (Gen 14:18). Since he (i.e. Melchizedek) offered the blessing of Abraham prior to the blessing of God, He (i.e. God) brought it (i.e. the priesthood) out from Abraham, as it is said, *And he blessed him and he said, 'Blessed be Abram of God Most High, creator of heaven and earth, and blessed be God Most High'* (Gen 14:18). Abraham said to him: 'Is it really so that we offer the blessing of the servant prior to the blessing of his master?' Immediately He gave it (i.e. the priesthood) to Abraham, as it is said, *The Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I set your enemies as your footstool* (Ps 110:1). And after it is written, *The Lord has sworn and will not reconsider, you are a priest forever after the manner of (דברתי) Melchizedek'* (Ps 110:4). That is, because of the utterance of (דיבורו) Melchizedek. It corresponds to

<sup>23</sup> The historical role of Shem as a wise rabbi with his own academy is also found in rabbinic traditions. In Gen 25:22, Rebekah enquires of the Lord why her children are fighting within her. This is interpreted in GenR 63:6 to mean that she went to the college of Shem and Eber (cf. GenR 20:6, 48:20, 63:10, 68:7). GenR 63:6 also maintains that visiting a rabbi with a question is the means of asking a question of God.



what is written, *And he is a priest of God Most High*. He is a priest, but his seed is not a priest.

First of all, BT Ned 32b makes the identification between Shem and Melchizedek by relating the priesthood of Shem to Gen 14:18, which is speaking of Melchizedek in the biblical text. Secondly, BT Ned 32b describes how the blessing given by the Melchizedek/Shem figure in Gen 14:19–20 is inappropriate, as Abraham is named before God (thus also casting doubt on Melchizedek/Shem's priestly abilities). Abraham points out the error of Melchizedek/Shem, and, as a result, God takes away the priesthood from Melchizedek and passes it to Abraham and his descendants forever, as proven by Psalm 110.

This tradition is also found in Palestinian midrash and is closely paralleled in LevR 25:6, which is earlier than the Babylonian Talmud in terms of date of redaction.<sup>24</sup> The midrash makes the identification between Shem and Melchizedek on the basis of Gen 14:18, attributed here to R. Ishmael. The tradition also goes on to describe how the blessing pronounced by Melchizedek/Shem was improper as Abraham was named before God, which led to the priesthood being taken from Melchizedek/Shem and given to Abraham by God, again based on Psalm 110. This closely parallels the tradition in BT Ned 32b; however, the discussion goes on to connect the priesthood of Abraham with his circumcision.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> In later texts, the priesthood of Melchizedek/Shem is discussed in connection with the priestly role of firstborn sons, as in PRE 8, TanB *Toledot* 12 and NumR 4:8, which are discussed above. These texts explain that the sacrificial service was performed by firstborn sons before the Levite tribe was created. In PRE 8, Melchizedek/Shem is considered to be a priest, but, in NumR 4:8, it is very clear that Melchizedek/Shem was not a priest, rather the attribution was given because of the similarity of his role to the function of priest.

<sup>25</sup> In Gen 17:9ff. God commands Abraham to circumcise himself and all the males of his household as a sign of the covenant between them. Abraham follows God's command, circumcising the 'flesh of their foreskins' (Gen 17:23ff.). A major exegetical approach in rabbinic exegesis of Genesis 17 is the concept of perfection through circumcision, thus emphasizing the importance of this practice. This is an early Mishnaic tradition transmitted in a wide variety of rabbinic sources (e.g. M Ned 3:11, Mek *Amalek* 3:106–125, GenR 46:1, PR 48:3, TanB *Lekh Lekha* 25 and PRE 29). An interesting development of this idea is that the foreskin is actually a defect to be removed to reach a state of perfection (cf. GenR 46:1 and 46:4, TanB *Lekh Lekha* 21, NumR 12:8). GenR 46:4 illustrates this point as God tells Abraham that he has no defect other than the foreskin and the defect will be gone if he removes it, as proven by Gen 17:1: '*Walk before me and be whole*'. GenR 46:5 outlines four places of the body that could be potentially circumcised. The possibilities are viewed in light of what would invalidate the priesthood of Abraham, and it is only the circumcision of the foreskin that would not be considered a blemish; cf. Tan *Lekh Lekha* 16 and PRE 29.

A lengthy discussion outlining the views of several rabbinic exegetes illustrates that Abraham was qualified to be a high priest because he did not have any blemishes; he circumcised his foreskin rather than another part of his body.<sup>26</sup> Abraham knew where to perform his circumcision because God's promise in Gen 17:2 that his descendants will multiply intimated that the sign of this covenant should be on the foreskin as the means of multiplying.<sup>27</sup>

Abraham is often given a priestly function in rabbinic traditions, and interestingly this is usually based on Ps 110:4: '*you are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek*'. Thus, the priesthood of Abraham is affirmed on the basis of the priesthood of Melchizedek. For example, GenR 55:6 assigns priesthood and kingship to Abraham on the basis of Ps 110:4, and in GenR 55:7 Abraham questions God about the need for a priest to sacrifice Isaac and he is told, again on the basis of Ps 110:4, that God has already appointed him as a priest.<sup>28</sup>

Through exegesis of Genesis 14 and Psalm 110, LevR 25:6 and BT Ned 32b illustrate that, although Melchizedek/Shem once had the priesthood, it has now passed to Abraham and his descendants and remains solely with them.<sup>29</sup> Thus, it is possible that the identification of Melchizedek with Shem was a means of keeping the office of priest within the history and ancestry of Israel, and then, in a development of this approach, the removal of the priesthood from Melchizedek/Shem to Abraham is a means of clarifying that priestly authority is with Abraham and his descendants rather than any other priestly figure.

Further emphasis on the superiority of Abraham over Melchizedek is found in the prominent rabbinic exegetical approach that Abraham was blessed by virtue of giving Melchizedek the tithe.<sup>30</sup> The lack of proper nouns as subjects in the Hebrew biblical text of Gen 14:20 makes it ambiguous whether Abraham gave Melchizedek the tithe or vice versa:

<sup>26</sup> For the prohibition on priests with physical 'blemishes' see Lev 21:16–23.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. B. Visotzky, *Golden Bells and Pomegranates*, 63–64 and 163.

<sup>28</sup> See E. Kessler, *Bound by the Bible*, 52–54.

<sup>29</sup> J.J. Petuchowski has proposed that the polemic in BT Ned 32b is directed against a Jewish interpretation of Ps 110:4 that understands this verse to provide a legitimation of the Hasmonean dynasty with their union of king and priest in one office, a move which was strongly disapproved of by the Pharisees as described in Josephus, Ant. XIII ('Controversial Figure', 127–136).

<sup>30</sup> E.g. GenR 43:8, PR 25:3, PRE 27, TanB *Ḥayye Sarah* 6, Tan *Ḥayye Sarah* 4 and NumR 12:11.

ויתן לו מעשר מכל *'and he gave to him a tenth of everything'*.<sup>31</sup> However, a variety of rabbinic interpretations make it clear that Abraham is the one who gave the tithe to Melchizedek, and the emphasis is on the virtue of Abraham for his action, rather than the status of Melchizedek. This approach is exemplified in GenR 43:8:

ויתן לו מעשר מכל ר' יהודה בשם ר' נוהראי מכוח אותה הברכה אכלו שלש יתדות גדולות בעולם, אברהם יצחק ויעקב, באברהם כת' וי"י ברך את אברהם בכל (בראשית כד א) בזכות ויתן לו מעשר מכל  
(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 1, 422)

*And he gave to him a tenth of everything* (Gen 14:20). R. Yehudah in the name of R. Nehorai said: By virtue of that blessing, the three great pegs in the world, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, ate (i.e. had plenty). Concerning Abraham, it is written, *And the Lord blessed Abraham in everything* (Gen 24:1). On account of merit for *And he gave to him a tenth of everything* (Gen 14:20).

GenR 43:8 states that the comprehensive blessings given to Abraham by God, as recorded in Gen 24:1, came as a direct result of giving the tithe to Melchizedek. Furthermore, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob received blessings on account of the merit of Abraham for giving a tithe to Melchizedek.<sup>32</sup> In giving Melchizedek the tithe of the spoils of war, Abraham is the first patriarch to practise tithing and again foreshadows and keeps the covenantal laws before they are made known.<sup>33</sup> PRE 27 also emphasizes the virtue of Abraham, but goes even further as Melchizedek himself wonders at the deeds of Abraham and the wealth he brought back.<sup>34</sup>

Connected to these interpretations is another rabbinic exegetical approach on the importance of Abraham for receiving Melchizedek's blessing.<sup>35</sup> This approach is evidenced in M Abot 6:10, which teaches that Abraham was one of five possessions that God acquired (alongside the Torah, heaven and earth, Israel and the Temple), with his exalted status proven

<sup>31</sup> This ambiguity is retained in the LXX Gen 14:20, Tg Neofiti Gen 14:20 and Tg Onqelos Gen 14:20; cf. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, which specifies that it was Abraham who paid the tithe from the spoils that he brought back with him from rescuing Lot. The question is also addressed in 1QApGen 22.17, which presents the idea that it was Abraham who gave the tithe: 'And he gave him a tithe of all the possessions of the king of Elam and his associates'.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. the tradition that Abraham should not be afraid of Shem because he will not curse Abraham but will bring him blessing (GenR 44:7, Tan *Lekha Lekha* 15 and TanB *Lekha Lekha* 19).

<sup>33</sup> The laws of tithing are outlined in Lev 27:30–33.

<sup>34</sup> The tradition in PRE 27 describes the trials of Abraham, with the war against the four kings counted as the sixth trial.

<sup>35</sup> E.g. M Abot 6:10, GenR 43:7, TanB *Behar* 3, ExodR 15:27, NumR 14:2, SER 29.

by Gen 14:20. In this approach, the emphasis is on the reward or illustrious standing of Abraham through the blessing, and in some cases Melchizedek's blessing is recorded but *without* mention of him pronouncing it.<sup>36</sup> It appears that the role of Melchizedek in giving the blessing has been subordinated to its consequences for Abraham.

The interpretations discussed represent an approach to the glorification of Abraham in rabbinic exegesis, although this is not a universal interpretation of the broader history of Abraham as a number of critical traditions indicate.<sup>37</sup> In general, it seems that there is a rabbinic exegetical approach that attempts to demote Melchizedek by replacing the priesthood of Melchizedek with that of Abraham. This approach is then emphasized by other traditions that focus on the superiority of Abraham over Melchizedek with regard to their interaction over the tithe and the blessing. The emphasis on Abraham giving a tithe establishes the practice with him and portrays him as one who followed God's law, even if this was yet to be established.

### *Melchizedek and Jerusalem*

The next point of discussion focuses on the geographical origins of Melchizedek and the identification and naming of his city in Gen 14:18. The identification of Salem in Gen 14:18 with Jerusalem in particular is a well attested motif in rabbinic traditions, as exemplified by GenR 43:6:<sup>38</sup>

ומלכי צדק המקום הזה מצדיק את יושביו: ומלכי צדק, אדני צדק (יהושע י א),  
נקרית ירושלים צדק צדק ילין בה:

(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 1, 420)

<sup>36</sup> Cf. SER 29.

<sup>37</sup> The fact that Abraham questioned God regarding his promises to him (such as illustrated in Gen 15:8) was a significant problem for rabbinic exegetes, who needed to explain how anyone could question God. As such, exegesis of Genesis 15 in rabbinic sources focuses extensively on the doubts and questions of Abraham (cf. Tg Neofiti Gen 15:13, GenR 44:1–7, BT Ned 32a, PRE 48, Tg PsJon Gen 15:13, TanB *Qedoshim* 13). GenR 44:1–7 portrays God as giving reassurance in the face of Abraham's doubts. However, the other sources cited view Abraham in a critical light. In particular, PRE 48 and Tg PsJon Gen 15:13 describe a causative link between the doubts of Abraham and the subsequent affliction of his descendants—it is as a direct result of Abraham's questions, which are understood to be doubts, that the Israelites suffer slavery in Egypt. On the righteousness and faith of Abraham, see J. Frishman, '“And Abraham Had Faith”: But in What? Ephrem and the Rabbis on Abraham and God's Blessings', in: E. Grypeou – H. Spurling, *The Exegetical Encounter*, 143–162 and G. Stemberger, 'Genesis 15 in Rabbinic and Patristic Interpretation', in: E. Grypeou – H. Spurling, *The Exegetical Encounter*, 163–179. The faithfulness of Abraham is also discussed in J.L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 296–301 and 308–309.

<sup>38</sup> E.g. GenR 43:6, 56:10, Midrash Zuta on Song 1:1 and MidrPss 76:3.

*And Melchi Zedek* (Gen 14:18). This place makes its inhabitants righteous. *And Melchi Zedek* (Gen 14:18). This corresponds to *Lord of Zedek* (Josh 10:1). Jerusalem is called Zedek (צדק): *righteousness* (צדק) *lodges in her* (Isa 1:21).

In GenR 43:6, Melchizedek (מלכי צדק) is understood to be a title rather than a name, that is, 'King of Zedek' with Zedek referring to a place name. This is then followed by the identification of Zedek with Jerusalem on the basis of Isa 1:21. In Isa 1:21, it says of the faithful city that she was '*full of justice*' (מלאתי משפט) and '*righteousness lodged in her*' (צדק ילין בה). Thus, based on word association of צדק 'righteousness', Melchizedek, king of Zedek, is linked to Jerusalem, the faithful city of Isa 1:21. This tradition firmly places Melchizedek as coming from Jerusalem. The association with the root צדק also leads to the interpretation that the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and as such Melchizedek, are righteous.

GenR 56:10 offers alternative exegesis with a similar result. In interpretation of Gen 22:14, Abraham calls the mountain where he sacrificed Isaac 'Jireh', taken from 'Adonai-Jireh'. The mountain is then identified with the place over which Melchizedek/Shem was king, and was called 'Salem'. To appease Abraham and Shem, who were both righteous men, God called the name of the place Jerusalem, thus combining the two names of 'Jireh' and 'Salem'. Therefore, this represents not merely an identification between Salem and Jerusalem, but also Mount Moriah.<sup>39</sup>

However, Salem is identified with Jerusalem in the Hebrew Bible at Ps 76:3, where it is placed in parallelism with Zion: יהיה בשלם סבו ומעונתו *יהיה בשלם סבו ומעונתו* *'His abode was in Salem, his dwelling-place in Zion'*.<sup>40</sup> The connection made in Ps 76:3 is then utilized in the development of the identification of Salem with Jerusalem in MidrPss 76:3.<sup>41</sup> The tradition begins with the concept of a Temple in Jerusalem from the beginning of creation.<sup>42</sup> The Temple in Jerusalem is then identified with Salem from Gen 14:18. The connection

<sup>39</sup> See discussion on the connection between Mount Moriah and Jerusalem in the chapter 'In Paradise' in this volume. This motif has been much discussed, see I. Kalimi, 'The land of Moriah, Mount Moriah, and the Site of Solomon's Temple in Biblical Historiography', *HTR* 83.4 (1990), 345–362 and E. Kessler, *Bound by the Bible*, 87–89.

<sup>40</sup> There has been much discussion over whether this is opposing parallelism, which would mean that Salem is a separate place to Zion; cf. M. McNamara, 'Melchizedek', 8–10.

<sup>41</sup> The dating of the Midrash on Psalms (1–118) has received various suggestions, but remains disputed as outlined in G. Stemmerger, *Introduction*, 350–352. It is included here as a 'late' composition, but, as with many midrashim, Stemmerger notes that 'one must undoubtedly assume an extended period of development' (G. Stemmerger, *Introduction*, 351).

<sup>42</sup> Cf. P. Schäfer, 'Tempel und Schöpfung: zur Interpretation einiger Heiligtumstraditionen in der rabbinischen Literatur', *Kairos* 16 (1974), 144–153.

with Melchizedek is continued with inclusion of his identification with Shem. The tradition then goes on to say that Melchizedek/Shem served in the Temple. This is based on the blessing in Gen 9:27; *וישכן באהלי שם* 'and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem' is understood to mean 'Shem shall dwell in my tent'. In other words, it is taken to mean that Melchizedek/Shem was the servant of God in the Temple. Thus, MidrPss 76:3 not only locates Melchizedek/Shem as king and priest in Jerusalem, but develops the tradition to say that he was active in the Temple which had existed there from creation.

Ultimately, the identification between Salem and Jerusalem is an early idea found in sources such as 1QApGen 22.12ff and also in Josephus, Ant. I.181, VII.67, Bell.Jud. VI.438 and Apion I.174. Thus, it is likely that rabbinic exegetes based their interpretations on the Hebrew text of Ps 76:3, which explicitly linked Jerusalem and Salem, with precedent for such an approach in earlier tradition such as found in Josephus. However, given that the priestly line had not yet been established according to the chronology of the biblical narrative, it is interesting that MidrPss 76:3 portrays Melchizedek as an active priest in Jerusalem and even in the Temple. Importantly, Melchizedek is also identified with Shem in all the sources discussed, thus linking him with the ancestry of Israel, the future nation from which the priesthood would emerge.

### *Bread and Wine Symbolism*

In Gen 14:18, Melchizedek is described as bringing bread and wine to Abraham. Interestingly, this aspect of the Melchizedek tradition has not been treated extensively in rabbinic interpretations. The primary rabbinic tradition to discuss the bread and wine of Gen 14:18 at length is GenR 43:6. Within this passage, the bread and wine are treated symbolically:

הוציא לחם ויין ר' שמואל בר נחמן הלכות כהונה מסר לו, לחם זה לחם הפנים ויין אילו הנסכים, רבנין אמ' תורה גילה לו לכו לחמו בלחמי ושתו ביין מסכתי (משלי ט ה): והוא כהן לאל עליון ר' אבא בר כהנא כל יין שכתוב בתורה עושה רושם חוץ מזה, אמר ר' לוי אף זה לא יצאנו ידו שמשם קרח לו ועבדום וענו אותם וגו':  
(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 1, 420–421)

*He brought out bread and wine* (Gen 14:18). R. Samuel b. Nahman said: He transmitted the laws of priesthood to him. 'Bread': This is the bread of the presence. 'And wine': These are the libations. The Rabbis said: He revealed Torah to him: *Come, eat my bread and drink the wine I have mixed* (Prov 9:5). *And he is priest of God Most High* (Gen 14:18). R. Abba b. Kahana said: Everywhere that wine is written in the Torah, it makes a mark, except this instance. R. Levi said: Even this time we have not escaped its consequences,

because he recited for him *And they will serve them and they will afflict them*, etc. (Gen 15:13).

First, Melchizedek is said to instruct Abraham in the laws of the priesthood, with the bread compared to the shewbread, and wine to libations. Thus, a parallel is drawn with the Temple ritual for Shabbat regarding the bread of the presence. The table for the bread of the presence is described in Exod 25:23ff, which also states that libation vessels were kept on the shewbread table (cf. 1 Kings 7:50), but there is no record of how these vessels were used in the Temple. In the Shabbat ceremony, which is described in Lev 24:5–9, twelve loaves made from fine flour were set out in the Temple every Shabbat on a table of gold, and incense was set with them. It was described as a most holy portion for the high priests, namely Aaron and his descendants in Lev 24:9, to be eaten in a holy place on Shabbat.<sup>43</sup> Thus, a comparison is made between Melchizedek's actions and aspects of Temple religious ceremony, which links to the previous discussion on the understanding of Melchizedek as a priest in Jerusalem.

Secondly, another interpretation compares the bread and wine to the Torah, which, with foreknowledge, Melchizedek/Shem teaches Abraham. This is based on Prov 9:5, which, as F.L. Horton notes, are the words of Wisdom personified, which was later to be identified with the Torah.<sup>44</sup>

Thirdly, Rav Abba bar Kahana points out that reference to wine is usually followed by a mention of trouble except in this instance.<sup>45</sup> This opinion is supplemented by R. Levi, who sees the wine of Gen 14:18 as symbolic of the oppression in Egypt. This is based on the prediction in the Covenant of the Pieces in Gen 15:13, which follows Abraham's meeting with Melchizedek: *'your offspring shall be aliens in a land that is not theirs, and shall be slaves there, and they shall be oppressed for four hundred years'*.

This is a considerable development of earlier Jewish traditions on the bread and wine, which focus on the hospitality of Melchizedek. Philo

---

<sup>43</sup> Cf. LevR 11:4, which identifies the tabernacle with the house of Wisdom and claims that Wisdom's table represents the shewbread, while NumR 21:21 reports that shewbread and sacrifices are the offering of this world but will be replaced with a great table in the world-to-come. Discussion of the ritual function of bread and wine is also found in the pseudepigraphical material. For example, Testament of Levi 8:1–10 outlines how Levi saw seven angels giving him the insignia of high priesthood and he described the ritual: he was anointed, washed with water and then fed bread and wine, 'the most holy things', before eventually receiving the incense.

<sup>44</sup> *The Melchizedek Tradition*, 121; cf. GenR 1:1 and P.S. Alexander "In the beginning": Rabbinic and Patristic Exegesis of Gen 1:1', in: E. Grypeou – H. Spurling, *The Exegetical Encounter*, 1–29.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Tan *Bereshit* 16.

noted that Melchizedek did not bring out the usual hospitality gifts of bread and water for his guests; instead of water he brought out wine (Leg. Alleg. III.82) and the Genesis Apocryphon has 'food and drink', an indication of the hospitality on Melchizedek's part. Also, the targumic traditions (Onqelos, Neofiti and Pseudo-Jonathan) translate simply 'bread and wine' so, as M. McNamara states, 'The targumic renderings seem to exclude any liturgical-sacrificial interpretation of Melchizedek's action'.<sup>46</sup>

Overall, the bread and wine of Gen 14:18 in Genesis Rabbah is given a variety of symbolic interpretations. The bread and wine is understood to reflect aspects of Temple worship, thus emphasizing Melchizedek's role as a priest in Jerusalem in line with the obligations of the Israelite priesthood. However, the symbolism is taken further to refer to Torah. Knowledge of Torah was of obvious importance to rabbinic exegetes and Melchizedek/Shem is here presented as wise and able to pass on teachings to Abraham.<sup>47</sup> Finally, the episode in Genesis 14 is connected to the next chapter of Genesis, as the wine is a sign of the oppression in Egypt predicted in Gen 15:13.

#### *Melchizedek and Circumcision*

The topic of circumcision, a sign of the biblical covenant with Abraham in Genesis 17, has already arisen in discussion of the priesthood of Abraham. However, a wide variety of rabbinic traditions also discuss circumcision in relation to Melchizedek. Many aspects of circumcision are analyzed throughout rabbinic literature, but one widely transmitted approach in both Palestinian and Babylonian sources is that a number of key righteous figures in the history of Israel were born circumcised, and some before the command to do so was given. Here, the focus is on the circumcision of Melchizedek from birth, as found in GenR 43:6:

מלך שלם ר' יצחק הבבלי אמר שנוולד מהול:

(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 1, 420)

*King of Salem* (Gen 14:18). R. Isaac the Babylonian said that he was born circumcised.

The fact that Melchizedek was born circumcised is understood from exegesis of Gen 14:18.<sup>48</sup> Melchizedek is king of Salem. Through wordplay, the proper noun שלם 'Salem' is understood to be the adjective שלם 'complete'

<sup>46</sup> 'Melchizedek', 22.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. n.23 above on the rabbinic school of Shem.

<sup>48</sup> The identification with Shem is not made until later in the anthology at GenR 44:7.



or 'perfect'. Thus, Melchizedek is king of perfection through his circumcision. This leads to a number of interpretations regarding the circumcision of Melchizedek, which are also usually found in the broader rabbinic traditions on circumcision from birth. First, the aim was to prove that *all* righteous men in Israel were circumcised, and so, those few righteous men who lived before Abraham and the institution of circumcision must have been born circumcised, namely Melchizedek in this tradition. Secondly, the rabbinic interpretations teach in relation to this tradition that a person is not complete until they are circumcised. Thus, the key righteous figures of Israel would naturally have been born in a state of perfection. Indeed, as I. Kalimi notes, being born circumcised was 'a preliminary sign of a forthcoming important national personality'.<sup>49</sup>

The only two traditions that explicitly link Melchizedek with circumcision are GenR 43:6 and ARN A 2 through reference to Gen 14:18. Kalimi notes that the earliest version of thirteen circumcised men is found in ARN A 2 and lists Adam, Seth, Noah, Shem (linked with Melchizedek based on Gen 14:18), Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Samuel, David, and Jeremiah and the non-Jews Job, Balaam and Zerubbabel.<sup>50</sup> However, the list of who was born circumcised varies in different sources. For example, TanB *Noah* 6 refers to ten men who were born circumcised without listing their names, whereas MidrPss 9:7 lists Adam, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Shem, Terah, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Samuel, David, Isaiah and Jeremiah. This tradition is also repeated in relation to individual figures in a variety of traditions.<sup>51</sup>

Although the name Melchizedek is not always explicitly included in the broader tradition of those who were born circumcised, the popularity of the identification between Shem and Melchizedek means that, in including Shem in the list of those circumcised from birth, the identification with Melchizedek would most likely have been understood from this name. Shem was one of the key ancestors of Israel who would have been born circumcised. Furthermore, the association of צדק 'righteousness' with Melchizedek (מלכי צדק) would have reinforced the concept that Melchizedek/Shem was one of the righteous who was born circumcised.

<sup>49</sup> *Early Jewish Exegesis*, 68.

<sup>50</sup> *Early Jewish Exegesis*, 61–62.

<sup>51</sup> For example, see the circumcision of Noah at BT Sot 12a, ARN A 2, TanB *Noah* 6, Tan *Bereshit* 11, *Noah* 5 and MidrPss 9:7.

*The Christian Tradition*

Christian exegesis on the figure of Melchizedek was already developed in the New Testament (Heb 5:6.10; 6:20; 7:1–17). This early exegetical approach was particularly influential for the subsequent Christian understanding of the king-priest of Salem. His priestly function was of particular significance, which was interpreted as contrasting with Israelite priestly lineage (Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* II.5.21). Melchizedek was called a ‘king of righteousness’ on the basis of an etymological explication of his name. He was also thought to be a ‘self-appointed’ priest (John Chrysostom, *Hom.Gen.* 35.15). Most prominently, he is described as a type of Christ because, according to the biblical account, he, like Christ, has no family history (*ibid.*). Alternatively, he is portrayed as a fore-runner of Christ (Ephraem, *Hymn.Virg.* 8.20) or as reflecting Christ’s perfection (Cyril of Alexandria, *Glaphyra II*, PG 69:84). Furthermore, Melchizedek, who was ‘a priest from the nations living in Palestine at the time’, represents a type of priesthood to come (Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Quaest.* LXV). Accordingly, Melchizedek’s encounter with Abraham indicates that ‘the Church of Christ would grow up not in Israel but among the Gentiles’ (Jerome, *Ep.* 46.2). Thus, Melchizedek became a symbol for Christian priesthood and his actions set an example for Christian priests in a number of ways. As Maximus the Confessor elucidates, Christian priests, who are priests after the order of Melchizedek, do not marry because Scripture does not mention a wife for Melchizedek (*Quaest.* 7). In the following, the discussion of the Christian exegetical traditions on Melchizedek will focus mainly on his origin, identity and priestly role.

*Melchizedek identified with Shem*

The figure of the enigmatic priest-king of Salem, Melchizedek, was particularly significant for Christian exegetes.<sup>52</sup> Christian exegetes based their interpretation of this figure on Gen 14:18–20 in light of the exegesis of

---

<sup>52</sup> The literature on Melchizedek is vast. Some of the most important studies include: V. Aptowitz, ‘Malkizedek. Zu den Sagen der Agada’, *MGWJ* 70 (1926), 93–113; G. Bardy, ‘Melchisédech dans la tradition patristique’, *RB* 35 (1926), 496–509; (1927), 25–45; G. Wuttke, *Melchisedech, der Priesterkönig von Salem. Eine Studie zur Geschichte der Exegese*, Giessen 1927; M. Delcor, ‘Melchizedek from Genesis to the Qumran Texts and the Epistle to the Hebrews’, *JSJ* 2 (1971), 115–136; C. Giannotto, *Melchisedek, e la sua tipologia. Tradizioni giudaiche, cristiane e gnostiche (sec. II. a.C.–sec. III. d.C.)*, Brescia 1984; B.A. Pearson, ‘Melchizedek in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Gnosticism’, 176–202; and more recently, T. Heither – C. Reemts, *Biblische Gestalten bei den Kirchenvätern*, Münster 2005, 66–72;

Psalm 110 in order to show that Melchizedek was a prototype for a Christian priestly order. The foundation of this exegetical tradition was established in the Epistle to the Hebrews, as is well known. The Epistle to the Hebrews 7:3 notes the lack of genealogy for Melchizedek, as this is not mentioned in Scripture. The intention of this text is to prove the superiority of Christ's priesthood over the levitical priesthood, which was based on genealogy. Accordingly, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews highlighted Melchizedek as a priest who did not relate to an Israelite priestly lineage.<sup>53</sup> This approach was adopted by the majority of the Christian tradition.<sup>54</sup> However, a stream of thought is encountered in the Syriac tradition that suggests a priestly lineage, albeit not a Levite one, for this mysterious priest. This alternative tradition can be found first in Ephraem the Syrian:

This Melchizedek is Shem who became a king due to his greatness; he was the head of fourteen nations. In addition, *he was a priest*. He received this from Noah, his father through the rights of succession. Shem lived not only to the time of Abraham, as Scripture says, but even to [the time of] Jacob and Esau, the grandsons of Abraham (Comm.Gen. XI.2).<sup>55</sup>

According to this tradition, Melchizedek is identified with Shem, Noah's son, a king-priest figure, who receives his priestly (and royal?) rights on account of succession from Noah, implying that Noah was also a priest but not elaborating further on the legitimation and origin of these priestly rights. Interestingly, Noah acts explicitly as a (proto-Christian) priest in the Syriac *Cave of Treasures* and hands over his priestly office to 'a man of his lineage' (XVI.19–21).<sup>56</sup> Later in the same text, his son, Shem, appoints

---

E.F. Mason, *'You Are a Priest Forever': Second Temple Jewish Messianism and the Priestly Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Leiden 2008.

<sup>53</sup> W. Horbury notes the dependence of the Epistle on Jewish sources on the issue of ideal priesthood ('The Aaronic Priesthood in the Epistle to Hebrews', in: idem, *Messianism among Jews and Christians*, 227–254). See also A. Vanhoye, 'Le Christ grand-prêtre selon Héb. 2,17–18', *Nouvelle revue théologique* 91 (1969), 449–474; P. Eisenbaum, *The Jewish Heroes of Christian History: Hebrews 11 in a Literary Context*, Atlanta 1995; and H.W. Attridge, *The Epistle to Hebrews*, Philadelphia 1989.

<sup>54</sup> See Clement Alex, Strom. II.5,21; John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 35,15; Hom.Hebr. XII–XIII.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Ephraem, Hymn.Eccl. 11,3; see S. Hidal, *Interpretatio Syriaca*, 117.

<sup>56</sup> A. Orlov sees a connection between Noah and Melchizedek in the Epistle to Hebrews on account of their righteousness, as stressed in the biblical text itself and, more importantly, against the background of sacerdotal animal sacrificial rites ('The Heir of Righteousness and the King of Righteousness: The Priestly Noachic Polemics in 2 Enoch and the Epistle to the Hebrews', *JThS* 58 (2007), 25–65). Orlov argues that: 'along with explicit polemics against Mosaic sacrificial precepts and practices, the Epistle to the Hebrews

Melchizedek as a 'Priest of the High God' (XXIII.19). According to the *Cave of Treasures*, Shem and Melchizedek are two different people, who, nonetheless, act together and appear to be related to each other.<sup>57</sup> Significantly, however, the *Cave of Treasures* suggests that the idea of a Noahitic priestly lineage was known and accepted by certain groups within Syriac Christianity. Moreover, the *Cave of Treasures* suggests that this alternative priestly lineage was linked to Christian ideals of priesthood.

The Apostolic Constitutions, which originated in Syria in the late fourth century, perhaps reflect this tradition when they mention in a prayer for the ordination of a bishop, Abel, Seth, Enosh, Enoch, Noah and Melchizedek as priests predetermined by God from the beginning (VIII.5.3).<sup>58</sup> Moreover, views are encountered in Christian authors, such as Cosmas the Indicopleustes, that explicitly deny any priestly succession related to Melchizedek: 'This is Melchisedek (. . .) This is the King of peace and righteousness, and at the same time a priest of God most high, who was made like to the Son of God—who neither received the priesthood in succession to other priests, nor transmitted it to other priests.' (Christian Topography, Book V).

The motif of the identification of Shem with Melchizedek is repeated later by other authors, such as Theodore bar Koni in the late eighth century (Lib.Schol. II.24), who actually copies Ephraem. Other early Syriac authors, such as Aphrahat who often demonstrates certain familiarity with Jewish traditions, do not seem to know of this motif, while Ishodad of Merv in the ninth century explicitly rejects Ephraem's suggestion (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 14:18). Moreover, Ephraem suggests that Shem lived until the time of Abraham's grandsons, an idea that was also considered but rejected by many Christian exegetes, as discussed below.

---

ventures into more subtle debates with the priestly Noachic tradition, which in the late Second Temple period often stood as an ideological counterpart to the official priestly office associated with the Jerusalem temple' (op. cit., 2). Interestingly, as found in the *Cave of Treasures*, it is exactly the Noahite priestly lineage that is opposed to the performing of bloody sacrifices (see also *infra*).

<sup>57</sup> C. Böttrich notes that 'Der Autor der Schatzhöhle hat in dieser Episode deutlich erkennbar zwei Traditionen miteinander verbunden, die ihm demnach auch beide schon vorlagen. Auf der einen Seite ist das die jüdische Tradition, die Sem mit Melchisedek identifiziert (. . .). Der Priesterkönig von Salem wird auf diese Weise als Nachkomme Noas von dem Makel heidnischer Herkunft befreit' (*Geschichte Melchisedeks*, Gütersloh 2009, 32).

<sup>58</sup> ὁ προοριστὰς ἐξ' ἀρχῆς ἱερεὶς εἰς ἐπιστασίαν λαοῦ σου; see F.X. Funk, *Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum*, Paderborn 1905, 474; cf. D.A. Fiensy, *Prayers Alleged to Be Jewish: An Examination of the Constitutiones Apostolorum*, Chico CA 1985.

According to Jerome (Ep. 73.6), the identification of Shem and Melchizedek is a common Jewish tradition, which is based on an old custom. This custom applied up to the time of Aaron, according to which all the firstborn of Noah's descendants were priests. Jerome notes, further, that this was the firstborn right that Esau sold to Jacob (Gen 25:29–33). Jerome emphasizes that: 'The Jews make a great effort to prove that Melchizedek king of Salem was no one else than Shem, son of Noah' (cum in tantum nitantur Hebraei Melchisedech regem Salem, filium Noe, Sem ostendere; Ep. 73.9). The LXX illustrates that Abraham was born 1170 years after Shem (Gen 11:26) and Shem lived for 600 years (Gen 11:11), so he could not have been alive in Abraham's time. Jerome, however, following the 'Hebrew calculation', suggests that Shem outlived Abraham (Ep. 73.6).

Procopius implies that there are Christians who falsely believe that Shem and Melchizedek are the same person (Comm.Gen., PG 87:333f.). Both Epiphanius (Pan. 55.6.3–10) and Procopius (ibid.) make the effort to prove that this identification cannot be possible on account of the duration of the life of Shem. As Epiphanius argues: 'But if we go by the figure in other copies, there are about 628 years from the date of Shem's birth until the time of Abraham's meeting with Melchizedek, in the eighty-eighth or ninetieth year of Abraham's life. Thus on no account can Shem have lived until Abraham's time, to be thought of as Melchizedek' (Pan. 55.6.11).

Epiphanius of Salamis in the fourth century notes, further, that the identification of Shem with Melchizedek was a Samaritan tradition (Pan. 55.6.1). He stresses that the Jews regard Melchizedek as a righteous person. He adds, further, that the Jews claim that Melchizedek's genealogy was not recorded because he was the son of a harlot and his father is unknown (διὰ τὸν υἱὸν αὐτὸν εἶναι πόρνης, Pan. 55.7.1). The same information can be found in Ps.-John Chrysostom's writing '*On Melchizedek*'.<sup>59</sup> Eustathius of Antioch also mentions this tradition but rejects it.<sup>60</sup> This tradition reminds of Jewish polemics against Jesus' illegitimate descent.<sup>61</sup> According to Church Fathers, such as John Chrysostom in his Homilies on Genesis (35.16), Melchizedek in fact resembles Christ, but of course in a positive way in that he had no family history.

<sup>59</sup> Ἰουδαῖοι μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸν λέγουσιν ἐκ πορνείας γεννηθέντα, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἀγενεαλόγητον γενέσθαι (PG 56:260).

<sup>60</sup> F. Cavallera (ed.), *Eustathii Episcopi Antiocheni in Lazarum, Mariam et Martham homilia christologica*, 63; cf. Marcus Eremita, De Melchisedech (PG 65:1121B).

<sup>61</sup> See the Toledot Yeshu, and relevant literature, S. Krauss, *The Jewish-Christian Controversy from the earliest time to 1799*, ed. and rev. W. Horbury, Tübingen 1995; P. Schäfer, *Jesus in the Talmud*, 17ff; cf. M. Poorthuis, 'Enoch and Melchizedek in Judaism and Christianity', 114, esp. n.60.

It seems that the 'exalted' position of Melchizedek gave rise in Early Christianity to sectarian views that regarded Melchizedek as a supernatural being and went so far as to venerate him as Jesus Christ, or as the Holy Ghost or even as the Father of Jesus Christ. Thus, the refutation of this tradition might partly target these views and would belong to general heresiological polemics. According to the testimony of Hippolytus (Ref. 7.24), Epiphanius (Pan. 55), or Marcus Eremita (De Melchisedech, PG 65:117–1140), these views were held by certain groups, mainly in Egypt, known as Melchizedekians.<sup>62</sup> An evidence of this 'special' veneration of Melchizedek as an eschatological messianic figure is attested in a Gnostic text known under the title *Melchizedek* (NHC IX, 1).<sup>63</sup> Melchizedek is further known as an angelic figure in the Coptic Gnostic texts *Pistis Sophia* (CAsk: IV,139–140; I,25–6; II,86; III,112.128.131.) and *Second Book of Jeu* (CBr 2:45–46).<sup>64</sup>

Thus, in later patristic tradition, the figure of Melchizedek became an issue of inner-Christian controversy.<sup>65</sup> This controversy on the heavenly origin of Melchizedek may explain the considerable legendary material that circulated in Christian writings after the fifth century and attributed to Melchizedek an earthly genealogy. Epiphanius of Salamis (Pan. 55.2.1), Ps.-Athanasius (Hist.Melch.; PG 28:526), Zacharias Rhetor (Hist.Ecl. I.13); and the *Cave of Treasures* (XXIII.8) name his father and mother,<sup>66</sup> denying

<sup>62</sup> See O. Hesse, 'Marcus Eremita und seine Schrift "De Melchisedech"', *Oriens Christianus* 51 (1967), 72–77; H. Stork, *Die sogenannten Melchizedekianer mit Untersuchung ihrer Quellen auf Gedankeninhalt und dogmengeschichtliche Entwicklung*, Leipzig 1928; M. Friedländer, 'La secte de Melchisédec et l'Épître aux Hébreux', *REJ* 5 (1882), 1–26; 6 (1883), 187–199. See also J. Helderman, 'Melchisedek, Melchisedekianer und die koptische Frömmigkeit', in: M. Rassart et al. (eds), *ICCOptS* 4, vol. 2, Louvain-la-Neuve 1992, 402–415.

<sup>63</sup> See B.A. Pearson – S. Giversen, 'NHC IX, 1: Melchizedek', in: B.A. Pearson (ed.), *Nag Hammadi Codices IX and X*, Leiden 1981, 19–85; H.-M. Schenke, 'Die jüdische Melchizedek-Gestalt als Thema in der Gnosis', in: K.-W. Tröger, *Altes Testament-Frühjudentum-Gnosis. Neue Studien zu 'Gnosis und Bibel'*, Gütersloh 1980, 111–136; J. Helderman, 'Melchisedeks Wirkung. Eine traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung eines Motivkomplexes in NHC IX, I, 1–27,10 (Melchisedek)', in: J.-M. Sevrin (ed.), *The New Testament in Early Christianity*, Leuven 1989, 335–362.

<sup>64</sup> See F.L. Horton, *The Melchizedek Tradition*, 142–145; C. Giannotto, *Melchisedek*, 223–226; B.A. Pearson, 'Melchizedek in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Gnosticism', 116–118.

<sup>65</sup> See also Apophthegmata Patrum 8 (PG 65:160); Cyril of Alexandria, *Glaphyra* II (PG 69:84); B. Altaner, 'Die Schrift περι τοῦ Μελλισεδέκ des Eustathius von Antiocheia', *ByzZ* 40 (1940), 34–36; E.A.W. Budge, *The Book of Governors: The Historia Monastica of Thomas Bishop of Marga, A.D. 840*, vol. I, London 1893, 52–53; cf. M. Poorthuis, 'Enoch and Melchizedek in Judaism and Christianity', 120.

<sup>66</sup> Epiphanius: Heraclas – Astarth (Astoriane) (Pan. 55.2.1); Ps.-Athanasius: Melchisalem (De Melchisedeco, PG 28: 525–30); Zacharias Rhetor: Heraclim-Shelathiel (Hist.Ecl. I. 13; cf. Ishodad of Merv Comm.Gen. ad loc.); *Cave of Treasures*: Malak-Yosadak (XXIII.8). The names of Melchizedek's parents are also mentioned in 2 Enoch (Nir-Sothonim),

in this way any 'misleading' heavenly or eschatological identity.<sup>67</sup> However, the efforts of the Church Fathers to attribute to Melchizedek an earthly genealogy also provided him at the same time with an explicitly Gentile origin. Accordingly, these traditions, even if they were contradicting the Epistle to the Hebrews, were also reinforcing Melchizedek's prototypical role as a Gentile High Priest.

*Priesthood of Abraham vs Priesthood of Melchizedek*

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews emphasizes that the change in the law requires a change of priesthood (7:12), thus highlighting the necessity of a change in the priestly orders. The Epistle to the Hebrews implies that the Aaronite priesthood descends ultimately from Abraham.

The patristic tradition follows the Epistle to the Hebrews and stresses the authority of Melchizedek's priestly order over the Levite order. Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 263–339) in his work *Evangelical Demonstration* V.242 explains that Christ has 'forsaken the priesthood after Aaron's type' in order to establish his priesthood after the order of Melchizedek for all nations and not only for the Jews. The episode between Melchizedek and Abraham in the book of Genesis exemplifies Melchizedek's superiority over Abraham and his descendants. This superiority is demonstrated by the fact that Melchizedek blessed Abraham and received the tithe from him.

Christian exegetes, such as John Chrysostom in his *Homilies on Hebrews* (XIII.4), Eusebius of Caesarea in *Evangelical Demonstration* V.241, Cyril of Alexandria in *Glaphyra III* (PG 69:104) and Cosmas the Indicopleustes in *Christian Topography* V, apply a christological understanding to the encounter between Melchizedek and Abraham on the basis of the Epistle to the Hebrews. These traditions regard Melchizedek as a type for Christ, the true High Priest, to whom the biblical patriarch paid his respect with the tithe and by whom he received a blessing. John Chrysostom states:

---

which might have served as an inspiration for Christian authors. Notably in 2 Enoch, Melchizedek's father, Nir is a brother of Noah. Thus, in 2 Enoch, Melchizedek is a blood relation to Noah. See C. Böttrich for a complete list of all the variations of the names of Melchizedek's parents in the relevant literature, (*Geschichte Melchisedeks*, 86, n.1,2a).

<sup>67</sup> As S.E. Robinson observes: 'It was at this time, during the fourth and fifth centuries, that traditions establishing the mortality of Melchizedek or his subordination to Abraham would have proved particularly useful to the church' ('The Apocryphal Story of Melchizedek', *JSJ* 18 (1987), 37); cf. G. Bardy, 'Melchisédech dans la tradition patristique', 34–37; F.L. Horton, *The Melchizedek Tradition*, 101, 108–110.

Now consider (he said) 'how great this man is to whom even the Patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.' Up to this point he has been applying the type: hence-forward he boldly shows him [Melchizedek] to be more glorious than the Jewish realities. But if he who bears a type of Christ is so much better not merely than the priests, but even than the forefather himself of the priests, what should one say of the reality? You observe how super-abundantly he shows the superiority (Hom.Hebr. XII. [4.], trans. NPNF XIV, 424).

Jerome notes that, according to the Jews, the identification between Melchizedek and Shem explains the episode in a different way: Melchizedek blessed Abraham because Abraham was his grandson, and it is only natural that Abraham received a blessing from an ancestor. Furthermore, Jerome discusses the philological ambiguity with regard to the person who offers or receives the tithe, which is attested both in the Hebrew text of the Bible and in LXX Gen 14:20. Jerome concludes, however, that 'the Apostle defines very clearly in the Epistle to the Hebrews that it was not Abraham who received from Melchizedek the tithe of his fortune, but the priest (pontifex) who accepted part of the spoils of the enemies' (quamquam Apostolus in epistula ad Hebraeos apertissime definiat, non Abraham suscepisse a Melchisedech decimas divitiarum eius, sed de spoliis hostium partem accepisse pontificem; Ep. 73.6).

According to Christian exegesis, the fact that Abraham offers the tithe to Melchizedek attests to Melchizedek's superior priestly office. The inferiority of the levitical priesthood is confirmed *de facto*, because Abraham, the ancestor of the Levite priests, honours Melchizedek, who is not a Levite. Melchizedek's blessing of Abraham provides additional evidence of his priestly authority, as argued in the Epistle to the Hebrews and in subsequent Christian literature.

### *Melchizedek and Jerusalem*

The identification of Salem, the city of Melchizedek, with Jerusalem is widely attested in Christian literature. Christian writers, such as Jerome (Ep. 73.7) and Procopius of Gaza (Comm.Gen., PG 87:333) attribute the origin of this tradition to Josephus.<sup>68</sup> This tradition is encountered as early as Theophilus of Antioch (Ad Autolyicum II.31) in the late second century, but also in the writings of various later authors, such as Cyril of Alexandria

<sup>68</sup> Bell.Jud. VI.38 [VI.10.1]: 'Melchizedek was the first to officiate as a priest of God, and being the first to build the temple, gave the city, previously called Solyma, the name Jerusalem (Hierosolyma)' (trans. Thackeray, 503); cf. Josephus, Ant. I.10 [181].



(Glaphyra, PG 69:81), Epiphanius of Salamis (Pan. 55.2.1) and Eusebius of Emesa, Cat.Sin G2, et al.<sup>69</sup>

However, Epiphanius of Salamis and Procopius of Gaza consider additional possibilities as regards the location of Salem, such as Sikimon in Sichem or Salamias (Saloumia)<sup>70</sup> in the west of Aelia or ‘another Salem near Hobah to the left of Damascus’.<sup>71</sup> The Onomastikon of Eusebius also identifies Sichem with Salem (ed. Klostermann, 150–151). The identification of Salem with Sichem, or its identification with a neighbouring location, goes back to LXX Gen 33:18, which reads: εἰς Σαλήμ πόλιν Σικιμων ἢ ἔστιν ἐν γῆ Χανααν ‘Salem, a city of Sicima, which is in the land of Canaan’.<sup>72</sup> According to a related tradition, preserved by Eusebius of Caesarea, Melchizedek received Abraham in the temple of the city called ‘Argarizin’, which was interpreted as ‘Mount of the Most High’, very probably an allusion to mount Garizim in Samaria (Praep.Ev. IX.17).<sup>73</sup>

Interestingly, Jerome, in his Ep. 73, mentions—in contrast to Josephus—that Salem is not Jerusalem but a city near Scythopolis, opposite Neapolis, which is still called Salem and believed to be the location of the ruins of

<sup>69</sup> On the identification with Jerusalem, see J.A. Emerton, ‘The City of Salem, the City of Melchizedek (Genesis XIV 18)’, in: idem, *Studies in the Pentateuch*, Leiden 1990, 45–71. H. Donner, *Pilgerfahrt ins Heilige Land. Die ältesten Berichte christlicher Palästina-pilger (4.–7. Jahrhundert)*, Stuttgart 2002.

<sup>70</sup> See, for example, Procopius’ report: Σαλήμ ἔστι μὲν πόλις Σικίμων, ἥτις ἔστιν ἐν Συχέμ, ὡς φησιν ἡ Γραφή, ἔστι δὲ καὶ ἄλλη κώμη ἐν τοῖς δυτικαῖς Αἰλίας, καὶ ἄλλη ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ Σκυθοπόλεως Σαλουμίας. “Ὅμως ὁ Ἰώσηπος τὴν νῦν καλουμένην Ἱερουσαλήμ, ταύτην λέγει εἶναι τὴν Σαλήμ, ἣς ἐβασίλευσεν ὁ Μελχισέδεκ, καὶ ἐπειδὴ περὶ ἡ αὐτὴ καὶ Ἱεβοὺς ἐκαλεῖτο, ἢ συνδρομὴ τῶν δύο ὀνομάτων, τοῦ τε Ἱεβοὺς καὶ τοῦ Σαλήμ ἐποίησεν Ἱερουσαλήμ, τροπὴ τοῦ β εἰς τὸ ρ, πρὸς δ, φασὶ τινες ἀντιλέγοντες ὡς οὕτε Ἱερουσαλήμ ἦν, οὕτε Συχέμ, ἡ Γραφή γὰρ φησιν, αὐτὴν εἶναι ἐν τῇ κοιλάδι Σαυῆ εἰς τὸ πεδῖον τοῦ βασιλέως (PG 87:333).

<sup>71</sup> See Epiphanius, *On Weights and Measures*, 79; cf. Gen 14:15 ‘Hobah north of Damascus’.

<sup>72</sup> This identification is also attested by several Samaritan sources, such as Asatir V and the Samaritan Chronicle II; see also the Madaba mosaic map, which locates Salem in this area; cf. M. Avi-Yonah, *The Madaba Mosaic Map*, Jerusalem 1954, 35–36 and plate 1; cf. C. Böttrich, *Geschichte Melchisedeks*, 71.

<sup>73</sup> Eusebius relates a tradition allegedly by Eupolemus (150 BCE) found in Alexander Polyhistor. Eupolemus in his book *Concerning the Jews of Assyria* says: ‘And when there came to him ambassadors asking that he would ransom them for money, he did not choose to trample upon the unfortunate, but on receiving food for his young men restored the booty; he was also admitted as a guest into the temple of the city called Argarizin, which being interpreted is “Mount of the Most High”, and received gifts from Melchizedek, who was the king, and the priest of God’ (trans. E.H. Gifford, 212); cf. M. McNamara, ‘Melchizedek’, 10 who argues that this is an old Samaritan tradition and probably older than Ps.-Eupolemus; cf. J.G. Gammie, ‘Loci of the Melchizedek Tradition of Genesis 14:18–20’, *JBL* 90 (1971), 385–396, who notes that various Samaritan traditions point to the probable antiquity of an association between Melchizedek and a northern city.

the palace of Melchizedek and visited by pilgrims (Ep. 73:7: *ibi palatium Melchisedech, ex magnitudine ruinarum veteris operis ostendens magnificentiam*; in connection with Gen 33:17–18 and John 3:23).<sup>74</sup> In the Hebrew Questions, Jerome attributes this identification to Jewish sources:

Because our little book is, in a word, a collection of Hebrew questions or traditions, let us therefore introduce what the Hebrews think about this. They declare that this man is Sem, the son of Noah, and by calculating the years of this life, they show that he lived up to the time of Isaac; and they say that all the first-born sons of Noah were priests before Aaron performed the priestly office. Next, by 'king of Salem' is meant the king of Jerusalem, which was formerly called Salem. (Hebr. Quest. 14:18–19).

In the Syriac tradition, however, and particularly in the *Cave of Treasures*, Melchizedek as the founder of Jerusalem is encountered (XXX.3–8). Before the foundation of Jerusalem, he served as a priest in the Cave, a place that is identified with the grave of Adam in Golgotha and ultimately with Jerusalem (XXIII.16–24).<sup>75</sup> It is also the place where Abraham presented Isaac as an offering. Melchizedek had built an altar there upon which he offered bread and wine (XXIX. 4–8). Shem, who appointed Melchizedek as a priest, commanded him never to perform bloody sacrifices or to build a building in this place.<sup>76</sup> According to this tradition, although Melchizedek is described as a priest in the place where Jerusalem will be founded, the emphasis is put on the type of his sacrifice and on the absence of a building. Both of these elements can be understood as latent polemics against the Israelite Cult in the Temple in Jerusalem.

In general, a certain reluctance can be observed among Christian authors to attribute to Melchizedek a priestly function in Jerusalem. Following the Epistle to the Hebrews, Eusebius of Caesarea emphasizes that Melchizedek was not a Levite or an Aaronite priest, mentioning

<sup>74</sup> On the ruins of Melchizedek's palace, see also Egeria's pilgrimage report 13:3–14:3 (*Itinerarium*, ed. G. Röwekamp, FC 20, Freiburg et al. 1995). The *Peregrinatio S. Siviae* mentions that the ruins of the palace of Melchizedek could be seen in the ancient Samaritan Salem (13:4–14:3, CSEL 39). The itinerary of Antoninus Placantius from the sixth century reports that pilgrims visited the same ruin on the hill of Calvary (Itin. 19, CSEL 39).

<sup>75</sup> See the discussion of this motif in the chapter 'In Paradise' above.

<sup>76</sup> On the tradition of Melchizedek's altar at Golgotha, see J. Jeremias, *Golgotha*, 48f.; H.W. Hertzberg, 'Die Melchisedeq-Traditionen', *JPOS* 8 (1928), 172; C. Böttrich, *Geschichte Melchisedeks*, 72; cf. 2 Enoch 68–73: Melchizedek will be a priest and a king on the place Achuzan, i.e. the centre of the world where Adam was created. See A. Orlov, 'Melchizedek Legend of 2 (Slavonic) Enoch', *JSJ* 21 (2000), 37.

among other points of evidence that he did not act as a priest in Jerusalem, since the Temple did not exist at the time.<sup>77</sup>

Furthermore, legendary traditions that were popular among Christian writers provided Melchizedek with an explicitly 'Gentile' origin. The earliest attestation of this tradition is probably Julius Africanus, who establishes a Sidonian or Canaanean origin for Melchizedek.<sup>78</sup> A Canaanean origin for Melchizedek is also attested in Josephus, who calls Melchizedek a ruler of the Canaanians (δυναστής Χαναναίων) (Bell. Jud. VI.438). Jerome reports that Hippolytus, Irenaeus, Eusebius of Caesarea, Eusebius of Emesa, Apollinarius and Eustathius of Antioch all believe that Melchizedek was a man from Canaan, king of Jerusalem, which was called first Salem, then Jebus and in the end Jerusalem (Ep. 73.2). The same tradition is known to Epiphanius of Salamis (Χαναναίων, Pan. 67.7).<sup>79</sup> In addition, there were speculations that Melchizedek was a Phoenician, allegedly even the founder of Sidon or, alternatively, of Egyptian origin.<sup>80</sup> Finally, a seventh century tradition claims that Melchizedek stems from the tribe of Ham (ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς τοῦ Χάμ, Chronikon Paschale, ed. Dindorf, 90f.).

Although the patristic literature acknowledges in part the identification of Salem with Jerusalem, based on Psalm 76:2 and on Josephus' account, it considers also alternative possibilities for the location and ultimate identification of Salem. There is a tendency in the patristic literature to disassociate Melchizedek from the Temple Cult and consequently from any priestly functions connected to the Israelite priestly tradition. Accordingly, Melchizedek's 'Gentile' noble identity, unrelated to any Israelite/Jewish lineage was emphasized.

<sup>77</sup> Οὔτε γὰρ ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων ἤρητο, οὐκ ἐλαίω σκευαστῶ κέχριστο, οὐ γένος ἦν τῶν φανέντων πῶ, καὶ τὸ πάντων γε παραδοξότατον, ὅτι μηδὲ τὴν σάρκα περιτέμνητο, καὶ ὁμως τὸν Ἀβραάμ εὐλογεῖ, ὡς ἂν πολὺ κρείττων αὐτοῦ τυγχάνων, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ θυσίαις καὶ σπονδαῖς τῷ ὑψίστῳ ἱεράτο θεῶ, οὐδὲ μὴν παρὰ τῶ ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ <ναῶ> τὴν λειτουργίαν ἐξετέλει. (Eusebius, Dem. Ev. V.241).

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Gen 10:15, which mentions that Canaan was the father of Sidon. On Julius Africanus' information, see H. Gelzer, Julius Africanus I, 89; cf. John of Antioch FHG IV, ed. C. Müller, 1851, 546. See Su-Min Ri, who attributes the origin of the traditions on Melchizedek's Phoenician or Egyptian origin in Christian literature to Julius Africanus (*Commentaire*, 272).

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Eustathius of Antioch, who also mentions that Melchizedek's parents were Canaanites, (ed. F. Cavallera, 63).

<sup>80</sup> John of Nikiu, *Chronicle* 27.4; cf. George Monachos (Comp. Hist. I.10).

### *Bread and Wine Symbolism*

The fact that Melchizedek offered Abraham bread and wine was promptly identified by Christian authors as a type of the Holy Communion. Through this offering, Melchizedek, the true High Priest, demonstrates prophetically the ‘only true spiritual sacrifice’.<sup>81</sup> The connection was first made by Clement of Alexandria in *Stromata* IV.25, which states that Melchizedek offered wine and bread, the ‘consecrated food’, as a type of the Eucharist (ὁ τὸν οἶνον καὶ ἄρτον τὴν ἡγιασμένην διδοὺς τροφήν εἰς τύπον εὐχαριστίας).

This exegetical tradition is to be found in most major patristic works that deal with the encounter of Melchizedek with Abraham. Eusebius notes:

For just as he, who was priest of the Gentiles, is not represented as offering outward sacrifices, but as blessing Abraham only with wine and bread, in exactly the same way our Lord and Saviour Himself first, and then all His priests among all nations, perform the spiritual sacrifice according to the customs of the Church, and with wine and bread darkly express the mysteries of His Body and saving Blood (Dem.Ev. V.242).

Similarly, according to Theodoret of Cyrhus, Melchizedek does not offer animal sacrifice to God but bread and wine (ἄλογα θύματα ἀλλὰ ἄρτους καὶ οἶνον; Interpr. in Ps. 110; PG 80:1773; Cf. Ps.-John Chrysostom, *De Melch.*; 56:262). Jerome suggests that Melchizedek introduced the Eucharistic sacrament when he offered bread and wine (pane et vino, simplici puroque sacrificio, Christi dedicaverit sacramentum) (Ep. 73.3). Cyril of Alexandria describes the offering as a ‘provision for life’ (ἐφόδιον ζωῆς; Glaphyra II, PG 69:105ff.), while John of Damascus in the eighth century calls it a ‘sacramental table’ (ἡ μυστικὴ τράπεζα—De fide orthodoxa IV.13).<sup>82</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Cf. the Roman Canon of the Mass, where Melchizedek is called High Priest. See M. McNamara who suggests that ‘this may be an old tradition, possibly even of Jewish origin’ (‘Melchizedek’, 30); see also C.T.R. Hayward, who quotes a Eucharistic prayer of the church of Milan probably from the 4th cent. and similarly argues for the Jewish origin of the title (‘What did Cain do Wrong?’, 116–117).

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Cyprian, Ep. 63.4 (PL 4:387–388); Ambrose, *De Sacramentis* IV.10; V.1—Ambrose calls Melchizedek in this context: ‘auctor sacramentorum’; see C.T.R. Hayward, ‘Shem, Melchizedek’, 67, who, however, does not elaborate further on this point. See also M. Poorthuis, who notes: ‘As a priest offering bread and wine, Melchizedek became the prototype of the Eucharistic offering’ (‘Enoch and Melchizedek in Judaism and Christianity’, 112). For an overview and quotation of later sources, see G. Wuttke, *Melchisedech*, 46f. Note the strong Eucharistic meaning of Melchizedek’s offering in a Bohairic prayer fragment related to the *Historia de Melchisedech*, in J. Dochhorn, ‘Die Historia de Melchisedech’, *Le Muséon* 117 (2004), 25, cf. 27; a similar emphasis can be found in the Ethiopic Gregorius-Anaphora,

As observed, this exegetical tradition is attested from the second to the eighth century and was known in Egypt, Palestine and Syria. Significantly, the Syriac *Cave of Treasures* mentions: 'Melchizedek made Abraham to participate in the Holy Mysteries, of the bread of the Offering and the wine of redemption' (XXVIII.11). Furthermore, the *Cave of Treasures* emphasizes that Melchizedek, who acts as a priest in the Cave, is commanded by Shem 'never to pour out blood in this place. Not to offer up wild beasts, not feathered fowl, but to offer up bread and wine always' (XXIII.21).

Melchizedek's priestly offering as a prototype for the Eucharistic rite was also influential in Christian art. Notably, a wall painting, which dates probably to the 13th century in the Church of the Holy Virgin at the Coptic Monastery of al Baramus in Wadi al-Natrun, portrays Abraham receiving communion from Melchizedek.<sup>83</sup>

#### *Melchizedek and Circumcision*

The observance (or not) of circumcision was a controversial topic among early Christians. According to those Christians that opposed the rite of circumcision, it was a sign of Israel's covenant with God, which had to be replaced by true faith. The rejection of circumcision became a significant issue in the context of the definition of Christian identity and community in distinction to Israel and the Mosaic law. Furthermore, the observance of circumcision was an important argument in anti-Jewish polemics.<sup>84</sup>

Justin, one of the first writers of the Church to argue against the observance of circumcision, maintains in his *Dialogue against Trypho the Jew*

---

see O. Löfgren – S. Euringer, *Die beiden gewöhnlichen äthiopischen Gregorius-Anaphoren*, Rome 1933, 102–107.

<sup>83</sup> Similar scenes can be found in the Church of Saint Macarius in Dayr Abu Maqar (12th cent.) and in the Church of the Dayr Anba Antuniyus (13th cent.). See P.P. van Moorsel, 'Treasures from Baramous with Some Remarks on a Melchizedek-Scene', in: M. Rassart-Debergh – J. Ries (eds), *Actes du IVe Congrès Copte*, Louvain-La-Neuve 1992, 177; P.P. van Moorsel, 'A different Melchizedek? Some Iconographical Remarks', in: M. Krause – S. Schatzen (eds), *Themelia*, Wiesbaden 1998, 329–342; G.J.M. van Loon, 'The Meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek and the Communion of the Apostles', in: M. Immerzeel et al. (eds), *Coptic Studies at the Threshold of the New Millennium*, vol. 2, Leuven 2004, 1373–1392; G.J.M. van Loon, *The Gate of Heaven—Wall Paintings with Old Testament Scenes in the Altar Room and the Hurus of Coptic Churches*, Leiden 1999, 66–67 and 72–74. Melchizedek can be seen as offering bread and wine in the fresco of St. Vitale in Ravenna (6th cent.); cf. C. Böttrich, *Geschichte Melchizedeks*, 48. On Melchizedek in Christian art, see H.M. v.Erffa, *Ikonomie der Genesis. Die christlichen Bildthemen aus dem alten Testament und ihre Quellen*, vol. 2, München – Berlin 1995, 59–76.

<sup>84</sup> See J. Mayer, 'Circumcision in Primitive Christianity', in: G. Kittel et al. (eds), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. VI, Grand Rapids 1995, 81ff.

(Dial XIX; cf. Dial. XXXIII) that circumcision was not part of God's original purpose, and insists that circumcision was given as a sign and not for righteousness. Justin writes:

(...) it is because circumcision is not essential for all men, but only for you Jews, to mark you off for the suffering you now so deservedly endure. Nor do we approve of your useless baptism of the wells, which has no connection at all with our baptism of life. Thus has God protested that you have forsaken him *the fountain of the living water, and have dug for yourselves broken cisterns which can hold no water* (Jer 2:13). You Jews, who have the circumcision of the flesh, are in great need of our circumcision, whereas we, since we have our circumcision, do not need yours. For, if, as you claim, circumcision had been necessary for salvation, God would not have created Adam uncircumcised; nor would he have looked with favour upon the sacrifice of the uncircumcised Enoch, *who was seen no more, because God took him* (Gen 5:24). The Lord and his angels led Lot out of Sodom; thus was he saved without circumcision. Noah, the uncircumcised father of our race, was safe with his children in the ark. Melchizedek, the priest of our Most High, was not circumcised, yet Abraham, the first to accept circumcision of the flesh, paid tithes to him and was blessed by him; indeed, God, through David, announced that he would make him a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. Circumcision, therefore, is necessary only for you Jews, in order that, as Hosea one of the twelve prophets, says *your people should not be a people, and your nation not a nation* (Hos 1:9). Furthermore, all these men were just and pleasing in the sight of God, yet they kept no Sabbaths (Dial. XIX. 3-5).

Justin, ostensibly responding to Jewish criticisms (cf. Dial. XVI; XXX), refers to various episodes from Scripture to demonstrate that biblical figures such as Noah, although uncircumcised, were found by God to be righteous. He concludes with the example of Melchizedek, who, as an uncircumcised priest, blessed Abraham, the first person to be circumcised. Thus, he proves that an uncircumcised person is superior to a circumcised one. Similarly, Jerome reports that the mainstream of patristic tradition (namely Hippolytus, Irenaeus, Eusebius of Caesarea, Eusebius of Emesa, Apollinarius and Eustathius of Antioch) views Melchizedek as a priest. This was despite the fact that he was neither circumcised nor an Aaronite, as were Abel, Enoch and Noah who sacrificed to God and found favour with Him. The same applies to Job, who also was not a Levite (Ep. 73.2). Jerome stresses that Melchizedek was a priest before the introduction of circumcision (*ante circumcisionem functus sacerdotio*; Ep. 73.3).

The figure of Melchizedek as a prototype of the superiority of the uncircumcised can be found also in the works of other major Church Fathers, such as in Aphrahat's *Demonstrations* (II.3), in Evangelical

Demonstration (V.3.15[241–242]) by Eusebius of Caesarea, in Epiphanius of Salamis' *Panarion* (55.3.1) and in John Chrysostom's *Homilies on Hebrews* (XIII.3). The deprecation of circumcision is generally understood in the context of the rejection of the observance of the Mosaic law. At the same time, Melchizedek is commonly listed together with other non-circumcised righteous figures from the book of Genesis, such as Abel and Enoch. Ultimately, Christian authors emphasize the irrelevance of circumcision when addressing questions related to priestly functions and the authority for blessings.

### *The Exegetical Encounter*

The motifs discussed in this chapter reveal a particularly rich source of evidence of exegetical encounter between the various rabbinic and Christian traditions. Indeed, the number of connections between rabbinic and Christian interpretations on Melchizedek is indicative of the theological importance of this figure despite the small number of verses focused on Melchizedek in the Bible itself. The exegetical motivations behind the motifs discussed in the previous sections can be explained, in part, in light of a potential relationship between rabbinic and Christian traditions, although this is not to be understood as the sole impetus for their development. In particular, the examples of encounter are primarily of a polemical nature, and represent evidence of a vibrant dialectic over controversial issues such as the legitimacy of the priesthood and the observance of circumcision; there is evidence of shared use of motifs and methods of argumentation, but the theological conclusions frequently diverge.

The first motif for discussion is the identification of Melchizedek and Shem. This presents an exegetical encounter between rabbinic and Christian traditions in several ways, which may reflect different points in the development and transmission of the motif.

Melchizedek was a priest who blessed Abraham, and so a fundamental question addressed by rabbinic exegetes was the relationship between these two figures. In discussion of Melchizedek's activities and role, as portrayed in the biblical story, a distinct approach was taken in a variety of rabbinic traditions to bring the King of Salem into line with Jewish ancestry, history and practices.<sup>85</sup> As part of this exegetical approach,

---

<sup>85</sup> Although he goes on to argue against the identification of Shem and Melchizedek as an example of Christian polemic, C.T.R. Hayward still notes that Melchizedek in targumic

traditions with an array of different contexts teach that Melchizedek is Shem, the priest of God Most High.<sup>86</sup> He is the servant of God in the Temple at Jerusalem.<sup>87</sup> He received his priesthood as the firstborn son of Noah and is circumcised.<sup>88</sup> He instructed Abraham in the laws of the priesthood and revealed Torah to him. As such, Melchizedek/Shem is described as a priest in line with Jewish tradition. He is identified as an ancestor of Israel and fulfils a Jewish priestly function. Thus, in these traditions, Melchizedek/Shem is a human historical figure with a genealogy.

This identification was probably motivated by a number of factors. First, the need to explain the fact that Shem was still alive at the time of Abraham, according to biblical calculations. Secondly, the identification incorporates Melchizedek into the history of Israelite ancestors and the history of the priesthood. However, a third possibility is that this motif developed partly as a response to the portrayal of Melchizedek as without genealogy, as presented in Hebrews 7 and subsequent Christian literature. This is supported by M. Poorthuis who says: 'The widely attested identification of Melchizedek with Noah's son Shem in the Targum and in rabbinic literature counters both the claim of a heavenly figure 'without father or mother' and of Melchizedek being uncircumcised'.<sup>89</sup> The fact

---

tradition is presented as 'a Semite par excellence, and ancestor of the Jews, a great Torah scholar and head of an academy' ('Shem, Melchizedek', 68).

<sup>86</sup> E.g. Tg Neofiti Gen 14:18, GenR 44:7, LevR 25:6, BT Ned 32b, ARN A 2, PRE 8 and 27, Tg PsJon Gen 14:18, MidrPss 76:3, SOR 21 and NumR 4:8.

<sup>87</sup> E.g. Tg Neofiti Gen 14:18, GenR 43:6, 56:10, Midrash Zuta on Song 1:1 and MidrPss 76:3.

<sup>88</sup> E.g. BT Sot 12a, ARN A 2, TanB *Noah* 6, Tan *Bereshit* 11, *Noah* 5 and MidrPss 9:7.

<sup>89</sup> 'Enoch and Melchizedek in Judaism and Christianity', 113. M. Simon has also argued for a polemical interpretation. He states that Abraham paying homage to Melchizedek, as the type of Jesus is embarrassing, so if Melchizedek is identified with an ancestor of Abraham, i.e. Shem, then Abraham is merely showing deference to a Jewish ancestor ('Melchisédech dans la polémique entre juifs et chrétiens et dans la légende', *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses* 17 (1937), 58–93). This has been a contentious issue in scholarship with scholars such as C.T.R. Hayward, J.L. Kugel and J.J. Petuchowski arguing against Jewish traditions on Melchizedek as representing evidence of anti-Christian polemic. For example, Hayward argues that there is 'a complex interpretation of the two men which cannot simply be explained as anti-Christian polemic' ('Shem, Melchizedek', 68). Hayward points to Jubilees and Philo as providing the background to the idea that Shem was a righteous priest. This, in addition to the fact that Shem would still be alive by reasoning from the genealogies, led for Hayward to an easy equation of Melchizedek and Shem. This argument is picked up by M. McNamara and leads him to say of the identification of Shem and Melchizedek: 'It is doubtful if there was any polemical tendentious intention, anti-Christian or otherwise, in the identification' ('Melchizedek', 16). Similarly, J.L. Kugel argues that it is a Jewish idea without influence or response to Christianity and is just a way of explaining who Melchizedek is—Shem was still alive according to biblical chronology and so provided an easy answer (*Traditions of the Bible*, 289–291). Whilst



that this motif could be viewed as a response to Christian tradition is supported by the specific equation of the still-living Shem with Melchizedek rather than with another biblical figure, as Melchizedek was used to criticize the levitical priesthood in Hebrews 7 and throughout Christian tradition.<sup>90</sup> In this way, several exegetical problems are solved together; the historical origin of Melchizedek and the continued existence of Shem are explained, and Christian claims regarding Melchizedek are countered. Indeed, although there are clearly a number of internal motivations for the development of this motif, there is no reason why a long standing rabbinic tradition cannot be reinterpreted and reapplied to a new context and theological problem.

Significantly, the identification of Melchizedek and Shem was also explicitly made by Ephraem the Syrian and subsequent Syriac authors such as Theodore bar Koni.<sup>91</sup> His interpretation in Comm.Gen. XI.2 outlines the same arguments as also found in the rabbinic traditions. In particular, Ephraem notes that Shem was still alive at the time of Abraham and that Melchizedek was Shem<sup>92</sup> and that Melchizedek/Shem was a priest who gained his rights due to succession from Noah<sup>93</sup> (and as such Ephraem also gives Melchizedek a genealogy).<sup>94</sup> The congruence with the rabbinic traditions is clear. Indeed, this represents the use of the same exegetical motif, which is neither explicit nor implicit in the biblical text nor based on earlier Jewish tradition. Furthermore, the identification between Melchizedek and Shem is an early rabbinic tradition as attested by its presence in Tg Neofiti Gen 14:18. As such, the identification of Melchizedek and Shem constitutes a strong case of a direct exegetical

---

the argument of this chapter would claim evidence of polemic in rabbinic and Christian exegesis of the Melchizedek story, this is not intended to represent a simplistic and exclusive motivation behind the development of the variety of interpretations discussed.

<sup>90</sup> It has also been highlighted in the rabbinics section how the equation of Melchizedek and Shem is not explicitly found in early Jewish literature.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Ephraem the Syrian, Comm.Gen. XI.2 and Theodore bar Koni, Lib.Schol. M. II.124.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Tg Neofiti Gen 14:18, GenR 44:7, LevR 25:6, BT Ned 32b, ARN A 2, PRE 8 and 27, Tg PsJon Gen 14:18, MidrPss 76:3, SOR 21 and NumR 4:8.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. PRE 8, TanB *Toledot* 12 and NumR 4:8, which build on traditions that identify Melchizedek as Shem.

<sup>94</sup> Interestingly, Ephraem the Syrian, Comm.Gen. XXIII.1 states that when Rebekah enquired of the Lord regarding the children fighting within her, she took her question to Melchizedek as mediator on her behalf. This is paralleled in GenR 63:6, which describes how Rebekah went to the study house of Shem, as mentioned above in n.23. Thus, both Ephraem the Syrian and GenR 63:6 maintain the connection between Shem and Melchizedek.

encounter, with rabbinic interpretations reflected in the work of a major Church Father of the Syriac tradition and subsequent Syriac exegetes dependant on Ephraem.<sup>95</sup>

However, this specific interpretation was rejected by other Christian exegetes both within the Syriac and Greek traditions. Ishodad of Merv rejected Ephraem's approach, and Cosmas the Indicoplestes denied the possibility of priestly succession for Melchizedek, while Procopius and Epiphanius denied that Melchizedek was Shem based on biblical calculations from the LXX.<sup>96</sup> As such, the identification of Shem and Melchizedek was a controversial issue even within the Christian tradition, which may also reflect attempts to endorse the concept of Melchizedek as without genealogy and so a type for Jesus.

Furthermore, there are also Christian authors who maintained Melchizedek's identity as a Gentile High Priest, particularly from Canaan. Thus, Christian authors such as Julius Africanus, Jerome and Epiphanius of Salamis offered an alternative 'Gentile' family for Melchizedek.<sup>97</sup> In the first place, these authors likely follow, or even cite, Josephus (Bell. Jud. VI.438), who recorded that Melchizedek was a Canaanite. In addition, Christian writings that describe an earthly Gentile genealogy for Melchizedek may also reflect an internal controversy against groups, such as the so-called 'Melchizedekians', who saw Melchizedek as an eschatological figure, as indicated by Hippolytus (Ref. 7.36), Epiphanius (Pan. 55), or Marcus the Eremita (De Melchisedech, PG 65:117–140).<sup>98</sup> Thus, there may be a number of motivations for claiming a Gentile genealogy for Melchizedek, but this approach may also represent an attempt to disassociate Melchizedek from Israelite ancestry, a heritage claimed in the rabbinic traditions discussed above.

---

<sup>95</sup> The possibility cannot be ruled out that Ephraem's exegetical approach reflects Jewish traditions on Melchizedek and, according to M. McNamara, Ephraem's comment on Gen 14:18–20 'in fact consists almost entirely of material found in Palestinian Targums' ('Melchizedek', 14).

<sup>96</sup> Ishodad of Merv, Comm. Gen. ad Gen 14:18; Cosmas the Indicopleustes, Topography, Book V; Procopius PG 87:333f. and Epiphanius Pan. 55.6.

<sup>97</sup> Julius Africanus I, 89, Jerome Ep. 73.2 and Epiphanius of Salamis, Pan. 67.7. Jerome also references Hippolytus, Irenaeus, Eusebius of Caesarea, Eusebius of Emesa, Apollinaris and Eustathius of Antioch, who reportedly also made this claim.

<sup>98</sup> The interpretation was particularly found in the Gnostic tradition (NHC IX, 1); cf. PRK 5:9, PR 15:14/15 and CantR 2:13. J.R. Davila has suggested that the eschatological role assigned to Melchizedek in early Jewish tradition (such as 11Q13) may have had an influence on the ideas in Hebrews 7 ('Melchizedek: King, Priest, and God', in: S.D. Breslauer (ed.), *The Seductiveness of Jewish Myth*, N.Y. 1997, 220–224). This point is reiterated by M. Poorthuis, 'Enoch and Melchizedek in Judaism and Christianity', 112; cf. Ethiopic Book of Adam and Eve 3:13–21.

Finally, a last point of explicit encounter with regards to the identification of Melchizedek and Shem can be found in the writings of Jerome. In his Ep. 73.6, Jerome indicates his knowledge of the traditions of 'the Hebrews' and their identification of Shem and Melchizedek. In addition, Jerome claims that this was based on the Hebrew biblical text, which indicated that Shem lived up to the time of Isaac. Furthermore, he notes that the identification was based on the custom that the firstborn sons of the descendants of Noah were priests. As already noted, the identification of Melchizedek and Shem was a widely attested and early rabbinic tradition and Jerome clearly indicates accurate knowledge of rabbinic traditions on these points.<sup>99</sup> Interestingly, the statement about the succession from Noah is only preserved in later rabbinic texts (e.g. PRE 8; TanB *Toledot* 12; NumR 4:8), albeit a range of sources which are clearly also based on earlier rabbinic tradition. However, Jerome may indicate an earlier stage in the transmission of these traditions.

The identification of Melchizedek and Shem is also connected to the question of priesthood in rabbinic and Christian exegesis of this figure, and, in particular, the nature of and relationship between the priestly roles of Melchizedek and Abraham. In Christian literature, the riddle of Melchizedek's identity and origin gave rise to numerous speculations and legends about his character and position. Most popular are those traditions that see in Melchizedek a type for Jesus, the eternal High Priest, based on Hebrews 7. As such, in Christian understanding, the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek replaces the levitical priesthood. For example, this is highlighted by Eusebius of Caesarea, who states that when Jesus followed the priestly order of Melchizedek he abandoned the order of Aaron.<sup>100</sup> Furthermore, a major approach in patristic literature, as indicated by authors such as Cyril of Alexandria, Eusebius of Caesarea and John Chrysostom, considered Melchizedek to be superior to Abraham because Abraham gave a tithe to him. As such, they emphasized the pre-eminence of Melchizedek's priesthood over a priesthood that was established by Abraham's descendants.

A number of rabbinic traditions also offer an alternative approach to the priestly role of Melchizedek by demoting him and presenting a superior portrayal of Abraham, the great biblical patriarch of the Jewish people. In these traditions, the actions and exalted role of Abraham are

---

<sup>99</sup> See Jerome's commentary on Gen 14:18–20; cf. C.T.R. Hayward, *Hebrew Questions*, 157.

<sup>100</sup> Eusebius of Caesarea, *Evangelical Demonstrations* V.241.

emphasized.<sup>101</sup> It is Abraham who gains both kingship and priesthood. God took the priesthood away from Melchizedek and gave it to Abraham, who became a priest after the manner of Melchizedek. As such, the priesthood of Melchizedek is replaced with that of Abraham and his descendants, the Jewish people.<sup>102</sup> Indeed, Abraham is blessed by virtue of the tithe and even surpasses Melchizedek in righteous deeds.<sup>103</sup>

The polemical nature of the tradition in BT Ned 32b, in particular, has been widely noted.<sup>104</sup> For example, M. Poorthuis states of BT Ned 32b that 'the Christian claim of Melchizedek's superior priesthood was known to the Rabbis and countered by denying him the priesthood from the outset'.<sup>105</sup> It seems very probable here that this tradition is directed against the Christian portrayal of Melchizedek, first outlined in Hebrews 7, as a type of Jesus the everlasting priest. Through exegesis of Genesis 14 and Psalm 110, BT Ned 32b proves that, although Melchizedek/Shem once had the priesthood, it has now passed to Abraham and his descendants and remains solely with them.

Thus, it is possible that the identification of Melchizedek with Shem in rabbinic traditions was a means of keeping the office of priest within the history and ancestry of Israel; then, in another approach, the removal of the priesthood from Melchizedek/Shem to Abraham is a means of clarifying that priestly authority is with Abraham and his descendants rather than a figure who, even after the identification with Shem, might potentially be viewed as a Christian type of a priest.<sup>106</sup> The downgrading of the priesthood of Melchizedek in rabbinic traditions, such as LevR 25:6 and BT Ned 32b, could reflect a response to the Christian idea, first found in Epistle to Hebrews 7, that emphasizes the superiority of Melchizedek's

<sup>101</sup> E.g. LevR 25:6, BT Ned 32b, PRE 8, TanB *Toledot* 12, NumR 4:8.

<sup>102</sup> E.g. LevR 25:6 and BT Ned 32b.

<sup>103</sup> E.g. M Abot 6:10, GenR 43:7, 43:8, PR 25:3, PRE 27, TanB *Ḥayye Sarah* 6, *Behar* 3, Tan *Ḥayye Sarah* 4, ExodR 15:27, NumR 12:11 and 14:2.

<sup>104</sup> For a short selection, see M. Simon, 'Melchisédech dans la polémique', 58–93, R.S. Boustán, *From Martyr to Mystic*, 136–138, L. Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, vol. 5, 226, n.104, and M. Poorthuis, 'Enoch and Melchizedek in Judaism and Christianity', 113.

<sup>105</sup> 'Enoch and Melchizedek in Judaism and Christianity', 113.

<sup>106</sup> Alternatively, J.J. Petuchowski has proposed that the polemic in BT Ned 32b is directed against a pre-Christian Jewish interpretation of Ps 110:4. In particular, the understanding of this verse as providing a legitimation of the Hasmonean dynasty with their union of king and priest in one office, a move which was strongly disapproved of by the Pharisees, as described in Josephus Ant. XIII ('Controversial Figure', 127–136). Even if this view is adopted, however, it is still possible, given the Christian associations with Melchizedek, that this polemical tradition later came to be understood of and used in relation to Christian teaching.

priesthood over the priesthood that is to come from Abraham. Furthermore, the prominence in the rabbinic interpretations given to the blessing of Abraham by virtue of the tithe could be an answer to the prominent Christian idea that Melchizedek was superior to Abraham for receiving the tithe from him.<sup>107</sup> This is clearly a controversial topic illuminating a polemical treatment of Melchizedek and his priesthood in certain approaches in the rabbinic traditions.<sup>108</sup>

The location of Melchizedek's priestly activities is the next point of discussion. The biblical text describes Melchizedek as 'King of Salem', and a variety of rabbinic traditions attest that Salem is in fact Jerusalem.<sup>109</sup> As such, the priesthood of Melchizedek is associated with that city. The identification of Salem with Jerusalem is also widely attested in the Christian literature.<sup>110</sup> However, a connection is made between Salem and Jerusalem in Ps 76:3 (LXX Ps 76:2), which provides biblical support for this exegetical tradition. Furthermore, the understanding of Salem as Jerusalem is found in early Jewish literature such as 1QApGen 22.12ff and also in Josephus, *Ant.* I.181, VII.67, *Bell.Jud.* VI.438 and *Apion* I.174. As such, this represents a similar method of argumentation by rabbinic and Christian exegetes, but this shared motif is most likely a logical conclusion based on Ps 76:3 (LXX Ps 76:2), and many Church Fathers even cite Josephus in reporting this connection.

According to Jerome in *Ep.* 73:7, Salem is not Jerusalem but a city near Scythopolis. However, Jerome offers a point of indirect encounter on the identification of Salem and Jerusalem in his *Hebrew Questions on Genesis* 14:18–20. Jerome demonstrates his well founded knowledge of Jewish sources when he reports the approach of the 'Hebrews' and states that 'by 'king of Salem' is meant the king of Jerusalem, which was formerly called Salem'.<sup>111</sup> It is not clear whether Jerome is acknowledging rabbinic

<sup>107</sup> Cf. Cyril Alex., *Glaphyra*, PG 69:104; Eusebius of Caesarea, *Dem.Ev.* V.241; Cosmas the Indicopleustes, *Christian Topography* V and John Chrysostom, *Hom.Hebr.* XII.4.

<sup>108</sup> This is supported by M. Poorthuis who states: "The elevation of Abraham at the expense of Melchizedek is so foreign to the description of Melchizedek in Scripture that a polemical intent may be assumed" ('Enoch and Melchizedek in Judaism and Christianity', 113); cf. also *MidrPss* 37:1 in which Abraham surpasses Melchizedek in righteous deeds, i.e. alms giving.

<sup>109</sup> E.g. *GenR* 43:6, 56:10 and *MidrPss* 76:3.

<sup>110</sup> E.g. Jerome, *Ep.* 73:7; Procopius of Gaza, *Comm.Gen.* (PG 87:333); Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autolyicum* II.31; Cyril of Alexandria, *Glaphyra* (PG 69:81); and Epiphanius of Salamis, *Pan.* 55.2.1.

<sup>111</sup> As C.T.R. Hayward notes, and highlighted throughout the present chapter on 'Abraham and Melchizedek', Jerome summarizes four Jewish traditions about Melchizedek, all of which are extant in Jewish sources (*Hebrew Questions*, 156).

traditions, such as represented by GenR 43:6 and 56:10, or whether he is referring to Josephus, Ant. I.181, VII.67, Bell.Jud. VI.438 and Apion I.174 in making this assertion.

However, a number of Christian authors, including Epiphanius of Salamis and Procopius of Gaza, offer a variety of alternative possibilities for the location and ultimate identification of Salem.<sup>112</sup> Contrary to rabbinic traditions, such as preserved in MidrPss 76:3, there are Church Fathers, such as Eusebius of Caesarea, who emphasize that Melchizedek could not have served in the Temple of Jerusalem.<sup>113</sup> Indeed, this is part of the polemical approach in the patristic literature described above that disassociates Melchizedek from the Temple Cult in Jerusalem and consequently with any priestly functions connected to the Israelite priestly tradition.

Interestingly, the *Cave of Treasures* describes Melchizedek as the founder of Jerusalem. This text maintains that Salem and Jerusalem are distinct places, but Melchizedek moves to Jerusalem and is the one who names it.<sup>114</sup> However, the motif is further developed in the *Cave of Treasures*, as the site is also identified with that of the grave of Adam, Golgotha, and, of particular interest, the site of the near sacrifice of Isaac. This can be compared to the traditions preserved in GenR 55:7, which connects the priesthood of Abraham after the order of Melchizedek with the site of the attempted sacrifice of Isaac. Similarly, in GenR 56:10 Abraham calls the mountain where he nearly sacrificed Isaac 'Jireh', taken from 'Adonai-Jireh'. The mountain is then identified with the place over which Melchizedek/Shem was king, and was called 'Salem', thus linking Melchizedek's 'Salem' with both Jerusalem and the site of the Isaac's near sacrifice. This represents a broadly shared exegetical approach to the connection between Melchizedek, Jerusalem and the attempt to sacrifice Isaac, although ultimately the difference in details precludes certain evidence of encounter.

Interpretations of the action of Melchizedek in bringing bread and wine to Abraham provide a further point of encounter. It was a widespread view in Christian tradition that Melchizedek's offer to Abraham of

---

<sup>112</sup> E.g. Epiphanius of Salamis, On Weights and Measures 79, Procopius of Gaza (Comm. Gen., PG 87:333) and Eusebius of Caesarea, Praep.Ev. IX. 17 [according to Alexander Polyhistor].

<sup>113</sup> Eusebius, Dem.Ev. V.241.

<sup>114</sup> Cave of Treasures XXX.3-8; cf. the discussion on the site of Jerusalem in the chapter 'In Paradise' in this volume.

bread and wine was a type of the Eucharist.<sup>115</sup> This view is widely attested from the second century onwards and found amongst Church Fathers based in Egypt, Palestine and Syria as outlined above. This interpretation emphasized that Melchizedek was an archetype of the Christian priesthood. In comparison, there is a tradition found in GenR 43:6 that relates the bread and wine to the bread of the presence and libations. The discussion of the role of bread and wine in Temple ceremony in GenR 43:6 closely ties Melchizedek to Jewish religious practice, particularly as Jerusalem was where Melchizedek was thought to administer his duties. Thus, rabbinic and Christian traditions discuss the symbolism of the bread and wine in Gen 14:18, whilst emphasizing their opposing theological views on the nature, significance and use of the bread and wine. This may provide evidence of a direct encounter, with the interpretation in Genesis Rabbah presenting a distinctly rabbinic alternative to an established Christian understanding of the bread and wine. This possibility is reinforced by the fact that this reflects a different approach to earlier Jewish traditions in which Melchizedek's actions are a sign of hospitality.<sup>116</sup>

These traditions on bread and wine can also be seen as part of the wider approaches already discussed. In particular, this links to the rabbinic exegetical approach that emphasizes the Israelite history of Melchizedek as Shem, who as a priest followed specifically the practices and laws of the Jewish priesthood. This can be contrasted to the Christian approach that views Melchizedek as a type of the Christian priest who practises the rite of Communion. In light of these approaches, the *Cave of Treasures* is of particular significance. The *Cave of Treasures* XXIII.21 describes how Melchizedek made Abraham participate in the rite of Communion. However, the same text argues firmly against the offering of animal sacrifices in stating that Melchizedek is 'never to pour out blood in this place. Not to offer up wild beasts, not feathered fowl, but to offer up bread and wine always'. The text also emphasizes that a building for worship should not be erected in that place. Thus, this Syriac source implicitly polemicizes against Israelite Temple worship practices in the context of Melchizedek's priestly functions.

Finally, there is discussion in both rabbinic and Christian traditions over whether Melchizedek was circumcised, with opposing views on the

---

<sup>115</sup> E.g. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* (ed. Stählin-Früchtel, 15); Eusebius *Dem.Ev.* V.242; Theodoret of Cyrrhus *PG* 80:1773 and Jerome *Ep.* 73.3.

<sup>116</sup> Cf. Philo, *Leg.Alleg.* III.82 and *1QApGen* 22.12ff.

practice found. The practice of circumcision was clearly a controversial subject for rabbinic and Christian exegetes, as it was linked to religious identity and intense theological debate on the status of the Mosaic law.<sup>117</sup> This is exemplified by Justin Martyr who, in responding to criticisms offered by ‘Trypho’, argued at length that circumcision was unnecessary, as proven by the fact that a number of righteous men in the history of Israel, such as Melchizedek, were uncircumcised.<sup>118</sup> However, rabbinic exegesis on Gen 14:18 teaches that Melchizedek, as the king of *Shalem*, is perfect through his circumcision, and even that he was born circumcised.<sup>119</sup> This provides a clear contrast to Christian sources that see the figure of Melchizedek as an example of the superiority of the uncircumcised.<sup>120</sup> It is very probable that the rabbinic traditions also represent a response to Christian polemic over the necessity of circumcision in emphasizing this mark from birth on key ancestors of Israel, and the traditions promote the existence of the sign of the covenant even before the command was given to Abraham.<sup>121</sup> The fact that this opposing exegesis is found on a controversial subject, which is also not originally mentioned in the biblical text of Genesis 14, further strengthens the evidence of direct encounter.<sup>122</sup>

In summary, rabbinic and Christian exegesis of the Melchizedek story in Gen 14:18–20 provides evidence of a widespread polemical concern with Melchizedek, and theologically combative dialectic over this controversial

---

<sup>117</sup> See B.A. Pearson, ‘Melchizedek in Early Judaism, Christianity and Gnosticism’, 176–202.

<sup>118</sup> Justin Martyr, Dial. XIX.

<sup>119</sup> E.g. GenR 43:6 and ARN A 2.

<sup>120</sup> E.g. Justin Martyr Dial. XIX; Jerome Ep. 73.2–3; Aphrahat Dem. XI.3–4; Eusebius of Caesarea, Dem. Ev. V.241; Epiphanius of Salamis, Pan. 55.3.1 and John Chrysostom, Hom. Hebr. XIII.3.

<sup>121</sup> M. Poorthuis has noted that this could also be a refutation of the Christian idea that Melchizedek was ‘priest of the uncircumcised’, i.e. a refutation of Melchizedek as the type of Jesus and his ministering to the non-Jewish Church (‘Enoch and Melchizedek in Judaism and Christianity’, 112ff). In addition, I. Kalimi states that midrashim on ancestors who were born circumcised should be seen against the background of polemic with Christians over the importance of circumcision. He particularly refers to the early debate as reflected in the New Testament, such as at Acts 15:1–29; 16:1–3; Gal 2:3; 5:2,6; 6:11–17; Rom 2:25–29; 3:1; 4:9–12; 1 Cor 7:18–19, and in early polemical texts such as the Epistle of Barnabas and also relates it to the Hadrianic ban on circumcision (*Early Jewish Exegesis*, 61–76). The late date of some of the midrashim discussed here, however, indicates that this was a debate that continued in later centuries, and the tradition was reapplied to new arguments on the topic of circumcision.

<sup>122</sup> This point of encounter extends beyond exegesis of the Melchizedek story to include interpretations regarding the circumcision of other key figures from the biblical history of Israel.



figure.<sup>123</sup> As to be expected, the nature of encounters varies as a reflection of the diversity in approaches in rabbinic and Christian tradition. However, in broad terms, the Christian understanding of Melchizedek is challenged in some rabbinic traditions by rooting Melchizedek into the ancestry, practices and history of the Jewish people. An alternative challenge is presented in the exegetical approach that emphasizes the superiority of Abraham, and the priesthood to come from his descendants, over Melchizedek and his priesthood. A challenge to rabbinic traditions is also presented in certain Christian sources which claim that Melchizedek is a precursor of Christ and that his actions prefigure Christian teachings and practices. Indeed, there is a tendency in the Christian literature to disassociate Melchizedek from the Temple Cult and, consequently, from any priestly functions connected to the Israelite priestly tradition. Finally, in a different type of encounter, detailed awareness of rabbinic traditions is illustrated particularly in the writings of Jerome.

---

<sup>123</sup> M. Poorthuis has outlined a possible development of this dialectic. Briefly, the first stage is early Jewish interpretations such as found at Qumran or in Philo. The second stage is Christian appropriation of Melchizedek as highlighted in the Epistle to Hebrews. The third stage is the Jewish response to this appropriation, namely, the emphasis on the ancestry and circumcision of Melchizedek as illustrated in BT Ned 32b. The fourth stage is the Christian abandonment of Melchizedek as an intermediary, which was partly a reflection of the Christological debates. Finally the fifth stage is the Jewish rehabilitation of Melchizedek ('Enoch and Melchizedek in Judaism and Christianity', 110–119).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### HAGAR AND ISHMAEL

*And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing, and she said to Abraham: 'Drive out this maidservant and her son, for this woman's son will not inherit with my son Isaac'. (MT Gen 21:9–10)*

#### *Rabbinic Traditions*

The story of Hagar and Ishmael, and as such the origins of the Ishmaelites, is outlined in two chapters of Genesis. Genesis 16 describes how Sarah presented her maid Hagar to Abraham for the purposes of securing a successor, which subsequently leads to the birth of Ishmael. The story is then developed in Genesis 21, which reflects on the status of Hagar and Ishmael following the birth of Isaac, their expulsion from the house of Abraham, and the beginning of their life in the wilderness. Key themes within the diversity of rabbinic traditions on these passages include the nature and character of Ishmael and his descendants, the status and origins of Hagar, the relationship of Hagar and Ishmael to Abraham and Sarah, and the significance of the stories of Ishmael and Isaac for the future promises to and history of Israel.<sup>1</sup> A number of motifs from these topics are of relevance to the exegetical encounter and are discussed in the following chapter, including the Egyptian origins of Hagar, Ishmael as a plunderer, murderer and idolater, Ishmael's animosity towards Isaac and disputes with him over inheritance, and the character of Abraham

---

<sup>1</sup> For select bibliography on the rabbinic treatment of the Hagar and Ishmael stories, see C. Bakhos, *Ishmael on the border*; S.D. Sacks, *Midrash and Multiplicity: Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer and the Renewal of Rabbinic Interpretive Culture*, Berlin 2009, 157–167; R. Firestone, 'Patriarchy, Primogeniture, and Polemic in the Exegetical Traditions of Judaism and Islam', in: N.B. Dohrmann – D. Stern (eds), *Jewish Biblical Interpretation and Cultural Exchange*, Philadelphia 2008, 108–123; J. Baskin, *Midrashic Women: Formations of the Feminine in Rabbinic Literature*, Hanover NH 2002, 150ff.; R. Syren, 'Ishmael and Esau in the Book of Jubilees and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan', in: D.R.G. Beattie – M.J. McNamara (eds), *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in their Historical Context*, Sheffield 1994, 310–315; D.J. Zucker, 'Conflicting Conclusions: The Hatred of Isaac and Ishmael', *Judaism* 39.1 (1990), 37–46; C.T.R. Hayward, 'Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and Anti-Islamic Polemic', *JSS* 34 (1989), 77–93; and M. Ohana, 'La Polemique judeo-islamique et l'image d'Ismael dans Targum Pseudo-Jonathan et dans Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer', *Aug* 15 (1975), 367–87.

as illuminated by his dealings with Hagar and Ishmael. Additionally, it is particularly interesting to examine exegetical approaches that may reflect the rise of Islam on the political scene.

*Hagar: A Gift from Pharaoh*

Hagar is first introduced in the biblical narrative at Gen 16:1 where she is identified as an Egyptian handmaid of Sarah:

ושרי אשת אברם לא ילדה לו ולה שפחה מצרית ושמה הגר

*And Sarai, the wife of Abram, did not bear children for him; and she had an Egyptian handmaid and her name was Hagar.*

In addition to the sterility of Sarah, one of the main questions raised by this biblical verse is how Sarah came to have an Egyptian maid, as stated in Gen 16:1 (and thereafter at Gen 16:3, 21:9 and 25:12). The first motif for discussion centres on this question, as rabbinic exegetes sought to explain the nationality of Hagar. A frequently cited tradition is that Hagar was the daughter of Pharaoh, and that he gave his daughter to Sarah as a maid during Abraham and Sarah's stay in Egypt (Gen 12:10–20).<sup>2</sup> This tradition is found in GenR 45:1:

אמר ר' שמעון בן יוחי הגר בת פרעה היתה, כיון שראה פרעה מעשים שנעשו לשרה בביתו נטל בתו ונתן לה, אמר מוטב תהא בתי שפחה בבית זה ולא מטרוגה בבית אחר הה"ד ולה שפחת מצרית ושמה הגר אמר הא אגריד  
(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 1, 447–448)

R. Shimon ben Yoḥai said: Hagar was the daughter of Pharaoh. When Pharaoh saw the deeds that were done on behalf of Sarah in his house, he took his daughter and gave (Hagar) to her. He said: 'It is better that my daughter be a handmaid in this house than mistress in another house'. Thus it is written, *And she had an Egyptian handmaid, and her name was Hagar*. He said: 'Here is your reward'.

GenR 45:1 explains that Pharaoh gave his daughter Hagar to Sarah because of the power displayed on Sarah's behalf whilst she was in his house. The impact on Pharaoh's household of bringing in Sarah, a married woman, is described in Gen 12:17. This verse outlines the diseases that God inflicted on Pharaoh and his household because of Sarah, which are reminiscent

<sup>2</sup> Cf. GenR 45:1, PRE 26 and Tg PsJon Gen 16:1. This may implicitly be based on interpretation of Gen 12:6, which describes how whilst in Egypt Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, menservants and *maidservants* (ושפחה), and camels; cf. J.L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 273–274; cf. also 1QApGen 20.31–32 discussed below.

of the future plagues upon Egypt (Exodus 7–12). As such, in GenR 45:1, Pharaoh declares that it is better for his daughter to be a maid in Sarah's house, which has demonstrable divine support, than mistress of her own. The fact that Hagar is identified as the daughter of Pharaoh, rather than simply one of his concubines or maids, is a means of emphasizing the impact of God's actions on behalf of his people, and the recognition of his power by other nations.<sup>3</sup> The tradition in GenR 45:1 further expands upon this idea to say that Pharaoh gave Hagar to Sarah as a reward, that is, as recognition that God acted on her behalf as described in Gen 12:17. This exegesis is based on wordplay of 'Hagar' (הגר) and 'reward' (אגר).<sup>4</sup>

The nationality of Hagar is also an issue in Tg PsJon Gen 16:1 and 16:5.<sup>5</sup> Tg PsJon Gen 16:1 explicitly identifies Hagar as the daughter of Pharaoh, stating: 'and she had an Egyptian maidservant, whose name was Hagar, a daughter of Pharaoh (ברת פרעה)', and goes on to explain that Pharaoh gave Hagar to Sarah as a maid after he took Sarah and was struck by a word from God.<sup>6</sup> Tg PsJon Gen 16:1 suggests that Pharaoh took Sarah as a wife, and links the gift of Hagar to Sarah with Pharaoh's inappropriate actions and the consequences of this as described in Genesis 12.<sup>7</sup> In Tg PsJon Gen 16:5, the tradition is expanded further to identify Hagar, as Pharaoh's daughter, as the descendant of Nimrod, who tested Abraham by throwing him in a furnace of fire.<sup>8</sup> Thus, this tradition places Hagar in the line of those who have tested Abraham, as she herself represented a

<sup>3</sup> Interestingly, PRE 26 notes that Hagar was the daughter of Pharaoh through a concubine.

<sup>4</sup> The tradition in GenR 45:1 continues by recording that Abimelech also followed this example and gave his daughter to Sarah, as it was better for her to be a servant in Abraham and Sarah's house than mistress of another, based on Ps 45:10.

<sup>5</sup> This tradition is not found in Targum Neofiti or Targum Onqelos.

<sup>6</sup> For brief commentary, see M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 62.

<sup>7</sup> Tg PsJon Gen 16:1 gives: בזמן דנסבא (ed. A. Díez Macho, *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensis Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis*, 99). The verb נסב commonly means 'to take in marriage' (M. Jastrow, *Dictionary*, 915). It is not clear from Tg PsJon Gen 16:1 whether sexual relations were involved, but Tg PsJon Gen 12:19 reports that a plague was unleashed against Pharaoh, and so he did not approach Sarah.

<sup>8</sup> The ancestral connection between the testing of Abraham in the furnace and the testing of Abraham by Hagar is also found in Tg Neofiti Gen 16:5. A widely attested rabbinic tradition is the reinterpretation of Gen 11:31 (when Abraham and his family left Ur of the Chaldees) to mean that Abraham was not merely leaving his country, but that he endured the trial of being put into a furnace from which he escaped unharmed. This interpretation is based on wordplay with the Hebrew אור which can either mean 'Ur' or 'flame'; cf. GenR 39:3, Tan *Lekh Lekha* 2, MidrPss 18:25.

test of Abraham's certainty in the divine promises of a child of his own by Sarah.<sup>9</sup>

PRE 26 identifies Hagar as the daughter of Pharaoh, but takes a more positive view of the gift of Hagar to Sarah. A tradition in the name of R. Yehoshua ben Korḥah declares that Pharaoh gave Hagar to Sarah as part of her *ketubbah* because of his great love for Sarah.<sup>10</sup> In this tradition, Pharaoh not only gives Hagar to Sarah, but also all his wealth, whether in money, servants or land, and in particular makes a gift of the land of Goshen.<sup>11</sup> The contract with Pharaoh still stands when Sarah returns to Abraham, even though PRE 26 explicitly records that the marriage was not consummated. The identification of Hagar as Pharaoh's daughter is again based on the wordplay of 'Hagar' (הגר) as 'gift' or 'reward' (אגר), but in PRE 26 it is a gift reflecting the love of Pharaoh for Sarah.

A major issue in rabbinic exegesis of Genesis 12 is the beauty and purity of Sarah, who is described as the perfect wife in the ideal of a marital relationship with Abraham.<sup>12</sup> As part of this, there is an exegetical approach that focuses extensively on what happened to Sarah in Egypt and, in particular, whether or not she had sexual relations with Pharaoh, which would impact on the ideal image of Sarah.<sup>13</sup> Traditions range from the simple assumption that nothing happened between Sarah and Pharaoh,<sup>14</sup> to more detailed explanations of their relationship, such as including the intervention of an angel to prevent consummation of the marriage.<sup>15</sup> However, the different approaches within these sources are based upon resolving the tension between the episode in Egypt and the extensive broader tradition that insists on the purity of Sarah.

Although the motivation for the gift of Hagar by Pharaoh to Sarah varies in these sources, all the traditions identify Hagar as the daughter of

<sup>9</sup> On the theme of testing, see M Abot 5:3, BT Sanh 89b, ARN A 33, PRE 30 and MidrPss 18:25.

<sup>10</sup> It was part of the marriage contract, or *ketubbah*, to assign a settlement to the new wife in the event of divorce or widowhood. See M. Jastrow, *Dictionary*, 680.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Gen 45:10, 46:28–29, 46:34, 47:1, 47:4, 47:6, 47:27, 50:8, Exod 8:22, 9:26, Josh 10:41, 11:16 and 15:51.

<sup>12</sup> On the broader theme of Sarah as a role model, see the overview and sources outlined by J. Baskin, *Midrashic Women*, 151; R. Firestone notes: 'Rabbinic literature recognizes Sarah as the great princess of Israel and provides a biblical proof for her exalted status in the deep meaning of her name' ('Patriarchy, Primogeniture, and Polemic', 113).

<sup>13</sup> E.g. GenR 41:1, 41:2, PT Ket 7:9, PRE 26, Tg PsJon Gen 12:19, Tan *Lekh Lekha* 5, TanB *Lekh Lekha* 8.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. PRE 26, and as is also found in Philo, Abr. 96–98, 1QApGen 20.16–17 and Josephus Ant. I.163–164.

<sup>15</sup> E.g. GenR 41:2, Tan *Lekh Lekha* 5, TanB *Lekh Lekha* 8.

Pharaoh and that Sarah acquired her as a maid during her stay in Egypt. This emphasizes the exalted status of Abraham and Sarah, as a daughter of a king becomes a servant in Abraham's household. However, the motivation for Pharaoh's presentation of Hagar to Sarah varies in the sources from fear of power (as in GenR 45:1) to recompense (as in Tg PsJon Gen 16:1) and more positively, in PRE 26, as love.<sup>16</sup>

### *Ishmael the Plunderer*

The character of Ishmael is first outlined in Gen 16:11–12 in an announcement by an angel to Hagar of the forthcoming birth of her child:

ויאמר לה מלאך י'  
הנך הרה וילדת בן וקראת שמו ישמעאל  
כי שמע י' אל עניך  
והוא יהיה פרא אדם ידו בכל ויד כל בו  
ועל פני כל אחיו ישכון

*And an Angel of the Lord said to her:*

*Behold you will conceive and bear a son, and you will call him Ishmael*

*For the Lord listened to your misery.*

*And he will be a wild ass of a man; his hand will be against all, and the hand of all will be against him;*

*And he will dwell against all his brothers.*

The description of Ishmael as a 'wild ass' of a man in Gen 16:12 is explained in a variety of ways in rabbinic literature, and is often related to the description of the adulthood of Ishmael in Genesis 21. Interpretations frequently focus on his rebelliousness and violent activities.<sup>17</sup> GenR 45:9 is one of the earliest traditions to describe the violent activities of Ishmael:

והוא יהיה פרא אדם ר' יוחנן וריש לקיש ר' יוחנן אמר שהכל גדלים ביישוב והוא גדל במדבר, ריש לקיש אמר פרא אדם וודיי שהכל בוזים ממון והוא בוזו נפשות:  
(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 1, 456)

*And he will be a wild ass of a man* (Gen 16:12). R. Yoḥanan and Resh Laqish were in dispute. R. Yoḥanan said: It means that everyone grows up in civilization, but he would grow up in the wilderness. Resh Laqish said: It means a wild ass of a man in reality, as all others plunder wealth, but he plunders lives.

<sup>16</sup> L.H. Feldman, *Studies in Josephus' Rewritten Bible*, Leiden 1998, 78–80.

<sup>17</sup> E.g. GenR 45:9, 53:15, Tan *Shemot* 1, ExodR 1:1. Ishmael's leadership is in view in Tg Neofiti Gen 16:12, which describes how Ishmael will rule over all, and all shall rule over him. However, Tg PsJon Gen 16:12 understands this verse to mean that Ishmael will take revenge on his enemies, and the hands of his enemies will be stretched out to harm him.

In this tradition, first, ‘wild ass of a man’ is understood to refer to Ishmael growing up in the wilderness. Gen 21:20–21 is most likely in view here, which states that Ishmael grew up in the wilderness of Paran. Secondly, ‘wild ass of a man’ is understood to refer to the wildness of Ishmael as illustrated by his violent activities. In particular, he is said to ‘plunder’ people’s lives, which is a metaphor for murder. The verb בַּז is used here, and so the specific activity of plunder is in view rather than the general hostility suggested by Gen 16:12, which states that ‘*his hand will be against all*’. The criticism of Ishmael continues in the remainder of the interpretation in GenR 45:9, which includes a comparison between Ishmael and a dog based on wordplay of כל בו ‘*all will be against him*’ and כלבו ‘*his dog*’: just as Ishmael’s dog eats carrion, so does he.<sup>18</sup> It is clear that the tradition in GenR 45:9 presents a highly critical view of Ishmael, which may be a reflection of biblical stories on the actions of the Ishmaelites within the history of Israel, such as the buying and selling of Joseph by the Ishmaelites (Gen 37:25–28 and 39:1). It may also represent an attempt to downplay the importance of Ishmael as Abraham’s son in contrast to Isaac as heir of the promise.

The understanding of Ishmael’s violent nature is reiterated in a number of interpretations, often connected to biblical descriptions of his character and his life in the desert. For example, GenR 53:15 notes in interpretation of Gen 21:20 that as Ishmael grew (רבה), so did his cruelty (קשיות) grow with him. This interpretation is based on wordplay with the biblical description of Ishmael as an archer in Gen 21:20: ‘*God was with the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became an archer* (רבה קשת)’.<sup>19</sup> Thus, the skill of Ishmael as an archer is understood as a reference to cruelty and violent activities. Similarly, the thieving or plundering aspects of the activities of Ishmael, which are not explicitly mentioned in the biblical text, are also found in the later Tanḥuma. Tan *Shemot* 1 describes how, as an adult, Ishmael would wait at crossroads to rob passersby based on exegesis of Gen 16:12.<sup>20</sup>

The above interpretations all focus on Ishmael himself as a thief, however, there are a number of traditions that extend this criticism to his

<sup>18</sup> For analysis of the remainder of this passage see the next example under discussion.

<sup>19</sup> For a more positive view of Ishmael, see PT Ber 1:5, which identifies Ishmael as someone who was named before they were born, an action reserved for righteous people, whereas the wicked are strangers from the womb (Ps 58:4). Also, see discussion of the development of this motif in the next example.

<sup>20</sup> This tradition is paralleled in ExodR 1:1.

descendants.<sup>21</sup> The earliest instance where the Ishmaelites as a 'nation' are portrayed as thieves is to be found in the famous midrash on the rejection of Torah by the nations.<sup>22</sup> In Mek *Bahodesh* 5, God offers the Torah first to the sons of Esau, then of Amon and Moab, next the Ishmaelites, and finally Israel who accepts the Torah. When the Ishmaelites are offered the Torah, they quote the commandment: 'You shall not steal' (Deut 5:17), reiterate the prophecy of Gen 16:12: 'And he shall be a wild ass of a man: his hand will be against all', and finally quote Gen 40:15: 'I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews' in reference to the fact that it was Ishmaelites who 'stole' Joseph away to Egypt. In this tradition, the Ishmaelites cannot accept the Torah because they are thieves. This is made even more explicit in Sifre Deut 343 in which the Ishmaelites claim that theft is their very essence and that their forefather was a thief. This point is reiterated throughout the transmission of this tradition. For example, PR 21:2/3 states of the Ishmaelites that they live only by theft and robbery.<sup>23</sup>

The early date of this tradition as found in Mek *Bahodesh* 5 indicates that the 'nations of the world' listed as rejecting the Torah are not alluding to real political entities, at least not at this stage in the process of transmission. Rather, the Ishmaelites are included here as one of the standard biblical enemies of Israel. However, it is possible that the use of this tradition in texts such as PRE 41, which was redacted after the rise of Islam and particularly focuses on the descendants of Esau and Ishmael as the two 'nations' that rejected the Torah, could have been intended to reflect the contemporary political situation at the time of redaction of the text.<sup>24</sup>

Furthermore, Tg PsJ on Gen 21:13 states that the son of the maid-servant is destined to be made into a nation of robbers (לעם ליסטים). M. Maher notes of this passage in the Targum that 'By describing the descendants of Ishmael—that is, the Arabs—as a nation of robbers, Ps.-J. in our present verse betrays an anti-Moslem mentality'.<sup>25</sup> This Targum

<sup>21</sup> For example, the Ishmaelites as a 'nation' are in view in DeutR 4:5, which describes Ishmael as a 'leader of robbers'.

<sup>22</sup> E.g. Mek *Bahodesh* 5, Sifre Deut 343, PR 21:2/3, PRE 41, TanB *Berakhah* 3.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. also BT AZ 2b, PRE Edom in Jewish Eschatological and Apocalyptic Imagery', in: J.P. Monferrer-Sala – A. Urban (eds), *Sacred Text: Explorations in Lexicography*, Frankfurt 2009, 271–299.

<sup>24</sup> In discussion of Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer, C. Bakhos draws a distinction between the approach to Ishmael and the approach to the Ishmaelites, with only the latter being viewed in relation to the rise of Islam (*Ishmael on the border*, esp. 96–115); cf. H. Spurling, 'The Biblical Symbol of Edom in Jewish Eschatological and Apocalyptic Imagery', in: J.P. Monferrer-Sala – A. Urban (eds), *Sacred Text: Explorations in Lexicography*, Frankfurt 2009, 271–299.

<sup>25</sup> M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 75; cf. C.T.R. Hayward, 'Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and Anti-Islamic Polemic', 77–93 and M. Ohana, 'La Polemique judeo-islamique et l'image d'Ishmael dans Targum Pseudo-Jonathan et dans Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer', 367–87.



contains well-documented redactional comments reflecting the rise of Islam.<sup>26</sup> However, in this instance, this interpretation is clearly also in line with the pre-Islamic rabbinic understanding of the thievery of the Ishmaelites.

Overall, the concept of Ishmael as a thief or plunderer is widely transmitted in rabbinic tradition, and is a trait which is passed on to his descendants in some sources. This exegesis is attested in a developed form in halakhic midrashim, which testifies to the antiquity of the idea.

### *Apocalyptic Ishmaelites*

The use of the Ishmaelites as a pseudonym for the Muslim Arabs in later rabbinic sources leads to the topic of the next set of examples: an apocalyptic understanding of the sons of Ishmael. The connection between the descendants of Ishmael and Arab peoples, and subsequently the Muslim Arabs, would have been easy for rabbinic exegetes to make based on the biblical descriptions of Arabia and association of Ishmael with that region.<sup>27</sup> For example, Genesis 25 outlines the genealogy of Ishmael with reference to his twelve sons, including Kedar (Gen 25:13) and Tema (Gen 25:15). Genesis 25 also refers to the descendants of Abraham and Keturah (identified with Hagar in rabbinic tradition as discussed below), including Dedan, the grandson of Keturah (Gen 25:3). These three ancestral figures (Kedar, Tema and Dedan) are then connected with Arabia in the famous oracle given by Isaiah (Isa 21:13–16).<sup>28</sup> Arabia and Kedar are also connected in Ezek 27:21, which links the two as traders with Tyre.

<sup>26</sup> For example, the fact that the Targum was redacted after the rise of Islam is supported by references to Muslim figures. Tg PsJon Gen 21:21 states: 'And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran and took as wife Adisha (אֲדִישָׁא). But he divorced her, and his mother took for him Fatima (פַּטִּימָא) as wife from the land of Egypt'. Indeed, M. Maher notes that 'This mention of the names Adisha and Fatima, the wife and daughter of Mohammad, is often used as proof of the contention that Ps.-J., at least in its final form, cannot be dated earlier than the seventh century' (*Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 76); cf. PRE 30. For an outline of the bibliography on this topic, see Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 11–12.

<sup>27</sup> Such a connection is also made in early Jewish tradition as indicated in Jubilees 20:11–13 and the works of Josephus, Ant. I.213–214; I.220–221; II.210–216. For detailed discussion, see F. Millar, 'Hagar, Ishmael, Josephus and the Origins of Islam', *JJS* 44.1 (1993), 23–45.

<sup>28</sup> This connection is emphasized in Tan *Yitro* 5. In the Isaian oracle, the warriors of Kedar are described as bowmen (cf. Ishmael as an archer in Gen 21:20) and it is Tema's duty to bring water to the thirsty (cf. Ishmael's thirst in Gen 21:15–19).

The apocalyptic context of the Ishmaelites is most clearly highlighted in a number of sections in *Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer*, including chapter 32, which teaches:

ששה נקראו בשמותן עד שלא נולדו ואלו הן יצחק וישמעאל ומשה רבינו ושלמה ויאשיהו וישמו של משיח [...] ישמעאל מנין שנאמר וקראת שמו ישמעאל (בראשית טז יא) ולמה נקרא שמו ישמעאל שעתיד הקב"ה לשמוע בקול נאקת העם ממה שעתידין בני ישמעאל לעשות [[בארץ באחרית הימים]] לפיכך נקרא שמו ישמעאל שנאמר ישמע אל ויענם<sup>29</sup>

(ed. D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer*, 367-369 [183-184])

Six (people) were called by their names before they were born, and these are they: Isaac, Ishmael, Moses our teacher, Solomon, Josiah, and the name of the Messiah. [...] From where do we know about Ishmael? As it is said, *And you will call him Ishmael* (Gen 16:11). Why was his name called Ishmael? Because in the future the Holy One, blessed be He, will listen to the sound of the groaning of the people arising from what the sons of Ishmael will do [[in the land in the last days]]. Therefore was his name called Ishmael, as it is said, *God will hear and afflict them* (Ps 55:20).

PRE 32 contains an eschatological interpretation that Ishmael's descendants will cause despair due to their deeds in the future and, in particular, the 'last days'. The 'last days' or end of time is a common reference to the eschatological messianic era in rabbinic sources and is often discussed in the context of the rise and fall of nations and hope for the restoration of Israel.<sup>30</sup> This topic is introduced in PRE 32 by outlining those six people who were named before they were even created. Ishmael is one of the six, as shown in the prophecy given to Hagar about his birth in Gen 16:11-12. The eschatological interpretation is made through linking the name of Ishmael (understood as 'God will hear') to God 'hearing' the cries of distress from the people oppressed by the descendants of Ishmael in the last days. It is likely that this tradition alludes to the political climate at the time of the rise of Islam and subsequent expansion of Muslim rule, and displays the hopes for the messianic age that this provoked. This interpretation is typical of the type of material included in *Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer*,

<sup>29</sup> The edition of M. Higger reads: ואלו הן יצחק, ואלו הן יצחק, ואלו הן יצחק וישמעאל ומשה ויאשיהו ומלך המשיח, ישמעאל מנין שנ' ויאמר לה מלאך ה' הנך הרה ויולדת בן שמו ישמעאל, ולמה נקרא שמו ישמעאל שעתיד לשמוע הב"ה / הקב"ה / באנקת העם ממה שעתידין בני ישמעאל לעשות בארץ באחרית הימים לפיכך נקרא שמו ישמעאל ('*Pirque Rabbi Eliezer*', *Horeb* 8 (1946), 82-119; 9 (1947), 94-166; 10 (1948), 185-294).

<sup>30</sup> The use of the phrase 'אחרית הימים' is pervasive in eschatological teaching; cf. GenR 48:6, 98:2, 99:5.

which is often noted for its references to Muslim rule and also contains much apocalyptic and eschatological material.<sup>31</sup>

The tradition in PRE 32 represents a version of a much earlier tradition. For example, in Mek Bo 16 only Isaac, Solomon and Josiah are mentioned as being named before birth. This is paralleled in GenR 45:8, but the section ends by noting that some include Ishmael from among the 'nations', based on the announcement to Hagar in Gen 16:11–12. This tradition is paralleled in PT Ber 1:5, but it takes a more positive view by listing the four names (Isaac, Ishmael, Josiah and Solomon) and teaching that the act of naming before birth occurs in the case of those who are righteous.<sup>32</sup> It would seem that PRE 32 reflects a development of the tradition of those who are named before birth, which is elaborated upon in light of an apocalyptic understanding of the political turmoil caused by the rise of Islam and extension of the new Muslim governance.

However, there is evidence of an eschatological interpretation attached to Ishmael before the rise of Islam. A pre-Islamic tradition that discusses Ishmael in an eschatological context is found in GenR 45:9 in interpretation of Gen 16:12.<sup>33</sup> First, the biblical verse '*his hand will be against all, and the hand of all will be against him*' raised the question of when this angelic announcement shall come to pass. This leads to a connection between Ishmael and Nebuchadnezzar based on Dan 2:38: '*in your hands (בִּידֶךָ) he has placed the children of men and the beasts of the field and the birds of the air*'. The connection is based on wordplay of '*in your hands (בִּידֶךָ)*' in Dan 2:38 and '*his hand will be against all (כָּל בְּכַל)*' in Gen 16:12. In turn, this leads to discussion of Ishmael acting against the Temple, as Nebuchadnezzar did, and thus Ishmael obtains punishment

---

<sup>31</sup> For example, in a particularly well known passage, PRE 30 outlines the events of the end of time with reference to the activities of the sons of Ishmael. The text describes the fifteen things that the Ishmaelites will do at the end of days, alluding to events of the seventh and eighth centuries. The allusions and their possible historical basis are discussed, for example, in J.C. Reeves, *Trajectories in Near Eastern Apocalyptic: a Postrabbinic Jewish Apocalypse Reader*, Atlanta 2005, 70–75; A.H. Silver, *A History of Messianic Speculation in Israel from the First through the Seventeenth Centuries*, N.Y. 1927, 40–42; G. Newby, 'Text and Territory: Jewish-Muslim Relations 632–750 CE', in: B. Hary et al. (eds), *Judaism and Islam: Boundaries, Communication and Interaction*, Leiden 2000, 83–96; and H. Spurling, 'The Biblical Symbol of Edom', 293–297.

<sup>32</sup> BT Hül 139b additionally lists Moses, Mordecai, Esther and Haman; cf. the tradition in later texts such as Aggadat Bereshit 65.

<sup>33</sup> Additionally, although reference is not made to Ishmael or the Ishmaelites, GenR 44:23 refers to the Kenites as belonging to Israel in the messianic era. The location of the Kenites is variously discussed as Arabia, the Damascus region and Asia Minor.

in the next world.<sup>34</sup> However, the context of this passage in GenR 45:9 is eschatological rather than the imminent apocalyptic traditions of Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer, which also contain allusion to historical circumstances. As such, there is not a long transmission of specifically apocalyptic traditions regarding Ishmael or his descendants before the rise of Islam.<sup>35</sup>

Thus, PRE 32 is representative of traditions that display a new development in interpretations about the Ishmaelites; they are no longer seen only as traditional biblical enemies of Israel, but as representative of the rise of Islam and Muslim rule. In Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer in particular, this is primarily portrayed in apocalyptic terms, as is often the case with traditions that allude to times of political turmoil and disruption.<sup>36</sup>

### *Ishmael the Rejected*

The story of the rejection and expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael by Abraham is outlined in Genesis 21. This episode raised the question within rabbinic exegesis as to why a righteous person such as Abraham would treat Hagar and Ishmael in this apparently uncharitable way. This led to examination of the biblical accounts of Ishmael's deeds in Genesis 21 for an explanation of Abraham's decision, with particular focus on the activity of Ishmael as described in Gen 21:9:

ותרא שרה את בן הגר המצרית אשר ילדה לאברהם מצחן

*And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing.*

<sup>34</sup> J. Neusner argues that Ishmael can sometimes be understood as a pseudonym for Rome and particularly refers to the tradition in GenR 45:9 (*Judaism and its Social Metaphors*, Cambridge 1989, 141). C. Bakhos disputes this argument in general, but agrees with Neusner in the case of GenR 45:9 that Ishmael here does in fact refer to Rome, although not necessarily Christian Rome (*Ishmael on the Border*, 44). Descriptions of an enemy moving against the Temple bring to mind the Roman destruction of the Temple in 70 CE. However, the typical pseudonyms for Rome are Esau and Edom in rabbinic sources; cf. G. Cohen, 'Esau as Symbol in Early Medieval Thought', in: A. Altmann (ed.), *Jewish Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, Cambridge MA 1967, 19–48. As such, the identification between Ishmael and Rome would not have been immediately recognizable. Furthermore, it is equally plausible that Ishmael is used here as a motif for a standard enemy of Israel, with actions against the Temple a typical symbolic crime for one of Israel's greatest biblical rivals. This is supported by the use of typical rabbinic method leading to the connection of Gen 16:12 and Dan 2:38.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. C. Bakhos, who states: 'Prior to the rise of Islam, Ishmael is not discussed in midrashim with a future orientation, that is, in midrashim that envisage future events in light of a new world order' (*Ishmael on the Border*, 44).

<sup>36</sup> See also apocalyptic texts such as Pirque Mashiaḥ and Nistarot R. Shimon ben Yoḥai; see A. Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrash*, Leipzig 1877, 3:68–78 for Pirque Mashiaḥ and 3:78–84 for Nistarot R. Shimon ben Yoḥai.

The statement in Gen 21:9 that Ishmael was ‘making sport’ or ‘playing’ (מצחק) gave rabbinic exegetes an opportunity to describe the character and actions of Ishmael.<sup>37</sup> The verb צחק pi. means ‘sport’, ‘play’ or ‘toy with’, but is understood through different methods of exegesis to refer to Ishmael’s sexual immorality, idolatry, bloodshed and claims over his inheritance.<sup>38</sup> Traditions based on exegesis of צחק are widely transmitted within rabbinic sources, and one of the earliest attestations is found in T Sot 6:6:

אמר רבי שמעון בן יוחאי ארבעה דברים היה רבי עקיבא דורש ודברי נראין מדבריו. דרש רבי עקיבא וטרא שרה את בן הגר המצרית אשר ילדה לאברהם מצחק, אין צחוק האמור כאן אלא עבודה זרה, שנ' וישב העם לאכול ושתו ויקומו לצחק, מלמד שהיתה אמנו שרה רואה את ישמעאל שהיה בונה במסין, וצד חגיבים, ומעלה ומקטיר לעבדה זרה. רבי אליעזר בנו של ר' יוסי הגלילי אומר אין שחוק האמור כאן אלא גלוי עריות, שנאמר בא אלי העבד העברי וגומר, מלמד שהיתה אמנו שרה רואה את ישמעאל מכבש את הגנות, ומענה את הנשים. רבי ישמעאל אומר אין לשון צחוק אלא שפיכות דמים, שנ' ויאמר אבנר אל יואב יקומו נא הנערים ויצחקו לפנינו ויקומו ויעברו במספר ויחזיקו איש בראש רעהו וחרבו בצד רעהו ויפלו יחדיו, מלמד שהיתה אמנו שרה רואה את ישמעאל נוטל קשת וחצים ומזרק כלפי יצחק, שנ' כמתלהלה היורה זיקים וגומר כן איש רמה וגומר. ואני אומר חס ושלום שיהי בביתו של אותו צדיק שהוא כך, אפשר למי שנאמ' עליו כי ידעתיו למען אשר יצוה וגומר היא בביתו עבודה זרה וגילוי עריות ושפיכות דמים, אלא אין צחוק האמור כאן אלא לענין ירושה, שכשנולד אבינו יצחק לאברהם אבינו היו הכל שמחין, ואומרין נולד בן לאברהם, נולד בן לאברה', נוחל את העולם ונוטל שני חלקים, והיה ישמעאל מצחק בדעתו ואומר, אל תהו שוטים, אל תהו שוטים, אני בכור ואני נוטל שני חלקין, שמתשובת הדבר אתה למד, כי לא יירש בן האמה וגומ'. ורואה אני את דברי מדברי רבי עקיבא.

(ed. S. Lieberman, *Tosefta: Seder Nashim*, 185–187)

R. Shimon ben Yoḥai said: R. Aqiba expounded four matters, but my teachings are better than his teachings. R. Aqiba expounded: *And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing* (Gen 21:9).

<sup>37</sup> See D.J. Zucker, ‘Conflicting Conclusions: The Hatred of Isaac and Ishmael’, 40–42 for a broad outline of rabbinic sources that portray Ishmael negatively. This is not the case in Jubilees 17:4–5, which takes a literal understanding of the verse and implicates Sarah: ‘And Sarah saw Ishmael playing and dancing and Abraham rejoicing very greatly. And she was jealous of Ishmael and she said to Abraham, “Drive out this girl and her son because the son of this girl will not inherit with my son, Isaac”’ (trans. O.S. Wintermute, *OTP* 2, 90). There are also some positive descriptions of Ishmael, such as the tradition that he did not deserve judgement in the wilderness as he had not yet done anything wrong (e.g. GenR 53:14, LamR 2:2:4, ExodR 3:2). In BT Sanh 89b Abraham declares that he loves both of his sons in response to the command to sacrifice Isaac. In PRE 30, Abraham continues to visit Ishmael, and desires that he will be prosperous.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. T Sot 6:6, Sifre Deut 31, Tg Neofiti Gen 21:9, GenR 53:11, PRE 30, Tg PsJon Gen 21: 9–11, 15–17. R. Firestone notes of the exegesis of מצחק that ‘the biblical text also provides the pretext for Ishmael’s downfall—and its significance is so deep and inevitable that it is inexorably tied up with the essence of Ishmael’s and Isaac’s relationship’ (‘Patriarchy, Primogeniture, and Polemic’, 114–115).

The expression 'playing' refers to idolatry, as it is said, *And the people sat down to eat and drink and they arose to play* (Exod 32:6). This teaches that our mother Sarah saw Ishmael building altars, hunting locusts, and offering and sacrificing (them) for idolatry. R. Eliezer b. R. Yose the Galilean says: The expression 'playing' refers to uncovering nakedness, as it is said, *The Hebrew servant came to me*, etc. (Gen 39:17). This teaches that our mother Sarah saw Ishmael storming the gardens and violating the women. R. Ishmael says: The word 'playing' refers to the shedding of blood, as it is said, *And Abner said to Joab, Let the young lads get up and play before us. Then they arose and passed over by number. And each man seized the head of his neighbour and (thrust) his sword in the side of his neighbour, and they fell together* (2 Sam 2:14–16). This teaches that our mother Sarah saw Ishmael taking a bow and arrows and shooting toward Isaac, as it is said, *Like a madman who throws burning arrows*, etc. *Thus is the man who deceives*, etc. (Prov 26:18–19). But I say: God forbid that this should happen in the house of that righteous man! Thus, is it possible concerning whom it was said about him, *For I have chosen him, in order that he may command*, etc. (Gen 18:19) that there should be in his house idolatry, and uncovering of nakedness, and shedding of blood? But the expression 'playing' refers to the subject of inheritance, as, when our father Isaac was born to our father Abraham, everyone rejoiced and said: 'A son is born to Abraham! A son is born to Abraham! He will inherit the world and take two portions'. But Ishmael mused, and said: 'Do not be fools! Do not be fools! I am firstborn and I will take two portions'. As from the reply to the matter you learn, *For the son of (this) handmaid will not inherit*, etc. (Gen 21:10). And I prefer my teachings to the teachings of R. Aqiba.

### *Idolatry*

The first point of interest in this tradition is the question of Ishmael's idolatry. The tradition in T Sot 6:6 teaches that when Sarah saw Ishmael playing (מצחק) that this referred to idolatry. This understanding is achieved by connecting the use of the verb צחק in Gen 21:9 with the meaning of this verb in Exod 32:6: 'and they got up to play (ויקמו לצחק)'. Exod 32:6 is part of the famous episode of the worship of the golden calf by Israel, and specifically refers to the revelry of the Israelites as part of their idolatrous worship. In T Sot 6:6, Ishmael's idolatry is said to take the form of building altars and sacrificing locusts. This interpretation represents a clear attempt to discredit Ishmael and give cause for Abraham's actions.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Also from the Tannaitic period is Sifre Deut 31, which represents a shorter version of the tradition preserved in T Sot 6:6. Sifre Deut 31 records the dispute between Rabbi Aqiba and R. Shimon ben Yoḥai, but only refers to Aqiba's interpretation of the idolatry of Ishmael in contrast to R. Shimon ben Yoḥai's interpretation of quarrelling over inheritance. A parallel form of the tradition is also found in GenR 53:11.

The idea that Ishmael practised idolatry is prominent in the targumic literature. Targum Neofiti and the Fragmentary Targums to Gen 21:9 understand the ‘playing’ of Ishmael to refer to idolatry.<sup>40</sup> This interpretation is also in Tg PsJon Gen 21:9: ‘And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, sporting with an idol and bending down to it (לפולחנא נוכראה וגחין לה)’.<sup>41</sup> The idolatry of Ishmael is further reiterated in this Targum at Gen 21:11 where it is presented as the reason for Abraham being upset with Ishmael and therefore sending him away. Also, Tg PsJon Gen 21:15–16 states that both Hagar and Ishmael reverted to idolatry once they were in the wilderness. This was the cause of Ishmael’s illness, which led to him drinking all the water that they had; it was when Hagar threw away their idol and wept that God intervened. Thus, in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, Ishmael demonstrates idolatrous tendencies both while in Abraham’s house, which led to his expulsion, and also afterwards in the wilderness.

The idea that Hagar and Ishmael practised idolatry is also found in PRE 30 where it is Hagar who is the idolater, a practice that she follows once cast out of Abraham’s house. This tradition also preserves the interpretation that it was because of idolatry that their water dried up in the wilderness and Ishmael nearly died of thirst. However, in PRE 30, Ishmael does not take part in the idolatry and it is his supplications to God that lead to the revelation of the well in Gen 21:19. Thus, Ishmael is presented more positively as someone who renounced the practices of his idolatrous mother, Hagar.

Alternatively, in another version of the tradition, Tan *Shemot* 1 describes the reason for Ishmael’s rejection as due to the fact that when he was fifteen he brought idols into his home to play with and worship, again based on the connection between Gen 21:9 and Exod 32:6. In this tradition, it is Sarah who takes action to get rid of Ishmael because of his idolatry, based on Gen 21:10, as she does not want Isaac to learn from his behaviour. Similarly, ExodR 1:1 describes how Ishmael was practising idolatry, and states that this was the reason Sarah wanted Ishmael to be cast out of her household, and also the reason that Abraham hated him enough to expel

<sup>40</sup> Tg Neofiti Gen 21:9 understands this as doing deeds that were improper: עבד עובדין: די לא כשרין ברה דהגר 21:8. This is further expanded upon as idolatry in Tg Neofiti Gen 21:8: מצריתא די ילדת לאברהם עבד עובדין די לא כשרין היך מגהך בפולחנא נוכריה. A. Díez Macho notes that the end of Tg Neofiti Gen 21:8 belongs to Gen 21:9 (*Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia Series IV. Vol. 1. Genesis*, 132).

<sup>41</sup> A. Díez Macho (ed.), *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis*, 133. For brief commentary, see M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 75.

him.<sup>42</sup> In these versions of the tradition, the emphasis is on Sarah as the instigator of Ishmael's expulsion, perhaps in an attempt to minimize the role of the righteous Abraham.

Overall, there are a number of different approaches to the question of Ishmael's idolatry. The earliest sources either list a number of reasons for the rejection of Ishmael of which idolatry is but one (e.g. T Sot 6:6, GenR 53:11) or focus on idolatry as the sole issue (e.g. Sifre Deut 31, Tg Neofiti Gen 21:9). Traditions preserved in later sources, in terms of redaction, focus on idolatry as the main issue (e.g. PRE 30, Tan *Shemot* 1, ExodR 11). However, there are differences over who took part in the idolatry. The most common approach is that both Hagar and Ishmael were practising idolatry, but PRE 30 absolves Ishmael of this crime, and Hagar's idolatry only takes place after they have been sent away.

### *Bloodshed and Animosity towards Isaac*

A second point of interest raised by rabbinic exegesis of צחק is the accusation against Ishmael of bloodshed, and, in particular, his murderous intent towards Isaac, an attitude that is not explicitly found in the biblical text itself.<sup>43</sup> T Sot 6:6 records an alternative interpretation that when Sarah saw Ishmael playing (מצחק) this refers to bloodshed. This interpretation is based on connecting the use of the verb צחק in Gen 21:9 with a similar verb in 2 Sam 2:14–16: '*let the young lads get up and play (וישחקו) before us*'.<sup>44</sup> 2 Sam 2:14–16 belongs to a chapter describing war between the houses of David and Saul, and so are particularly appropriate proof texts for allusion to fighting between two rivals for inheritance. This exegesis leads to the teaching that Sarah saw Ishmael take a bow and arrow and shoot at Isaac, which is further supported by wordplay with Prov 26:18–19: '*Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death, is the man who deceives his neighbour and says, "I am only joking!" (הלא משחק אני)*'.

Again, the aggressive actions of Ishmael are emphasized as a means of justifying Abraham's ejection of his son in Genesis 21. However, Ishmael's

<sup>42</sup> The other actions of sexual immorality, bloodshed and arguments over inheritance are not mentioned in these versions of the tradition.

<sup>43</sup> D.J. Zucker also makes this point in discussing the conflict between Isaac and Ishmael: 'Despite the commonly perceived notion that there are deep and abiding tensions between the brothers, on the face of it, nothing in the [biblical] text would seem to indicate this conflict' ('Conflicting Conclusions: The Hatred of Isaac and Ishmael', 37).

<sup>44</sup> In 2 Samuel the word used is שחק pi. which means 'play' or, importantly, 'contest' or 'fight'.



violent attitude towards Isaac may also reflect teachings on the nature of the relationship between Israel and rival nations, and on the fulfilment of divine promises about the future of Israel. For example, the tradition in T Sot 6:6 is closely paralleled in GenR 53:11, but further expands that Ishmael enticed Isaac outside, so as to shoot at him, by suggesting that they discuss their inheritance. This form of the tradition reflects a clear concern with the implications of the inheritance claims of Isaac and Ishmael for the future of Israel and the Ishmaelites.<sup>45</sup>

In a version of this tradition in PR 48:2, the focus is on the close relationship between Isaac, as a patriarch of Israel, and God. This tradition describes how God loves the pursued and hates the pursuers with reference to Isaac and Ishmael. Gen 21:9 is again understood to mean that Ishmael shot arrows at Isaac, based on wordplay with *מצחק* in Gen 21:9 and *משחק* in Prov 26:18–19, as in T Sot 6:6. In PR 48:2, however, the tradition is expanded to include a debate between God and Abraham over how Abraham can choose between his sons, but God declares that he loves Isaac because he is pursued by Ishmael.<sup>46</sup>

PRE 30 also describes how Ishmael shot at Isaac with a bow and arrow, with which he was an expert, based on Gen 21:20. This leads to a request by Sarah that a will be written in favour of Isaac, and, furthermore, a request for the divorce of Hagar and the expulsion of the concubine and Ishmael. In this way, in PRE 30, it is Ishmael's violence towards Isaac that leads to his expulsion. Furthermore, Tg PsJon Gen 21:10 refers to future wars between Ishmael and Isaac if Ishmael should inherit along with Isaac.<sup>47</sup> These traditions are preserved in texts redacted after the rise of Islam, and the violent aspect of Ishmael's activity ties in with the apocalyptic motifs discussed above, and the perception of future 'warfare' between the descendants of Isaac and Ishmael.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. GenR 61:7, which outlines the claims of future Ishmaelites to the birthright of Israel. The tradition explains that the Ishmaelites argue for the legitimate claim based on Israelite law, namely, firstborn rights, as highlighted in Deut 21:17, as Ishmael was firstborn.

<sup>46</sup> The tradition preserved in PR 48:2 can be compared to a version found in PRK 9:4 where Isaac is pursued by Philistines not Ishmael: 'Isaac was pursued by Philistines, and God seeks the one pursued' (Eccl 3:15), and they (the Philistines) said, *We have indeed seen that the Lord was with you*, etc. (Gen 26:28); cf. TanB Emor 8.

<sup>47</sup> The hatred of Ishmael for Isaac is also stated explicitly in TanB *Shemot* 24 (cf. Tan *Shemot* 27), which teaches that 'Ishmael hated Isaac' based on Gen 21:9. Furthermore, the word '*playing*' is understood to mean that Ishmael sought to kill Isaac, based on 2 Sam 2:14.

*Firstborn Rights and Inheritance*

The third point of interest raised in T Sot 6:6 is the tradition that ‘*playing*’ (מצחק) means that Ishmael argued with Isaac over his firstborn rights and inheritance. This represents the view of R. Shimon b. Yoḥai in contradistinction to the previous interpretations, which are presented as the teachings passed on by R. Aqiba. In this aspect of the tradition in T Sot 6:6, it states that when Isaac was born, people rejoiced and referred to his future inheritance. Ishmael, however, ‘mused’ (lit. played [מצחק] with his mind) over the idea and as a result refuted claims that he would not gain his rights of inheritance as firstborn son. The result of the dispute is described in Gen 21:10, which explicitly states that Ishmael should not inherit: ‘*For this woman’s son will not inherit with my son Isaac* (Gen 21:10).’<sup>48</sup>

This tradition of dispute over inheritance is a detailed expansion of the biblical text of Gen 21:10 as to why Ishmael was expelled from the home of Abraham; Sarah did not want him to inherit along with Isaac. It should be noted that this dispute over inheritance is presented as a separate point of interpretation to the question of animosity towards Isaac and bloodshed in T Sot 6:6. A connection between Ishmael’s violent actions and his desire to inherit is described in GenR 53:11. The interpretation of R. Azariah in the name of R. Levi is that discussion over inheritance was the means by which Ishmael lured Isaac into the field to try and kill him. GenR 53:11 reflects a clear concern with the inheritance claims of Isaac and Ishmael, and, consequently, their descendants.

The argument over inheritance is not widely transmitted in later rabbinic sources. However, in Tg PsJon Gen 22:1 Isaac and Ishmael quarrel over firstborn rights and who should be heir to Abraham. In this interpretation, they argue over who is more worthy to inherit, with Isaac claiming that he would offer his whole body to God and so is more worthy.<sup>49</sup> This leads God to test Abraham (and therefore Isaac) through the Aqedah.<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>48</sup> This explanation is also attested in a shorter form in Sifre Deut 31 and closely paralleled in GenR 53:11.

<sup>49</sup> On the willingness of Isaac to sacrifice himself, see E. Kessler, *Bound by the Bible*, 41–56.

<sup>50</sup> There are parallels to this tradition, but none give the detail of this text, and they do not refer to the issue of inheritance, but rather focus on the theme of virtue; cf. GenR 55:4, BT Sanh 89b, TanB Wayera 42, Tan Wayera 18; cf. M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 78, and A. Shapira, ‘Traces of an Anti-Moslem Polemic in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan of Parashah “Aqedah”’, *Tarbiz* 54 (1985), 293–296.

Thus, there are a number of different approaches to the question of the reason for the expulsion of Ishmael by Abraham in Genesis 21, but all hold in common that the behaviour of Ishmael was the cause, with reference to dispute over the birthright, immorality, idolatry or Ishmael's violence towards Isaac.

### *Abraham's Lack of Generosity*

Having discussed at length the reasons for the rejection of Ishmael from the point of view of Ishmael's culpability, rabbinic exegetes also considered why Abraham behaved as described in Genesis 21. In particular, there is a concern in rabbinic traditions to explain why Abraham sent away Hagar and Ishmael with only bread and water when his household was prosperous, as this did not seem fitting behaviour for a righteous man. Ishmael's expulsion is described in Gen 21:14:

וישכם אברהם בבקר ויקח לחם וחמת מים ויתן אל הגר שם על שכמה ואת הילד וישלחא

*And Abraham got up early in the morning, and he took bread and a skin of water, and he gave them to Hagar; he put them upon her shoulders, and the lad, and he sent her away.*

The issue of Abraham's generosity is a question addressed in a variety of rabbinic traditions.<sup>51</sup> A number of interpretations discuss the expulsion of Ishmael by portraying Abraham in a positive light, as in GenR 54:2:

אלהים עמך בכל אשר אתה עשה לפי שהיו אומות העולם א' אילו היה צדיק לא היה מוליד, וכיון שהוליד אמרו לו אלהים עמך בכל אשר אתה עשה, ואילו היה צדיק היה שומע לקול אשתו, וכיון שנאמר לו כל אשר תאמר אליך שרה שמע בקולה (בראשית כא יב) אמרו לו אלהים עמך בכל אשר אתה עשה, אילו היה צדיק היה דוחה בנו בכורו, וכיון שראו מעשיו אמרו אלהים עמך וגו' (ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 2, 577)

*God is with you in all that you do* (Gen 21:22). Now the peoples of the world said: 'If he was a righteous man, would he not have begotten children?' So when he begat (a child), they said to him, *God is with you in all that you do*. And: 'if he was a righteous man, he would have listened to his wife'. So when it was said to him, *All that Sarah says to you, listen to her voice* (Gen 21:12), they said to him, *God is with you in all that you do*. 'If he was a righteous man, would he have thrust his firstborn son away?' But when they saw his deeds, they said, *God is with you*, etc.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. GenR 45:6, 53:13, 54:2, DeutR 4:5, PRE 30, Tan *Shemot* 1, ExodR 1:1.

GenR 54:2 addresses the impact of Ishmael's expulsion on Abraham's reputation. The tradition raises the question posed by the 'people of the world' that if Abraham were truly a righteous man would he have behaved in this way towards his son? However, the question is resolved by reference to 'his deeds', which justified Abraham's actions. The Hebrew does not specify whose deeds are under consideration here, but it most likely refers to Ishmael's behaviour. Once it became apparent that Ishmael was poorly behaved, the righteousness of Abraham's actions shone through.<sup>52</sup>

In line with this exegetical approach, in DeutR 4:5 the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael is viewed positively as an example of Abraham paying attention to his wife. Sarah sees the wicked behaviour of Ishmael and so requests that Ishmael and Hagar be cast out. Abraham is grieved, but God intervenes and tells Abraham to listen to his wife. This is based on Gen 16:2, when Abraham paid attention to Sarah on the question of gaining progeny, which set a precedent for him to listen to her on this occasion also. He therefore listened to Sarah and his reward was the continuation of his line through Isaac, as proven by Gen 21:12. In this tradition, God states that the reward of those who listen to Him will be even greater.

There is also a widely attested tradition that the expulsion of Ishmael is one of the ten trials of Abraham, which implies that the act was something difficult for this righteous man to accomplish.<sup>53</sup> The difficulty that Abraham faced in this decision is already highlighted in the biblical text, as Gen 21:11 states that '*the matter was very evil in the eyes of Abraham*'. Indeed, PRE 30 emphasizes this point in saying that despite all of Abraham's trials and misfortunes, the matter of Ishmael 'was exceedingly evil in his eyes'.<sup>54</sup>

There is, however, an exegetical approach that portrays Abraham more negatively, although still with blame focused on Ishmael's behaviour. Tan *Shemot* 1 (paralleled in ExodR 1:1) explicitly states that Abraham despised Ishmael for his wicked deeds and so cast him out. The idolatrous behaviour

<sup>52</sup> Cf. J. Baskin, *Midrashic Women*, 153.

<sup>53</sup> On the ten trials, see, for example, M Abot 5:3, ARN A 34, ARN B 37 and PRE 27; see also n.8–9 above; cf. J.L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 296–326.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Josephus, Ant. I.12.3–4 [215–221], which follows the biblical story quite closely, but expands on Abraham's reaction to the rejection of Ishmael: 'He, however, at first refused to consent to Sarra's scheme, thinking nothing could be more brutal than to send off an infant child with a woman destitute of the necessities of life. But afterwards, seeing that Sarra's behests were sanctioned also by God, he yielded' (trans. H.St.J. Thackeray, 107); see also Jubilees 17:17–18, which refers to the testing of Abraham when he sent Hagar and Ishmael away.

of Ishmael is the root cause of his expulsion. Indeed, Tan *Shemot* 1 teaches that once Ishmael began to go astray after idols, Abraham was no longer concerned about him and was only grieved (as in Gen 21:11), because of the consequences of Ishmael's idolatry which would lead him to murder and robbery. Interestingly, however, the tradition also criticizes Abraham, as it teaches that Ishmael only went astray because Abraham failed to provide the proper discipline.

In another exegetical approach, the status of Hagar as either wife or servant is understood as a determining factor in how Abraham should have treated Hagar.<sup>55</sup> GenR 45:6 excuses the behaviour of Abraham in dealing with Hagar by placing the responsibility for her treatment with Sarah. In this tradition, Abraham places Hagar under Sarah's direction, based on Gen 16:6: '*Behold, your maid is in your hand*'. Abraham's justification for passing responsibility to Sarah is that he cannot break the laws in Deut 21:14 and Exod 21:8 on the treatment of female servants (thus indicating his pre-knowledge of Torah), and, as such, cannot enslave her again once raising her status to that of wife. As such, Sarah was allowed to deal with her. Other traditions are clear on Hagar's status as a servant rather than a wife. GenR 53:13 explains that sending Hagar and Ishmael away with water, as in Gen 21:14, was not a reflection on Abraham's generosity but a way of indicating that they were servants.

Hagar's status is also discussed in PRE 30, which describes how Abraham sent Hagar away with a bill of divorce, thus clearly establishing the marital status of Hagar. The text is explicit in reducing Hagar's status from wife to servant, stating clearly that Sarah is Abraham's wife and Hagar is a maid. The status of servant is further reinforced in this tradition, as Abraham ties a veil around her waist, which is an indication that she was a servant. However, this tradition goes on to emphasize the love Abraham felt for both Ishmael, whom he continued to visit after his expulsion, and Hagar, whom he remarried after Sarah's death.<sup>56</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> On the relationship and relative status of Sarah and Hagar, see J. Baskin, *Midrashic Women*, 151–152.

<sup>56</sup> Hagar's status as a wife is much discussed in rabbinic sources. Hagar is often identified with Keturah, the wife of Abraham, which may represent an attempt to clarify the status of Hagar as a wife (cf. Gen 16:3, which states that she was indeed Abraham's wife), and maximize the importance of Sarah as Abraham's wife, as there was not another chosen after her death; cf. GenR 61:4, BT Yeb 64a, PRE 30, Tg PsJm Gen 21:14 and 25:1, Tan *Ḥayye Sarah* 8, TanB *Ḥayye Sarah* 9, TanB *Toledot* 5, MidrProv 26. See R. Firestone, 'Patriarchy, Primogeniture, and Polemic', 112–113.

Thus, there are a variety of responses to the question of Abraham's generosity: some interpretations focus on the practical nature of Hagar's treatment, which is tied to questions over her status (e.g. GenR 45:6, 53:13, PRE 30); some portray Abraham positively because he paid attention to Sarah's demands, or because he reacted appropriately to Ishmael's bad behaviour (e.g. GenR 54:2, DeutR 4:5); while a tradition found in later redacted sources criticizes Abraham as a father for not educating Ishmael properly (e.g. Tan *Shemot* 1, ExodR 1:1).

### *The Christian Tradition*

The patristic interpretation of the biblical story of Hagar and Ishmael is based to a great extent on Paul's illustration of this episode in the Epistle to the Galatians. In this work, Paul argues against Judaizers in Galatia, and uses Hagar and Sarah in a typological way as representatives for the two covenants.<sup>57</sup> The passage runs as follows:

Galatians 4. 21 Λέγετέ μοι οί υπό νόμον θέλοντες εἶναι· τὸν νόμον οὐκ ἀκούετε; 22 γέγραπται γάρ· ὅτι Ἀβραάμ δύο υἱοὺς ἔσχεν, ἓνα ἐκ τῆς παιδίσκης καὶ ἓνα ἐκ τῆς ἐλευθέρως. 23 ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ἐκ τῆς παιδίσκης κατὰ σάρκα γεγέννηται, ὁ δὲ ἐκ τῆς ἐλευθέρως δι' ἐπαγγελίας. 24 ἅτινά ἐστιν ἀλληγορούμενα. αὐταὶ γάρ εἰσι δύο διαθήκαι, μία μὲν ἀπὸ ὄρους Σινᾶ, εἰς δουλείαν γενώσα, ἣτις ἐστὶν Ἄγαρ· 25 τὸ γὰρ Ἄγαρ Σινᾶ ὄρος ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ Ἀραβίᾳ, συστοιχεῖ δὲ τῇ νῦν Ἰερουσαλήμ, δουλεῖ δὲ μετὰ τῶν τέκνων αὐτῆς· 26 ἡ δὲ ἄνω Ἰερουσαλήμ ἐλευθέρως ἐστίν, ἣτις ἐστὶ μήτηρ πάντων ἡμῶν. 27 γέγραπται γάρ· εὐφράνθητι στείρα ἡ οὐ τίκτουσα, ῥήξον καὶ βόησον ἢ οὐκ ᾠδίνουσα· ὅτι πολλὰ τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐρήμου μᾶλλον ἢ τῆς ἐχούσης τὸν ἄνδρα. 28 ἡμεῖς δὲ, ἀδελφοί, κατὰ Ἰσαὰκ ἐπαγγελίας τέκνα ἐσμὲν. 29 ἀλλ' ὡσπερ τότε ὁ κατὰ σάρκα γεννηθεὶς ἐδίωκε τὸν κατὰ πνεῦμα, οὕτω καὶ νῦν. 30 ἀλλὰ τί λέγει ἡ γραφή; ἔκβαλε τὴν παιδίσκην καὶ τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς· οὐ μὴ γὰρ κληρονομήσει ὁ υἱὸς τῆς παιδίσκης μετὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἐλευθέρως. 31 Ἄρα, ἀδελφοί, οὐκ ἐσμὲν παιδίσκης τέκνα, ἀλλὰ τῆς ἐλευθέρως.

4.<sup>21</sup>Tell me, you who want to be under the law, are you not aware of what the law says? <sup>22</sup>For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and the other by the free woman. <sup>23</sup>His son by the slave woman was born in the ordinary way; but his son by the free woman was born as the result

<sup>57</sup> See G. Sellin, 'Hagar and Sarah: religionsgeschichtliche Hintergründe der Schriftallegorie Gal 4,21–31', in: U. Mell – U.B. Muller (eds), *Das Urchristentum in seiner literarischen Geschichte*, Berlin 1999, 59–84; J.C. O'Neill, 'For this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia (Gal 4:25)', in: S. Moyise – J.L. North (eds), *The Old Testament in the New Testament*, Sheffield 2000, 210–219; T. Löfsted, 'The Allegory of Hagar and Sarah: Gal 4:21–31', *Estudios Biblicos* 58 (2000), 475–494; and P. Borgen, 'Some Hebrew and Pagan Features in Philo's and Paul's Interpretation of Hagar and Ishmael', in: idem – G. Giversen (eds), *New Testament and Hellenistic Judaism*, Aarhus 1997, 151–164.

*of a promise.* <sup>24</sup>*These things may be taken figuratively, for the women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar.* <sup>25</sup>*Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children.* <sup>26</sup>*But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother. And further:* <sup>28</sup>*Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.* <sup>29</sup>*At that time the son born in the ordinary way persecuted the son born by the power of the Spirit. It is the same now.* <sup>30</sup>*But what does the Scripture say? "Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman's son."* <sup>31</sup>*Therefore, brothers, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman.*

The popularity and impact of the Pauline passage on Christian literature is evidenced in its frequent, and often almost literal, quotation in the works of Church Fathers, such as Origen (*Contr.Cels.* IV.44).

Didymus the Blind (*Comm.Gen.* ad Gen 16:1–2 [235–236]) explains Paul's comparison between Sarah and Hagar from an allegorical point of view as types of the two covenants. Didymus proceeds to give a 'mystical' explanation, based on Philo's allegorical interpretation. According to Philo, Sarah represents virtue and philosophy, which live with the wise man in a lawful union.<sup>58</sup> Thus, Sarah symbolizes 'perfect and spiritual virtue'. Didymus further explains that, for Philo, Hagar means the 'προϋμνάσματα' or, according to Paul, 'the shadow' [of the good things to come]. Accordingly, Hagar symbolizes Judaism, 'the era of the shadow', when 'they offered animal sacrifices, celebrated Passover, received physical circumcision' as a preparation for the good things to come. Didymus explains in some length why this preparation is often necessary for the correct reception of 'perfect teaching' and real virtue. Following this line of interpretation, the 'maltreatment' of Hagar by Abraham is explained as a necessary action for the man who pursues real virtue and needs to leave behind the 'preparatory level'.

Similarly, John Chrysostom adopts Paul's typological approach to the story of Isaac and Ishmael, the sons of the 'handmaid and the freewoman' (Gen 15:16; *Hom. ad Gal.* IV.22–23).<sup>59</sup> The true children of Abraham are not those who are born after the flesh, but those who are born after the

---

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Philo, *Congr.* 9f.; on other examples of Philonic influence on the interpretation of Sarah and Hagar in Christian literature, see also Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* I.13; on Didymus' approach to this episode, following Philo, see D.T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature*, 202; cf. A. Van den Hoek, 'Mistress and Servant: An Allegorical Theme in Philo, Clement and Origen', in: L. Lies (ed.), *Origeniana Quarta*, Innsbruck 1995, 344–48.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. John Chrysostom, *Non esse desperandum* 4 (PG 51:368); *Cat. Sin G* 140.

spirit. Accordingly, it is Christians who are the true heirs and sons of Abraham, since they are his children in spirit. Furthermore, the two sons are understood as allegorical representations of the two covenants, while Hagar symbolizes Mount Sinai, that is, the law (Hom. ad Gal. IV.28).

Cyril of Alexandria (Glaphyra III, PG 69:125) describes the story of Sarah and Hagar as a type of the relationship of Judaism to the Church. Accordingly, Hagar, who prefigured the 'Synagogue', was a servant (as there was no free spirit in her). She had to bend her neck and obey the 'free woman' (cf. Gen 16:7–9). Moreover, like Hagar, who was disrespectful to her mistress, so also the synagogue of the Jews despised and persecuted Christians and looked down upon the tenets of the Gospel.

This brief selection of sources demonstrates that the typology of Sarah and Hagar as the church versus the synagogue was commonly used by Christian writers in the context of anti-Jewish polemics.<sup>60</sup>

Another central issue of discussion in patristic exegesis was Abraham's sexual relationship with a concubine. The Church Fathers needed to explain how a role model patriarch, such as Abraham, could have been involved in an extra-marital relationship that produced offspring, while he was lawfully married to Sarah. The moral consequences of such a delicate situation, from the point of view of Christian ethics, were obviously problematic. Monogamy was a principal ideal in the Early Church, and concubinage was not acceptable.<sup>61</sup> Following the biblical text, in which Sarah initiates this intimate relationship between Abraham and Hagar, Christian exegetes underline Sarah's influential role in the story. As stated in Gen 16:1–3:

Σαρα δὲ ἡ γυνὴ Ἀβραμ οὐκ ἔτικτεν αὐτῷ. ἦν δὲ αὐτῇ παιδίσκη Αἰγυπτία, ἧ ὄνομα Ἀγάρ. 2 εἶπεν δὲ Σαρα πρὸς Ἀβραμ Ἴδοὺ συνέκλεισέν με κύριος τοῦ μὴ τίκτειν· εἴσελθε οὖν πρὸς τὴν παιδίσκην μου, ἵνα τεκνοποιήσης ἐξ αὐτῆς. ὑπήκουσεν δὲ Ἀβραμ τῆς φωνῆς Σαρᾶς. 3 καὶ λαβοῦσα Σαρα ἡ γυνὴ Ἀβραμ Ἀγάρ τὴν Αἰγυπτίαν τὴν ἑαυτῆς παιδίσκην—μετὰ δέκα ἔτη τοῦ οἰκῆσαι Ἀβραμ ἐν γῆ Χανααν—καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτὴν Ἀβραμ τῷ ἀνδρὶ αὐτῆς αὐτῷ γυναικί.

<sup>60</sup> On the contrasting typology of church and synagogue, see W. Horbury, 'Church and Synagogue', in: E. Kessler – N. Wenborn (eds), *Dictionary of Jewish-Christian Relations*, Cambridge 2005, 93–94.

<sup>61</sup> See E.A. Clark, *Women in the Early Church*, Wilmington Del. 1983, esp. 55ff, 151ff; on Christian views on concubinage, see G. Clark, *Women in Late Antiquity: Pagan and Christian Lifestyles*, Oxford 1993, 32ff. Significantly, Emperor Constantine issued a law that prohibited concubinage (law 326: de concub. Cod. Just. V.26.1); see D.S. Schaff, 'Concubinage' (Christian), in: *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* III (1911), c.817ff.



*Now Sarah, Abram's wife was not giving birth for him. She, however, had an Egyptian slave-girl, whose name was Hagar. And Sarah said to Abram, 'See the Lord has shut me off from giving birth; so go to my slave-girl in order that you may beget children by her. And Abram listened to the voice of Sara. And after ten years of Abram's living in the land of Chanaan, Sara, Abram's wife, took Hagar, the Egyptian, her own slave-girl, and gave her to her husband Abram as a wife for him. [NETS].*

John Chrysostom interprets Sarah's encouragement that Abraham should have intercourse with her maid as a gesture of affection. Sarah is portrayed as being concerned for Abraham's sake because of the couple's childlessness (Hom.Gen. 38.4). Additionally, John Chrysostom suggests that Sarah suspected that the cause of their childlessness lay not only with her, but maybe also with the patriarch. Thus, Sarah sent the maid to Abraham in order to ascertain whether she was solely to blame for the couple's infertility (Hom.Gen. 38.5). Similarly, Didymus of Alexandria argues that Sarah, who was wise and holy (ὄν σοφὴ καὶ ἁγία ὀδῶσα), sent Hagar to Abraham with the sole intention that Abraham father a child with the maid (Comm. Gen. ad Gen 16:1–2 [235]; cf. Procopius, Comm.Gen., PG 87:35of.).<sup>62</sup> Didymus maintains that holy people get married for the sake of children and not for pleasure. This fact explains Sarah's decision to urge Abraham to produce children with her slave, Hagar. Accordingly, the duty of procreation is presented as the purpose of any lawful marriage. Furthermore, Procopius of Gaza maintains that Sarah acted according to the laws of marriage, which command procreation (Comm.Gen., PG 87:35if.). In this context, Sarah uses Hagar as a surrogate mother for Abraham and Sarah's 'common gain' because she and Abraham 'were one flesh'.

Nonetheless, it appears that this approach, which stressed Sarah's responsibility in introducing a concubine to Abraham and even praised her for this 'selfless' decision, was not accepted without question. The Church Fathers directed a major part of their exegesis to the explanation of Hagar's role in Abraham's life and her significance for biblical history. Theodoret of Cyrrhus offers a literal explanation to counter 'those' who accuse Abraham of lasciviousness because he took a concubine (Quaest. LXVIII; cf. Ishodad of Merv, Comm.Gen. ad Gen 16:2). Theodoret reveals that Abraham's behaviour was indeed a sensitive topic among Christians. He argues that:

---

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Diodore of Tarsus, Cat. Sin G 43; cf. Philo, Quaest.Gen. III.20–21.

Neither nature nor any law promulgated at that time forbade polygamy, and his wife was barren and importuned her husband to have intercourse with the servant girl, not so that he would become a slave to lust, but so that they could be called parents, he naturally and she by adoption. Moreover, what happens next confirms that the holy man was proof against dishonourable pleasure. As you recall, when Hagar conceived, she made her pregnancy a ground for boasting and behaved insolently towards her mistress Sarah, who became upset and unjustly complained against the patriarch. But he took her unreasonable behaviour very patiently and handed the servant girl over to her for punishment without even waiting for the birth of the child in her womb (ibid.).

Finally, the actual protagonists of the story are Hagar and Sarah, who are viewed in a stereotypical antithetical way. In this context, Hagar is portrayed as impertinent, arrogant and ungrateful. In a gross misjudgement of her actual situation and position in Abraham's household, the foreign slave girl causes Sarah's well-justified anger (see Ishodad of Merv, *Comm. Gen. ad Gen 16:2*). Ephraem notes that after Hagar conceived, she 'thought that it would be her seed that would enter and possess the Promised Land'. Ultimately, Sarah came to realize that Hagar had become a rival wife. Moreover, Sarah complained that Hagar made her a 'bitter reproach in the eyes of all her fellow servants' (*Comm. Gen. XIII*). So, Hagar took the good that Sarah did on her behalf and rendered it evil. Obviously, Ephraem thought that Hagar was honoured to be chosen to become Abraham's concubine.<sup>63</sup>

According to the Christian exegetes, Hagar deserved her repeated expulsion due to her bad character. The biblical text, however, is not particularly explicit about the causes of Sarah's anger in the first instance. The patristic approach focuses the interpretation of the episode on the dynamic of master-servant, emphasizing Sarah's superiority and Hagar's inferiority as a matter of fact.<sup>64</sup>

---

<sup>63</sup> See C. Osiek, 'Female Slaves, *Porneia* and the Limits of Obedience', in: D.L. Balch – C. Osiek (eds), *Early Christian Families in Context: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue*, Grand Rapids 2003, 255–274, who underlines the vulnerability of slaves to sexual abuse. As she remarks, however, the manumission of female slaves because of sexual relations with their masters was not uncommon in antiquity (op. cit., 261). Hence, Hagar's alleged misperception with regard to her position in Abraham's household may well have corresponded to typical social practices of the time.

<sup>64</sup> Ishodad of Merv remarks that the angel appeared to Hagar, in spite of her being a slave girl, because her son was the prefiguration of the Old Testament and of the people

*Hagar: A Gift from Pharaoh*

A certain stream of thought in Christian literature traces Hagar's Egyptian origin in the time period of Abraham and Sarah's sojourn in Egypt (Genesis 12).<sup>65</sup> This exegetical approach is explained on the basis of LXX Gen 12:14–16:

14. ἐγένετο δὲ ἡνίκα εἰσῆλθεν Ἀβραμ εἰς Αἴγυπτον, ἰδόντες οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι τὴν γυναῖκα ὅτι καλὴ ἦν σφόδρα, 15. καὶ εἶδον αὐτὴν οἱ ἄρχοντες Φαραω καὶ ἐπῆνεσαν αὐτὴν πρὸς Φαραω καὶ εἰσήγαγον αὐτὴν εἰς τὸν οἶκον Φαραω· 16. καὶ τῷ Ἀβραμ εὖ ἐχρήσαντο δι' αὐτὴν, καὶ ἐγένοντο αὐτῷ πρόβατα καὶ μόσχοι καὶ ὄνοι, παῖδες καὶ παιδίσκαι, ἡμίονοι καὶ κάμηλοι.

*And it came about when Abraham entered into Egypt as the Egyptians saw the woman that she was very beautiful—that then the rulers of Pharaoh saw her and praised her to Pharaoh and brought her into Pharaoh's house. And for her sake they dealt well with Abram and he had sheep and calves and donkeys, male and female slaves, mules and camels [NETS].*

Against this background, John Chrysostom mentions that 'she was one of the things handed over by Pharaoh'. He explains that the biblical text refers explicitly to her nationality in order to clarify her exact origin (Hom.Gen. 38.3).<sup>66</sup>

The tradition is also known in the *Cave of Treasures*: 'And when Abraham was eighty-six years old Ishmael was born to him by Hâghâr, the Egyptian. Hâghâr was given by Pharaoh to Sârâ as a handmaiden' (XXVIII.14–15). Similarly, Ishodad of Merv notes that it is probable that it was when Sarah entered Pharaoh's household that Hagar, the Egyptian handmaid, was given to Sarah (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 12:15).

Furthermore, Ephraem the Syrian presumes that Pharaoh married Sarah (Comm.Gen. XIII.1). In the biblical narrative, Pharaoh, who thought that Sarah was Abram's sister, questions him when he realizes the true relationship of Abram and Sarah: Gen 12:19 'ἵνα τί εἶπας ὅτι Ἀδελφή μου ἐστίν;

---

that would receive it. Furthermore, the angel calls her 'servant of Sarah', reproaching her for her arrogance towards her mistress. On perceptions of slavery in a Jewish and early Christian context, see C. Hezser, *Jewish Slavery in Antiquity*, Oxford 2005; J.A. Glancey, *Slavery in Early Christianity*, Oxford 2002; P. Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery from Aristotle to Augustine*, Cambridge 1999<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>65</sup> See M. Görg, 'Hagar, die Ägypterin', *BN* 33 (1986), 17–20; J.M. Duguid, 'Hagar the Egyptian: A Note on the Allure of Egypt in the Abraham Cycle', *Westminster Theological Journal* 56 (1994), 419–421.

<sup>66</sup> 'Διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο προσέθηκεν, ὅτι Αἰγυπτία, ἵνα ἐπὶ τὴν ἱστορίαν ἀναδράμωμεν ἐκείνην· καὶ ὅτι ἐκ τῶν παρὰ τοῦ Φαραῶ παρασχεθέντων αὐτῇ ἦν' (PG 54:351).

καὶ ἔλαβον αὐτὴν ἑμαυτῶ εἰς γυναῖκα'. 'Why did you say 'She is my sister'? And I took her to myself for a wife' [NETS].

Ephraem thus suggests that Hagar was a bridal gift from Pharaoh to Sarah, when he took her as a wife (Comm.Gen. XIII.1). Apparently, Ephraem assumed that Pharaoh, following the old Semitic custom, gave his future wife gifts as part of the marriage procedure.<sup>67</sup> However, the biblical text does not state explicitly that a wedding ceremony took place. The biblical narrative also does not indicate that the gifts that Abraham received were actually bridal gifts.

The nature of the relationship between Sarah and Pharaoh remains uncertain. Theodoret of Cyrrhus remarks: 'some commentators have claimed that Pharaoh had relations with Sarah' (Quaest. LXIII). Theodoret categorically denies this assumption and stresses that God prevented Sarah's defilement by Pharaoh by inflicting Pharaoh with serious diseases (Gen 12:17). According to Theodoret's graphic description: 'though the prey was in his (Pharaoh's) toils, the hunter, prevented by the ailment, could not enjoy his catch' (ibid.).

Following a similar line of interpretation, John Chrysostom highlights Sarah's unsurpassed chastity: 'A woman dazzling in her beauty is closeted with an Egyptian partner, who is king and tyrant, of such frenzy and incontinent disposition, and yet she leaves his presence untouched, with her peerless chastity intact' (Hom.Gen. 32.22; cf. Hom.Gen. 32.17).<sup>68</sup>

Finally, Ephraem is ambiguous on the subject of Sarah's physical relationship with Pharaoh. On the one side, he states that 'she was taken to the palace, so that she might learn that it was she who was barren', adding that 'Pharaoh forced her to become his wife, although she was unwilling' (Comm.Gen. IX.3). On the other side, he claims that while Sarah was in Egypt, 'she did not exchange her husband for a king', thus implicitly defending her marital fidelity (Comm.Gen. IX.9).<sup>69</sup>

<sup>67</sup> This approach reflects the biblical custom of the *mohar* (dowry), traditionally offered by the groom to the bride; cf. Gen 29:18–21,27; Deut 22:28–29; see M.L. Satlow, *Jewish Marriage in Antiquity*, 199ff.; cf. L.M. Epstein, *The Jewish Marriage Contract: A Study of the Women in Jewish Law*, N.Y. 1927, 53ff.

<sup>68</sup> Sarah remains intact also according to Eusebius of Emesa (Cat. Sin G 2); Jerome, Hebr. Quest. 12:15–16; (Pseudo-) Nilus of Ancyra, *Peristeria seu tractatus de virtutibus excellentis et vitiis fugendis* XI.6 (PG 79:912); and Ishodad of Merv (ad Gen 12:15).

<sup>69</sup> However, Sarah's chastity in Egypt is explicitly stressed in other works of Ephraem (Hymn.Virg. 1.9; 22.16–17). See also the pseudepigraphical poem edited by S.P. Brock – S. Hopkins, 'A Verse Homily on Abraham and Sarah in Egypt: Syriac Original with Arabic Translation', *Le Muséon* 105 (1992), 87–146; cf. S.P. Brock, 'Creating Women's Voices: Sarah and Tamar in Some Syriac Narrative Poems', in: E. Grypeou – H. Spurling,

Interestingly, Church Fathers, such as Eusebius of Emesa, address the provocative question of why Pharaoh offered presents to Abraham if he did not have intercourse with Sarah, and, additionally, why Scripture does not state explicitly that Pharaoh did not have intercourse with Sarah.<sup>70</sup> As is explained, Scripture sometimes simply passes over certain points, while sometimes it repeats others.

Thus, Christian writers discuss at length the circumstances that led Sarah to obtain Hagar, stressing at the same time Sarah's chastity, beauty and superior character. Finally, in contrast to the biblical text, most commentators argue that Hagar was given to Sarah personally—not to Abraham. This approach reflects most probably an effort at harmonization of Gen 12:16 and Gen 15:1, which refers to Hagar as Sarah's maidservant. Hagar as Sarah's personal maid would also explain Sarah's command over her.

### *Ishmael's Animosity*

According to Gen 21:8, Abraham organized a feast when Isaac was old enough to be weaned (LXX Gen 21:8 'Καὶ ηὐξήθη τὸ παιδίον καὶ ἀπεγαλακτίσθη, καὶ ἐποίησεν Ἀβραὰμ δοχὴν μεγάλην, ἣ ἡμέρα ἀπεγαλακτίσθη Ἰσαὰκ ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ'). C. Westermann notes in his Genesis Commentary that the weaning feast is a practice unique to this passage. It should have taken place when Isaac was three years old.<sup>71</sup> Ishmael must have been considerably older then, 16 or 17 years old.<sup>72</sup>

---

*The Exegetical Encounter*, 125–141, esp. 127–129; and A. Caquot, 'Une homélie éthiopienne attribuée à saint Mari Ephrem sur le séjour d'Abraham et Sara en Égypte', in: *Mélanges Antoine Guillaumont*, Geneva 1998, 173–185.

<sup>70</sup> See Cat. Petit 902 attributed to Eusebius of Emesa (cf. ed. Devreesse, 67; ed. Hovhannessian, 56–57, 218–226); cf. Procopius, *Comm.Gen.*, (PG 87:329); cf. also John Chrysostom, *Hom.Gen.* 32:18, who implies that there was a clear motive behind Pharaoh's gifts.

<sup>71</sup> C. Westermann, *Genesis*, 155. In antiquity, the age of weaning was normally at two or, more commonly, three years; see 2 Macc 7:27; cf. R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: its Life and Institutions*, Grand Rapids MI 1997, 43; J. Blenkinsopp, 'Family in First Temple Israel', in: L.G. Perdue et al. (eds), *Families in Ancient Israel*, Louisville KY 1997, 68. This practice is reflected in the seventh century Christian pseudepigraphon known as the *Gospel of pseudo-Matthew (Liber de Nativitate Mariae)*, where concerning Mary, the mother of Jesus, it mentions: 'when three years were expired and the time of her weaning was complete' (Ch. 4); see H.J. Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels: an Introduction*, London 2003, 78ff.

<sup>72</sup> Abraham was 86 years old when Ishmael was born (Gen 16:16) and 100 years old when Isaac was born (Gen 21:5). Therefore, according to the biblical evidence, Ishmael was over 14 years old when Isaac was born. Diodore of Tarsus remarks that Ishmael was 15 years old when he was expelled, and discusses the practical difficulty of a 15 year old being carried on the shoulders of a woman. Finally, after offering a variant reading of the biblical text, which suggests that actually he was not carried, Diodore adds that at that

In this context, Ephraem the Syrian writes of a great feast in celebration of both Isaac's weaning and his circumcision (Comm.Gen. XVIII.1). However, the biblical text makes a clear chronological distinction between the two events. Most Church Fathers follow the biblical text (Gen 21:4), and affirm that Isaac was circumcised when he was eight days old (Gen 21:4).<sup>73</sup>

During this feast, Sarah resents Ishmael's behaviour. More precisely, according to the Septuagint text, Sarah notices Ishmael '*playing* with Isaac, her son' (LXX Gen 21:9 ἴδουσα δὲ Σαρρα τὸν υἱὸν Ἀγαρ τῆς Αἰγυπτίας, ὃς ἐγένετο τῷ Ἀβρααμ, παίζοντα μετὰ Ἰσαακ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτῆς'), whereupon she asks Abraham to send the maid and her son away.

Ishmael's behaviour is explained in Christian literature in a number of ways. John Chrysostom stresses that Sarah could not tolerate Ishmael's 'brashness'. In addition, Sarah could not accept that the maidservant's son would be reared together with Isaac, and that he may even make inheritance claims after she and Abraham had died (Hom.Gen. 46.2). Accordingly, Sarah's demand is justified, while Ishmael is portrayed as a bully (cf. John Chrysostom, Hom. ad Gal. IV.28).

According to Diodore of Tarsus:

Ἔτισι δὲ ἔδοξε πονηρὸν ὄντα τὸν Ἰσμαῆλ κρίσει θεοῦ ἀποβεβλήσθαι, διὰ γοῦν τοῦτο μηδὲν εἰληφέναι παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς. Καὶ μάρτυς ὁ Παῦλος λέγων· Ἄλλ' ὥσπερ τότε ὁ κατὰ σάρκα ἐδίωκε τὸν κατὰ πνεῦμα. Ὡσπερ καὶ ἡ Σάρρα οὐχ ἀπλῶς θεασάμενη τὸν Ἰσμαῆλ παίζοντα μετὰ τοῦ Ἰσαάκ ἐκινήθη, εἰ καὶ τὸ ἀπλούστερον λέγει αὐτὸ Μωσῆς. Οὕτω καὶ ὁ Ἀβεννήρ τῷ Ἰωάβ ἀντιπαρετάξαντο, ὁ μὲν ὑπὲρ τοῦ υἱοῦ Σαοῦλ ὁ δὲ τοῦ Δαυῖδ· Παιζάτωσαν, φησὶν, τὰ παιδία ἐμπροσθεν ἡμῶν (2Sam 2:14), ἀντι τοῦ "μαχεσάσθωσαν". Οὕτω τὸ παίζειν καὶ ἐπὶ μάχης λαμβάνει ἡ θεία γραφή, ὡς καὶ τὸ ἐμπαίζειν τὸ βίαια συγκαθευδήσαι' (Cat. Csl 201)

Some believe that Ishmael was ejected, because he was evil in God's judgment and that is the reason why he did not receive anything from the father.

---

time children of 15 years old were still babies, since the age of marriage was 40 or 50 years old (Cat. Csl 201). Ishodad of Merv suggests that Ishmael was 12 years old when Isaac was born, and 14 years old when he was ejected (ad Gen 21:14). Philo of Alexandria argues that Ishmael was 20 years old at the time, but he is called a child (παιδίον) due to his mental immaturity (Sobr. 9).

<sup>73</sup> See John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 39.18; cf. a Catena fragment which reports that Isaac was circumcised on the eighth day, like the Jews, while Ishmael was circumcised when he was 13 years old, as is the custom of the Ishmaelites, who, according to Josephus, follow Ishmael's example: "Ἐν πρώτοις ὁ Ἰσαάκ τῇ ὀγδόῃ περιτέμνεται ἡμέρα· ὅθεν καὶ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι. Ὁ δὲ Ἰσμαῆλ δεκατριῶν ἐτῶν ὑπάρχων· διὰ τοῦτο καὶ οἱ ἐξ αὐτοῦ Ἰσμαῆλιται οὕτω περιτέμνονται, ὡς Ἰωσηπὸς φησιν" (Cat. Petit 1201 (anon.); cf. Procopius, Comm.Gen., PG 87:384; cf. Josephus, Ant. I.214).

This is witnessed by Paul who says: 'at the time the one, who was after the flesh persecuted the one of the spirit' (cf. Gal. 4:29). Therefore, Sarah did not take action, because she saw Ishmael just playing with Isaac, as Moses says in a simpler way (for the sake of simplicity). In the same way, Abenner and Joab arranged a confrontation, the one for the sons of Saul and the other for David (between the sons of Saul and David respectively). 'Let the boys sport/play in front of us' it says, instead of 'let them fight' (2 Samuel 2:14). Accordingly, Scripture understands 'playing' also as a 'fight', similarly 'playing with' (mocking) can be associated with violence.<sup>74</sup>

Diodore observes that Ishmael himself was responsible for his rejection due to his bad character. This is proven by his violent behaviour towards Isaac, and is elucidated by Paul. Diodore, who bases his interpretation on the LXX, explains that this behaviour caused Sarah's understandable indignation, although Scripture does not expand on the details of the episode for the sake of simplicity. To prove his point, Diodore quotes LXX 2 Sam 2:14 where the word 'play/sport' (παίζειν) is used with an unmistakably aggressive meaning. Consequently, Ishmael was not harmlessly playing with Isaac, but attacking him. Similarly, an anonymous Catena fragment understands the word 'playing' as a metaphorical expression for 'hitting'.<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, on the same biblical basis of 2 Sam 2:14 and Gal 4:29, Acacius of Caesarea ascribes the ambiguous use of the word in the (Greek) Bible to the *Hebrew* language, in which the same word means both 'play' and 'fight' (Cat. Csl 200).

In the same exegetical context, another unidentified Catena fragment (Cat. Petit 1210 ad Gen 21:9) adds that Ishmael's evil and cunning character, 'as some people think' (τισίν ἔδοξε πονηρὸν ὄντα τὸν Ἰσμαήλ), was the reason why he was cast out from Abraham's household and was deprived of inheritance, and this was according to God's judgement.

This exegetical approach combines Paul's allegorical interpretation of Ishmael's behaviour with a philological explanation of the word 'playing' in the Septuagint in order to demonstrate that Ishmael was actually hitting Isaac. This particular interpretation seems to have originated in the Antiochene school of exegesis in the fourth century, and served as

<sup>74</sup> Cf. similar interpretations in unidentified Catena fragment, Cat. Petit 1210; Eusebius of Emesa, Cat. Sin G 147 and Eusebius of Emesa, ed. Hovhannessian, 66, 522–527; cf. also Ishodad of Merv, ad Gen 21:9.

<sup>75</sup> Cat Petit 1206: Ad Gen 21,9–10: 'Τὸν παίζοντα περιεσταλμένως εἶπεν ἡ γραφή. Ἐν γὰρ τῷ παίζειν Ἰσμαήλ ἔτυπτε τὸν Ἰσαάκ· ὠργισθῆ δὲ ἡ Σάρρα θεασάμενην, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τῷ Ἀβραάμ φησιν· Ἐκβαλε τὴν παιδίσκη, καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς'; cf. Eusebius of Emesa, in: Hovhannessian, 66–67, 525–529; cf. Procopius, Comm.Gen., PG 87:384 (Latin).

a plausible explanation for Sarah's angry reaction and Ishmael's final expulsion.

Another popular patristic explanation simply adopts the Pauline approach and analyzes the episode in a christological frame of interpretation. Accordingly, the 'persecution' refers to the persecution of the people of faith (that is the people of Christ), who are the children of the free woman persecuted by the children of the servant, as explained by Paul in Gal 4:29.<sup>76</sup>

The Peshitta text of Gen 21:9 refers to Ishmael 'laughing' (ܠܫܝܚܘܬܐ). Ephraem the Syrian describes Ishmael's behaviour using exactly the same word, but he applies a clearly negative meaning to it, as 'laughing at' or 'snickering'. Sarah, having watched this annoying conduct, realized that Ishmael resembled Hagar in his bad manners. As Hagar despised Sarah, so Ishmael snickered at Isaac. According to Ephraem, Sarah thought: 'If he acts thus to my son while I am still alive, perhaps [Abraham] will make him coheir with my son when I die and even give him two parts according to [the laws of] the firstborn' (Comm.Gen. XVIII.1). Ephraem draws a parallel between Hagar, the slave girl, and her son on the one side, and Sarah and Isaac on the other. Obviously, the negative description of Hagar and Ishmael's characters provides a moral justification for Sarah's harsh treatment of Hagar and Ishmael. Still, Ephraem has to admit that Sarah also acted out of envy. He claims that Sarah, who was not envious on her own behalf, was envious as regards her son: 'Since it was a matter of God's promise, and the son of the concubine thought that he would be coheir with the son of the freewoman' (ibid.). In the Hymns on Nativity, Ephraem interprets Isaac as a type of Christ, who bore the animosity of Ishmael in silence. According to Ephraem, Ishmael 'the son of Hagar was wild and kicked at Isaac' (Hymn.Nat. 13.17; cf. 8.13). In all likelihood, this phrase is based on the Peshitta text of Gen 16:12, which calls Ishmael 'a wild ass' (ܠܫܝܚܘܬܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ).<sup>77</sup> Evidently, Ephraem understands this biblical expression in a metaphorical way.

Jerome suggests that Sarah became upset with Ishmael, because he was 'playing' with idols, or because he wanted to challenge Isaac's firstborn rights:

*And Sara saw the son of Agar the Egyptian woman, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing. In the Hebrew it does not have what follows: with Isaac*

<sup>76</sup> Cyril Alex., Glaphyra III.10 (PG 69:136); cf. Cat. Petit 1207; 1208.

<sup>77</sup> On this see below footnote 92.



*her son.* So this verse is explained by the Hebrews in two ways, either to mean that he made a game of idols, in line with what is written elsewhere: *the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play*; or to mean that he arrogated to himself by means of a jest and a game the rights of the first-born in opposition to Isaac, on the grounds that he was elder. Indeed, when Sarah heard this, she would not tolerate it; and this is proved by her own words when she says: *Cast out this handmaiden with her son. For the son of the handmaid shall not be heir with my son Isaac.* (Hebr. Quest. 21:9)

Jerome starts his comment on the biblical verse by pointing to the textual diversity between the LXX and the Hebrew text. Furthermore, following the interpretation of the 'Hebrews', Jerome explains that the reference to Ishmael 'playing' means that he was 'playing with idols'. As he remarks, this interpretation is linked to the notorious idolatrous scene described in Exod 32:6. In addition, another interpretation outlined by Jerome is that Ishmael 'playfully' insisted on his rights over Isaac as a firstborn son, although he was only the son of a handmaiden. Of course, Isaac had to be considered the firstborn son, as he was the only legitimate son of Abraham. Ishmael's unacceptable behaviour caused Sarah's 'justified' anger.

The association of Ishmael with idolatrous activities was also related to contemporary perceptions of his 'descendants' in Christian literature. In an almost passing reference, Aphrahat remarks that the 'sons of Ishmael', albeit circumcised, were idolaters (Dem. XI.5.10).

The Christian exegetical tradition, based on alternative interpretations of the word 'playing' justifies Sarah's reaction and shifts the blame to Ishmael for his expulsion into the wilderness. According to a major stream of thought in Christian exegesis, Sarah, when she asks Abraham to cast out Hagar and 'her' son, acts out of consideration for her son's inheritance, which was promised by God.<sup>78</sup> The Church Fathers explain that Abraham is reluctant, because 'he made no distinction between his sons', but he knew that he had to obey Sarah (see Ephraem, Comm.Gen. XVIII.2; John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 46.2–3). Sarah is thus presented as an agent of God's plans, which Abraham is unable to fully grasp without her guidance. Abraham, the biological father of Ishmael, is presented as weak in a very human and sympathetic way. This interpretation of the main figures of the story helps the Church Fathers to outline their main line of interpretation, namely, an approach that excuses human flaws, such as weakness or even harshness, on account of a higher divine plan. In this

---

<sup>78</sup> See R. Syrén, *The Forsaken First-born: A Study of a Recurrent Motif in the Patriarchal Narratives*, Sheffield 1993, esp. 15–65.

context, Abraham and Sarah can still be perceived as the model patriarch and model matriarch in a Christian ethical context.

### *Hagar's Expulsion*

The Church Fathers follow the same exegetical approach as above in order to explain the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael by Abraham into the desert with only bread and water. As Eusebius of Emesa in the early fourth century CE argues:

But was the just Abraham inhumane in that he did not even supply Hagar and the boy with a donkey, with all the cattle he possessed? Some say it was a gesture of kindness, so that she would not have to look after the donkey; others say that he did this believing that God would protect the boy. But why does he throw her out in the first place? Was it not that he wished to have peace with his wife? And indeed he really did not want to send her away at all, for it is written that the thing appeared extremely harsh to Abraham. So he would not have done what he did except for the fact that God said to him, let not this matter trouble you, etc. (Cat. Petit 1216, trans. Ancient Christian Commentary on Genesis, 97; cf. Ishodad of Merv, Comm.Gen. ad Gen. 21:14)

John Chrysostom understands Abraham's decision as a gesture of conjugal love towards Sarah. He stresses that Abraham felt remorse for sending his son away, and in particular at that tender age, but that he did not feel sorry for Hagar (Hom.Eph. XX).<sup>79</sup> Theodoret of Cyrrhus suggests that Abraham sent the mother and the child away only after God explicitly urged him to do so, and not when Sarah asked him (cf. Gen 21:9–13). Moreover, the fact that he gave them just a flask of water proves Abraham's trust in God's promise (Queast. LXXIII). Another interpretation suggests that Abraham listened to Sarah, and expelled Ishmael and Hagar from his household because they were 'evil' (ὡς πονηροῦς; Eusebius of Emesa, Cat. Petit 214; Procopius, Comm.Gen., PG 87:385f.). According to Christian tradition, this biblical episode emphasizes the importance of faith in God. Furthermore, details of the story are underlined that justify and even exonerate Abraham for sending Ishmael to the desert.

Finally, Jerome reports a 'Hebrew' tradition, according to which Hagar is identical with Abraham's second wife, Keturah (Gen 25:1):

---

<sup>79</sup> On the attitude toward Hagar in patristic literature, see J.L. Thompson, *Writing the Wrongs: Women of the Old Testament among Biblical Commentators from Philo through the Reformation*, Oxford 2001, 17ff.

In the Hebrew language *Cetura* means 'joined' or 'bound'. For this reason the Hebrews suppose that the same woman is Agar with her name changed, who, when Sara was dead, transferred from being concubine to wife. And the age of Abraham, who was already enfeebled, appears to be exempted from blame, lest the old man be charged with having been wanton in new marriages after the death of his aged wife. (Hebr. Quest. 25:16)

This tradition identifies Abraham's second wife, *Keturah* (Genesis 25), with Hagar, and appears to be an attempt to restore Hagar's position in Abraham's house. Furthermore, it presupposes that Hagar was not really expelled from Abraham's household, but that she remained his concubine. In addition, Jerome implies that this tradition intends to rehabilitate Abraham's reputation against evil gossip about him as a 'wanton old man'. However, this well intentioned tradition was not particularly popular. Jerome, probably our only Christian source for this tradition, refers to it as a mere 'supposition' of the Hebrews.

### *Ishmael and the Apocalyptic Understanding of the Muslim Arabs*

Ishmael and his descendants were soon linked with the wilderness of the desert from a geographical as well as from a cultural perspective. Israel Eph'al notes that, in the biblical narrative, Ishmael is associated throughout with the desert regions around Palestine and Egypt.<sup>80</sup> Ishmael's marginalization is further underlined through the choice of an Egyptian wife, a choice that, notably, is made by his mother (Gen 21:1).

The LXX uses the word 'agroikos' for Ishmael, when the angel prophesies to Hagar about her son's future (Gen 16:12: οὗτος ἔσται ἄγροικος ἄνθρωπος).<sup>81</sup> 'ἄγροικος' means the 'dweller of the open country', or 'rustic', but it also means someone who is 'boorish', or 'rude'. Accordingly, Ishmael

<sup>80</sup> Hagar, while pregnant with Ishmael, flees to the desert 'beside the road to Shur' (Gen 16:7); furthermore, when expelled from Abraham's household, Hagar and the child Ishmael flee to the desert of Beersheba (Gen 21:14). Grown-up Ishmael dwells in the desert of Paran, and his descendants live in the same area of Havilah to Shur (25:13); see I. Eph'al, *The Ancient Arabs: Nomads on the Border of the Fertile Crescent, 9th-5th cent.*, Jerusalem 1982, 234.

<sup>81</sup> Aquila gives 'ἄγριος' instead of 'ἄγροικος', which means 'wild, savage, fierce'; Symmachus gives 'ἕρημος ἄνθρωπος', that is, 'a solitary man' (a man of the desert/wilderness); and Theodotus gives 'κεχωρισμένος ἀνθρώπων', 'separated from people'; see Field, *Hexapla*, 33. The interpreters stress the connection with the 'wilderness', but focus even more on Ishmael's 'unsettled' nature. Nevertheless, the appellation 'wild ass' has not been preserved in any Greek translation.

is identified with an 'uncivilized' desert-dweller.<sup>82</sup> The biblical reference to Ishmael as 'boorish' may have featured in the background to certain Christian interpretations of Ishmael's troublesome character as a child.

Ishmael and his descendants thus serve as a prototype for desert nomads in contrast to settled people. From the fourth century onwards, the Christian literature identifies the descendants of Ishmael, the 'sons of Ishmael' with the so-called Saracens, the nomadic Arab tribes of the desert.<sup>83</sup> As found in Jerome, 'Instead of *boorish man* stands written in the Hebrew *phara*, which means 'wild ass'. Now it means that his descendants would dwell in the desert, and refers to the Saracens who wander with no fixed abode invade all the nations who border on the desert; and they are attacked by all' (Hebr. Quest. 16:12).<sup>84</sup>

In this way, the Saracens were integrated into the biblical history as the descendants of Abraham's illegitimate son. Eusebius of Caesarea repeats this information, which he claims that he found in the work of the Greek writer Apollonius Molon from the first century BCE (Praep. Ev. IX.19). According to this report, Abraham had taken two wives, Sarah and the Egyptian handmaiden. Further, Eusebius argues that Abraham had twelve sons with the Egyptian woman. These sons went to Arabia and divided the land among them. There they established twelve kingdoms that, he reports, exist even today, and their kings bear the same names as the first. The twelve sons must refer to Abraham's grandsons and Ishmael's sons, as in Gen 25:14. As I. Shahid argues, 'Eusebius derives from the Old

---

<sup>82</sup> On an allegorical interpretation of Ishmael as a 'rustic', 'uneducated man' living outside God's 'heavenly city', see Didymus Alex., Comm. Gen. ad loc. [246].

<sup>83</sup> 'Saracens' was a generic term of uncertain etymology, commonly used in Christian literature to describe nomadic populations mainly in the region of Arabia (see EI, vol. VII (1993<sup>2</sup>), 155ff.). The patristic traditions on the identification of the Ishmaelites with the Saracens of the desert go back, most probably, to Josephus, who explicitly identifies the Ishmaelites as Arabs (Ant. I.214). The identification of the Arabs with the Ishmaelites can also be found in Jubilees 20:13. Accordingly, this view was known already in the first century CE; cf. C. Bakhos, *Ishmael on the Border*, 74.

<sup>84</sup> C.T.R. Hayward notes that 'Jerome attempts to reproduce the sound of the Hebrew *pere*' in Vg with *ferus*, 'wild, savage', following Aquila's translation as *agrius*, 'wild', especially used of wild animals. He refers elsewhere to the descendants of Ishmael as Saracens, and describes some of their customs and beliefs. Their lack of fixed dwellings, and their raids on settled peoples, often feature in these descriptions: see, for example, 25:13–18; *In Esa.* 5:21: 13–17, 17:60:6–7; *In Hier.* I.21,2.84; *In Hiez.* 8.25:1–7; *In Gal.* 2.4:25–6; *Eps.* 123.13,129.4. He says they may be found in the region of Jerusalem, and some of his information tallies quite remarkably with details of Ishmael's descendants found in PJ and other targums' (*Hebrew Questions*, 162f., n.3). On shared points between Jerome and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan on the description of the 'Saracens', see C.T.R. Hayward, 'Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and Anti-Islamic Polemic', 77–93.

Testament the view that the Ishmaelites are descended from Hagar, the handmaid and thus, are outcasts, outside the promises'.<sup>85</sup>

Similarly, Epiphanius of Salamis identifies Ishmael and his twelve sons with the ancestors of the tribes known as Hagarenes or Ishmaelites, who are called Saracens in his time and practise circumcision (Pan. 4.1.6–7).<sup>86</sup>

Generally, the negative portrayal of Ishmael ultimately refers to his status as an illegitimate son, the son of the foreign slave girl, which places him outside commonly accepted social norms and even outside the 'civilized' world. LXX Gen 16:12 stresses that Ishmael would live 'facing his brothers' (καὶ κατὰ πρόσωπον πάντων τῶν ἀδελφῶν αὐτοῦ κατοικήσει), that is, opposite to them. The biblical text further confirms the hostility between Ishmael and his brothers (αἱ χεῖρες αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ πάντας, καὶ αἱ χεῖρες πάντων ἐπ' αὐτόν, *ibid.*).

The Syriac *Cave of Treasures* contains the enigmatic information that 'Ishmael made a mill of the hands (i.e. a handmill) in the desert, a mill of slavery (i.e. a mill to be worked by, slaves)' (XXXI.10–11). The image of the Ishmaelites as slave traders, however, may allude to Gen 37:25–28, where Joseph is sold as a slave to a caravan of Ishmaelites passing by. The identification of the Ishmaelites with the desert, and their fundamental antithesis to the 'civilized' world is stressed in this context as well.

Ishodad of Merv in his Genesis Commentary exemplifies this negative view of Ishmael. He explains that the designation 'wild ass' reminds of the sojourn in the desert, remoteness in relation to inhabited lands, and differences in life conduct. The angel's words that Ishmael's hands will be 'against all' indicate either the commercial activity common amongst those people who 'live beyond the frontiers' (i.e. the Ishmaelites), or their involvement in plundering activity. (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 16:12).

As observed, the 'sons of Ishmael' were stereotypically portrayed as fearsome and hostile. This negative perception is later projected onto the Muslim Arabs, who are also called 'the sons of Ishmael' or the 'sons of

<sup>85</sup> *Rome and the Arabs: a Prolegomenon to the Study of Byzantium and the Arabs*, Washington D.C. 1984, 104.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Historia Religiosa* 26; according to Sozomenus (*Historia Ecclesiastica* VI.38), they adopted the name 'Saracens' in order to conceal their illegitimate descent from the slave Hagar. Due to their common ancestry from Abraham, they share several customs and rites with the Jews. On the 'Ishmaelites' in the works of the Church Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries, see the masterful study of I. Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth Century*, Washington D.C. 1989, 167ff; cf. further J. Retsö, *The Arabs in Antiquity*, London-N.Y. 2003, 505ff.

Hagar' (Hagarenes),<sup>87</sup> terms which become interchangeable in Christian literature.<sup>88</sup>

The massive Islamic conquests of the Eastern Provinces of Byzantium in the seventh century were understood by the Christian population as a sign of the coming end of the world, as documented in the literature that emerged in that period. The Armenian History by Sebeos, written c.660 CE, associates the Muslim Arabs with the fourth and most horrible beast in the prophecy of Daniel, which will appear in the South and 'will consume the whole world'.<sup>89</sup> In a short Syriac apocalyptic text from the mid-seventh century, entitled 'A Sermon of the Holy Lord Ephraem on the End and Completion, the Judgment and Exaction, on Gog and Magog and on the False Messiah', the 'Ishmaelites' are perceived to be the forerunners of the Antichrist.<sup>90</sup>

The Syriac Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius, which was written around the end of the seventh century in North Mesopotamia, was one of the most influential and popular Christian apocalyptic texts in medieval times. This text understands the biblical Ishmael and his descendants to be the foraying Muslims in an explicitly apocalyptic context:<sup>91</sup>

In this last millennium, namely the seventh, in which the kingdom of the Persians will be uprooted, and in which the sons of Ishmael will come out from the desert of Yathrib, all of them will come together to Geb'ūt Râmṭā

---

<sup>87</sup> Indeed, Muhammad was promptly recognized as 'a man from the sons of Ishmael'; see, for example, the mid-seventh century sources such as The Armenian History attributed to Sebeos, ch. 30 and The Chronicle of Khuzistan, 33.47, in: T. Nöldeke (ed.), 'Die von Guidi herausgegebene syrische Chronik', *Sitzungsberichte der philosophisch-historischen Classe der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 28 (1893), 1–47.

<sup>88</sup> See also S.H. Griffith, who notes: 'These terms had long been used by Christian writers from the early Christian period onward to refer somewhat fearfully to the Bedouin Arab tribesmen of the desert; in Islamic times they were transferred to Muslims' (*The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque*, Princeton NJ 2008, 24, n.6). On these names for the Muslims in the Syriac literature, see S.P. Brock, 'Syriac Views on Emergent Islam', in: G.H.A. Juynboll (ed.), *Studies on the First Century of Islamic History*, Carbondale IL 1982, 15.

<sup>89</sup> See *The Armenian History attributed to Sebeos*, trans. with notes by R.W. Thomson, Liverpool 1999, ch. 32; cf. ch. 34, where according to another prophecy: 'They are as a storm which comes moving from the south, from the terrible desert' (cf. Isa 28:15,18).

<sup>90</sup> See E. Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Sermones III*, Louvain 1972, 60–71; cf. H. Suermann, *Die geschichtstheologische Reaktion auf die einfallenden Muslime in der edesischen Apokalypik des 7. Jhs*, Frankfurt a.M. 1985, 12–33. For an overview of further apocalyptic associations between the early Muslims and 'the sons of Ishmael', see R. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It*, Princeton NJ 1997, 257ff.

<sup>91</sup> See G.J. Reinink (trans.), *Die syrische Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius*, Louvain 1993; A. Palmer et al., *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles: including two seventh-century Syriac apocalyptic texts*, Liverpool 1993, 222ff.; P.J. Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, Berkeley – L.A. CA 1985, 13ff.

(Pesh. Judg 7:1). And there the word of Our Lord will be fulfilled, which says that they are 'like the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens, and He will summon them: 'Assemble and come, because I am providing a great slaughter for you today; eat the flesh of the fatling and drink the blood of the warriors' (cf. Pesh. Ezek 39:17–18). For in Geb'ūt, the fatlings from the kingdom of the Greeks will be destroyed. They had destroyed the kingdom of the Hebrews and the kingdom of the Persians, and so they too will be destroyed in Geb'ūt by Ishmael, the wild ass of the desert, who will be sent with fierce anger against the whole earth: men, wild animals, domestic animals, and even tree and plants. It is to be a chastisement in which there will be no mercy. (Ch. XI)<sup>92</sup>

The apocalyptic dimension of the Muslims as Ishmael's descendants becomes a common motif in later Christian literature. In the early eighth century, John of Damascus places his description of Islam (which he refers to as the 'Heresy of the Ishmaelites') into a biblical context and argues that "There is also the still prevailing deceptive superstition of the Ishmaelites, the fore-runner of the Antichrist. It takes its origin from Ishmael, who was born to Abraham from Hagar, and that is why they are called Hagarenes and Ishmaelites. They also call them Saracens, allegedly for having been sent away by Sarah empty; for Hagar said to the angel: "Sarah has sent me away empty" ' (De Haeresibus 101, PG 94:764; trans. Sahas, 133).<sup>93</sup>

Thus, it can be observed how an exegetical approach develops into a cultural and historical category, which is used in considerably later historical periods in order to interpret contemporary phenomena. In this way, the use of exegesis serves to conceptualize history in a biblical frame of interpretation.

<sup>92</sup> Trans. Rev. Fr. Javier Martinez, 'Eastern Christian Apocalyptic in the Early Muslim Period: Pseudo-Methodius and Pseudo-Athanasius' (unpublished Ph.D. diss. Catholic University of America, Washington D.C. 1985), 139–140. G. Reinink, 'Ismael, der Wildesel in der Wüste. Zur Typologie der Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius', *ByzZ* 75 (1982), 336–344, esp. 342–344 has demonstrated convincingly that the typology in Pseudo-Methodius 'Ishmaelites—Midianites—Arabs' is based on Gen 16:12, and, more precisely, on a particular interpretation of this verse. As he shows, the typology that Pseudo-Methodius applies in order to describe Ishmael cannot be explained on account of the text of the Septuagint, but through the Peshitta: 'wo das Hebräische pr' 'dm 'Wildeselmensch', in 'erd dbnyns', 'Wildesel der Menschen' übersetzt wurde' (op. cit., 343). The remark that God had called Ishmael an ὄναγρον—onager (i.e. 'wild ass') can also be found in the Greek and Latin versions of the text (ὑπὸ τοῦ σπέρματος Ἰσμαήλ, ὃς ἐπικέκληται ὄναγρος; A semine Ismahelis qui appellatus est onager; see, ed. Lolos, 108 and ed. Sackur, 85, respectively).

<sup>93</sup> ἔστι δὲ καὶ ἡ μέχρι τοῦ νῦν κρατούσα λαοπλάνου σκεία τῶν Ἰσμηλιτῶν, πρόδρομος οὖσα τοῦ Ἀντιχρίστου. Κατάγεται δὲ Ἰσμαήλ, τοῦ ἐκ τῆς Ἀγάρ τεχθέντος τῷ Ἀβραάμ διόπερ Ἀγαρηνοὶ καὶ Ἰσμηλιταὶ προσαγορεῦνται. Σαρακηνοὺς δὲ αὐτοὺς καλοῦσιν, ὡς ἐκ τῆς Σάρρας κενούς, διὰ τὸ εἰρήσθαι ὑπὸ τῆς Ἀγάρ τῷ ἀγγέλῳ· Σάρρα κενὴν μὲ ἀπέλυσεν'. See also the discussion in D. Sahas, *John of Damascus on Islam: The 'Heresy of the Ishmaelites'*, Leiden 1972, 70f.

*The Exegetical Encounter*

The analysis of possible encounters in this chapter focuses on exegetical motifs regarding Hagar's ancestry and relationship to Abraham, Ishmael's character and activities, as well as those of his descendants, and, finally, Abraham's treatment of Hagar and Ishmael.

GenR 45:1 states that Hagar was a daughter to Pharaoh, whom he gave to Sarah as a maid during the matriarch's stay in Egypt, in accordance with Gen 12:16. The noble ancestry of Hagar highlights the exalted status of Abraham and Sarah, as even their servants come from royal lineage. Based on wordplay with Hagar's name, GenR 45:1 contains the argument that she is presented to Sarah as a 'reward'. The motif of Hagar as a daughter of Pharaoh is also current in Tg PsJon Gen 16:1 and PRE 26.

In Christian exegetical tradition, Hagar's Egyptian origin is also explained on the basis of Genesis 12, when Abraham and Sarah fled to Egypt due to the famine in Canaan. In addition, the specific tradition that she was one of Pharaoh's gifts (cf. Gen 12:16) was known among Christian exegetes (John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 38.3; *Cave of Treasures* XXVIII.14–15; Ishodad of Merv, ad loc.).

Hagar is also mentioned as a gift from Pharaoh to Sarah in an ancient Jewish source, the Genesis Apocryphon (1QApGen 20.31–32). This exegetical approach connected Hagar's Egyptian origin with the gifts that Abraham received from Pharaoh, especially as the biblical narrative included maidservants among those gifts. This interpretation could have been a logical answer to the question of Hagar's provenance for both Jewish and Christian exegetes.

However, the rabbinic and Christian sources that attest to this tradition, as outlined above, stress that she was given by Pharaoh to Sarah, and not to Abraham. The change of masters may have been intended as a 'correction' of Gen 12:16, since Hagar is repeatedly referred to as Sarah's maid in the following chapters (cf. Genesis 16). This tradition is attested in rabbinic literature, but also in Christian texts of a Syriac/Aramaic background. As emphasized above, the understanding of Hagar as a 'gift' from Pharaoh goes back to wordplay between her name and the Hebrew word for 'reward', 'gift' (*'gr*). This wordplay cannot function in Greek, but it would have made sense in Syriac/Aramaic, which has a word of the same root (*'gr*) with the meaning of 'reward'. It thus demonstrates the importance of linguistic affinity for the dissemination and adaptation of exegetical motifs. In addition, the presence of this tradition in the Genesis Apocryphon indicates that it was a Jewish interpretation that circulated



in earlier times, and so rabbinic and Christian sources may have adopted this particular motif by means of alternative well known traditions. Thus, the motif of Hagar as a gift from Pharaoh presents an interesting case of an indirect encounter based on the etymology of Hagar's name. Furthermore, the specific explanation that Hagar was Pharaoh's daughter is found in rabbinic literature, but not Christian sources, which suggests that the Christian writers were not directly influenced by rabbinic traditions on this precise point.

There are rabbinic traditions and writings of Church Fathers that discuss quite extensively the nature of Pharaoh's relationship with Sarah in order to defend Sarah's chastity and honour. Obviously, the idea that Sarah committed adultery was an uncomfortable one for both religious traditions (see GenR 41:2; John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 32.21; Theodoret of Cyrrhus, Quaest. LXIII; et al.). Significantly, certain rabbinic traditions (e.g. GenR 41:2; PRE 26) and most patristic sources (e.g. John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 32.22; Jerome, Hebr. Quest. 12:15–16) defend Sarah's chastity and conjugal loyalty. This approach has its basis in the biblical text, which states that when Pharaoh took Sarah into his house he was inflicted by God with grave diseases (Gen 12:17). As such, rabbinic and Christian exegetes maintain that, according to divine plan and intervention, Sarah remained inviolate. Accordingly, rabbinic interpretations (e.g. GenR 41:2; Tan *Lekh Lekha* 5) and Christian traditions (Theodoret of Cyrrhus, Quaest. LXIII) understood Pharaoh's afflictions not as divine punishment for his unlawful actions but as divine preventative measures. This exegetical approach was an established Jewish interpretation, as evidenced by a number of older sources (Philo, Abr. 96–98; 1QApGen 20.16–17; and Josephus, Ant. 1.163–164). Thus, it presents a case of an indirect exegetical encounter based on a shared understanding of the relations between Pharaoh and Sarah.

However, this issue remained ambiguous. PRE 26 states (also implied in Tg PsJon Gen 12:19) that Pharaoh took Sarah in marriage. Thus, Pharaoh's gift to Sarah is explained against the background of this illicit relationship. Discussions encountered in patristic sources indicate that there was some controversy over the true nature of the relationship between Pharaoh and Sarah in Christian exegesis (see Cat. Sin G2; Procopius, Comm.Gen., PG 87:326). Interestingly, a fragment attributed to Eusebius of Emesa, and also preserved by Procopius, seems to be familiar with an exegetical tradition questioning the nature of relations between Pharaoh and Sarah. Furthermore, the approach preserved in the mentioned fragment

categorically denies 'claims' which suggest that Pharaoh's gifts to Abraham were due to Pharaoh's consummated relations with Sarah. Interestingly, PRE 26 also denies any sexual relations between the two, but sees the gifts as part of Sarah's *ketubbah*. The association between Pharaoh's gifts to Abraham (or Sarah) and Pharaoh's relations with Sarah cannot be considered a straightforward conclusion from the biblical text, which does not elaborate on the nature of Pharaoh's relationship with Sarah. Thus, both Christian and rabbinic traditions share a common exegetical approach to the nature of Abraham's gifts from Pharaoh. Furthermore, they also attest to the longevity of this idea. Accordingly, this motif presents a case of an exegetical encounter.

The next point of discussion is the portrayal of Ishmael in rabbinic and Christian exegesis. According to Gen 21:8, at Isaac's weaning feast, Sarah observed that Ishmael was 'playing', whereupon she asked her husband to send the handmaid and her son away, so that her son would not inherit with the son of the handmaid. Indirectly, Sarah admits that Ishmael may have been entitled to inheritance claims. However, the fact that the enigmatic biblical phrase did not explain exactly what caused Sarah's misgivings stirred various exegetical responses.

The 'playful' activity of Ishmael is interpreted variously in rabbinic traditions as sexual immorality, bloodshed, dispute over inheritance and idolatry. Two of these points are particularly relevant to the exegetical encounter. First, the word 'playing' is understood as a reference to Ishmael arguing with Isaac over firstborn rights and inheritance (e.g. T Sot 6:6 and GenR 53:11). This exegetical approach is an expansion of Gen 21:10, where Ishmael is expelled from Abraham's household because Sarah does not want him to inherit along with her son. Secondly, a number of traditions link Ishmael (and his mother) with idolatry, and conclude that Ishmael and Hagar were expelled from Abraham's household for this reason, as idolatry would not have been tolerated in Abraham's house (e.g. T Sot 6:6; Sifre Deut 31; GenR 53:11). The idea that Hagar was idolatrous seems to be a natural conclusion on account of her foreign origin. An alternative exegetical approach exonerates Ishmael from the charge of practising idolatry, which is attributed solely to his mother (PRE 30). However, most rabbinic traditions focus on the idolatrous activities of Ishmael as one of the main if not even the sole reason for Ishmael's rejection. Later traditions reiterate this motif and stress Sarah's role as instigator of Ishmael's expulsion (e.g. Tg PsJom Gen 21:9; Tan *Shemot* 1; ExodR 1:1). Furthermore, a rabbinic tradition is widely transmitted whereby the issue of Ishmael's

idolatry is explained in connection with Exod 32:6, which uses the same verb for 'play' as in Gen 21:9, with reference to the worship of the golden calf (e.g. T Sot 6:6; GenR 53:11; Tan *Shemot* 1).

Interestingly, Jerome, in his work 'Hebrew Questions', explains that the 'Hebrews' understand that Ishmael made a game of idols with reference to Exod 32:6, or also that, as in a game, he presumptuously claimed his inheritance rights as firstborn, because he was older. As noted, although it reflects the concerns raised by Sarah in the biblical text, the meaning of the word 'playing' in terms of inheritance claims is specifically attested in rabbinic literature (e.g. T Sot 6:6; GenR 53:11). The use of the same biblical verse (Exod 32:6) as a scriptural proof text for this precise interpretation emphasizes Jerome's exact knowledge of rabbinic traditions and specifically of traditions that can be found in sources of an early date of redaction. Thus, Jerome presents in a summarized form the two above-mentioned explanations as the reasons for Ishmael's rejection. Apparently, Jerome was aware of a cluster of rabbinic exegetical traditions, which are preserved in a very similar form in T Sot 6:6 and GenR 53:11, namely, Ishmael's 'playing' as idolatry, his claims over the birthright and his expulsion due to these reasons. In addition, he quotes his 'Hebrew' sources explicitly. The awareness of rabbinic exegesis in the work of Jerome is strong evidence of explicit encounter over readings of Genesis 21.

The issue of inheritance, which would have been a logical conclusion from the biblical text, is also mentioned by Ephraem the Syrian. In Ephraem's Genesis commentary (XVIII.1), Sarah, concerned about the future of her son, worries that Ishmael will be considered as the firstborn by Abraham, and will then inherit double in accordance with the law. The tradition preserved in T Sot 6:6 presents a similar argument to Ephraem, and reports that Ishmael claimed two portions of inheritance (of the world), which actually belonged to Isaac. Both approaches have in view the Mosaic Law, according to which a firstborn male child is entitled to a double share of his father's inheritance (Deut 21:15–17). This shared indirect reference by Ephraem and rabbinic tradition obviously derives from general knowledge of biblical inheritance laws and does not constitute a strong case of an exegetical encounter.

A range of rabbinic and Christian traditions stress Ishmael's bad character (e.g. T Sot 6:6; GenR 45:9; GenR 53:15; GenR 53:11; John Chrysostom, Hom. ad Gal IV.28; Hom.Gen. 46.2; et al.). Despite the variety of approaches that explain the evil character and intentions of Ishmael, these sources agree that Ishmael was ultimately responsible for his expulsion from Abraham's household. Thus, the reason for Ishmael's expulsion was his evil

character, which justly excluded him from his inheritance and justified Abraham's actions and Sarah's outrage. This perception and description of Ishmael's character is not found in Genesis 21, although may be derived from the prophecy regarding Ishmael in Gen 16:11–12, and, as such, presents a case of shared approach between rabbinic and Christian sources.

Although the biblical text (Gen 16:4–8) indicates a conflict between Sarah and Hagar, it does not explicitly mention a conflict between Ishmael and Isaac, besides the somewhat cryptic reference to Ishmael's tense relations with 'all his brothers' (Gen 16:12). However, a variety of traditions in rabbinic literature suggest that the term 'playing' (Gen 21:9) refers to bloodshed and more precisely to Ishmael's murderous intent towards Isaac. The image of Ishmael as pursuing and/or trying to murder Isaac is a common motif throughout midrashic literature and perhaps reflects the historic relationship of biblical Israel to rival nations (e.g. T Sot 6:6; PRK 9:4; PR 48:2; PRE 30; TanB *Shemot* 24). In particular, Ishmael's animosity towards Isaac is linked with 2 Sam 2:14–16, in which a fighting scene between young men is described as 'play' (e.g. T Sot 6:6; GenR 53:11). 2 Sam 2:14–16 refers to the conflicts of two rivals for inheritance, which would have been an appropriate frame of reference for the rivalry between Isaac and Ishmael as described in the rabbinic traditions. Moreover, certain rabbinic traditions also describe how Ishmael was shooting arrows at Isaac (e.g. T Sot 6:6; GenR 53:11). This understanding is based on Gen 21:20, which states that Ishmael became an archer. Rabbinic traditions preserved in later texts expand upon Ishmael's aggression towards Isaac (e.g. PRE 30; Tg PsJon Gen 21:10,13).

There are two prominent exegetical approaches to Genesis 21 in rabbinic traditions of relevance to the encounter. One approach focuses on Ishmael's evil behaviour without his actions directed against a particular person, and another approach outlines the ways in which Ishmael behaved badly towards Isaac. As noted above, the LXX adds that Ishmael was 'playing with Isaac, her [Sarah's] son', but the MT and Peshitta simply state that Ishmael was 'playing/laughing'. It is evident that the LXX specifies that Ishmael was doing something *to/with Isaac* specifically rather than to any other character in the story. The verb 'playing'/'laughing' without a direct or indirect object would support interpretations connected with activities such as idolatry, and would disassociate Isaac as the object of Ishmael's aggression from the episode. As such, rabbinic interpretations focusing on intent towards Isaac may presuppose a familiarity with a textual variation, similar to the wording of the LXX text. However, rabbinic tradition here may equally be based on the typical rabbinic method of connecting verses

based on similar verbs, and, in particular, the link between Gen 21:9 and 2 Sam 2:14 mentioned above. 2 Sam 2:14–16 describes young men fighting each other on the side of David and Saul respectively. As such, connecting these verses naturally leads to the interpretation that *two* rival parties were involved in the ‘playing’ of Gen 21:9.

General reference to Ishmael’s ‘play’ in an innocent way is reflected in early Jewish sources, such as Jubilees 17:4–5. The book of Jubilees describes Ishmael ‘playing and dancing and Abraham rejoicing very greatly’. Josephus (Ant. XII) implies that Ishmael may have presented a possible future threat because he was older and could harm Isaac accidentally. Accordingly, the motif of Ishmael’s evil intentions, and even violent deeds, is not explicitly attested in early Jewish sources.

The earliest Christian source that broaches the issue of Ishmael’s violence against Isaac is Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians. As Paul states in Gal 4:29, ‘*the son born in the ordinary way persecuted (ἔδιωκεν) the son born by the power of the Spirit*’. Paul’s exegetical illustrations are based on the LXX.<sup>94</sup> The Epistle to the Galatians is considered to be one of the genuine works of the Apostle Paul. It addresses issues that were stirred by Judaizers in the community with regard to the observance of the Mosaic Law, and is dated between 50 and 60 CE.<sup>95</sup> It is widely assumed that Paul’s interpretation of the relationship between the two half-brothers is influenced by rabbinic traditions. As T. Löfstedt suggests, ‘When Paul writes that Ishmael persecuted Isaac, he is relying on a tradition preserved in the targums of Gen 21.9’.<sup>96</sup> Indeed, Paul’s understanding of Ishmael as persecuting Isaac may have been inspired by traditions popular in his first century Jewish environment about Ishmael’s animosity towards Isaac. However, Paul’s specific illustration of the relationship between Ishmael and Isaac does

---

<sup>94</sup> See A. Deissman, who calls Paul a ‘Septuagint-Jew’, see idem, *Paulus*, Tübingen 1925<sup>2</sup>, 69; deviations from the Septuagint text in the Pauline corpus are commonly attributed to the use of early recensions of the LXX, see F. Wilk, ‘The Letters of Paul as Witnesses to and for the Septuagint Text’, in: W. Kraus – R. Glenn Wooden (eds), *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures*, Atlanta GA 2006, 253–272; C.D. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture. Citation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature*, Cambridge 1992, 65ff.; D.-A. Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums: Untersuchungen zur Verwendung und zum Verständnis der Schrift bei Paulus*, Tübingen 1986.

<sup>95</sup> See H.D. Betz, *Galatians*, Philadelphia 1979, xlii; J.D.G. Dunn (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to St Paul*, Cambridge 2003, 65ff.

<sup>96</sup> ‘The Allegory of Hagar and Sarah: Gal 4.21–31’, *Estudios Biblicos* 58 (2000), 487; cf. R.N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, 200–206; C.K. Barrett, ‘The Allegory of Abraham, Sara and Hagar in the Argument of Galatians’, in: idem, *Essays on Paul*, London 1982, 154–170; cf. R.A. Cole, *The Letter of Paul to the Galatians: An Introduction and Commentary*, Leicester 1989, 18.

not demonstrate a direct dependence on rabbinic traditions, which are characterized by graphic descriptions of Ishmael attacking Isaac physically.<sup>97</sup> The persecution motif in Galatians, which emphasizes an allegorical understanding of Ishmael and Isaac as Judaism and Christianity respectively, appears to be peculiar to Paul. Commentators of the Epistle to the Galatians have suggested that Paul referred to an actual situation in Galatia, where Gentile Christians felt under pressure by Judaizers in the community.<sup>98</sup> Moreover, similar approaches only appear in rabbinic sources of a later redaction as discussed above.

Patristic literature has been significantly influenced by Paul's interpretation of this episode. Accordingly, the persecution motif is common in Christian literature in general. However, Christian sources do not tend to expand upon the violent or immoral nature of Ishmael's behaviour against Isaac. John Chrysostom writes of Ishmael as a bad influence for Isaac (Hom.Gen. 46.2). Ephraem suggests that Ishmael was kicking Isaac (cf. Gen 15:6; Hom.Nat. 13.17), or, in the context of a literal interpretation of the biblical text, that he was laughing *at* him (Comm.Gen. XVIII.1). Other explanations transmitted in the Catenae include that the correct interpretation of the word 'playing' was that Ishmael was 'hitting' Isaac. Still, the image of Ishmael as an attempted murderer is not common in Christian exegetical literature.

In contrast, in association with the Pauline interpretation of the episode, Diodore of Tarsus explains that 'playing' means 'fighting', as evidenced in the scene described in 2 Sam 2:14 (Cat. Csl 201; cf. Eusebius of Emesa Cat. Sin G 147; et al.). Thus, the association of Gen 21:9 with 2 Sam 2:14 was current in the exegesis of the School of Antioch in the fourth century. Significantly, while the MT uses different albeit similar verbs to denote the activities described in Gen 21:9 and 2 Sam 2:14 (namely, קחצ pi. in Gen 21:9 and קחש pi. in 2 Sam 2:14), the LXX translates both verbs with the same Greek word: παίζειν, 'to play'. Indeed, the fight in 2 Sam 2:14 is described

<sup>97</sup> On various aspects of affinities between Paul and rabbinic sources, see W.D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology*, Philadelphia 1980; E.P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion*, London 1977; P. Lapede – P. Stuhlmacher (eds), *Paul: Rabbi and Apostle*, Minneapolis 1984. On Paul's Jewish origins and relations to his Jewish roots, see J.D.G. Dunn, *Paul and the Mosaic Law*, Grand Rapids MI 2003; A.F. Segal, 'Paul's Jewish Presuppositions', in: J.D.G. Dunn (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to St. Paul*, 159ff. and *passim*.

<sup>98</sup> On Paul's use of ἐδίωκεν in Gal 4:29, see H. Ridderbos, *The Epistle of Paul to the Churches of Galatia*, Grand Rapids MI 1953, 181; H.D. Betz, *Galatians*, Philadelphia 1979, 249–250; F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, Grand Rapids MI 1982, 223–224; E. Basland, 'Persecution: A Neglected Feature in the Letter to the Galatians', *ST* 38 (1984), 135–156.

like a gladiatorial combat, and so the Greek word 'play' (or 'sport') would have been appropriate in this context. The connection between Gen 21:9 and 2 Sam 2:14 was also made by rabbinic exegetes, as noted above (e.g. T Sot 6:6; GenR 53:11). The rabbinic tradition can be explained by connecting the use of similar verbs, whereas Diodore's approach is based on the LXX. However, it is striking that this exegetical understanding can only be found in texts attributed to the Antiochean tradition, and is not attested elsewhere among Christian exegetes who also used the LXX. Moreover, the connection of these two verses was not obvious in Christian exegetical literature. Thus, the possibility of an exegetical encounter cannot be ruled out.

Another point of discussion relevant to the exegetical encounter is Abraham's lack of generosity towards Hagar and Ishmael, especially in light of his prosperous status. Rabbinic and Christian commentators address the problematic issue of Abraham's stance towards Hagar and Ishmael primarily from a moral point of view. However, they also reflect on the theological implications of the story.

According to certain rabbinic exegetical traditions, Abraham's harsh treatment of Hagar and Ishmael was justified because of Ishmael's bad behaviour (e.g. GenR 54:2). Abraham's decision is even proof of his righteousness, as it shows that he listened to the words of his wise wife, as he did in Gen 21:12 and was rewarded with the birth of Isaac (e.g. DeutR 4:5). In an alternative approach, PRE 30 focuses on Gen 16:11 and stresses that Abraham was grieved because he had to send Ishmael away. This approach can already be found in Josephus (*Ant* I.215–221), who states that Abraham disapproved of such barbaric action. Thus, this constitutes an old Jewish exegetical tradition. Another rabbinic exegetical approach explains that Ishmael's expulsion was a test for Abraham, suggesting that Abraham's faith in the promises that God had made was tested (e.g. ARN A 33; PRE 30; MidrPss 18:25). Other approaches state openly that Abraham despised Ishmael because of his idolatrous practices, although Abraham was also held responsible for Ishmael's deviant social behaviour since he had obviously neglected his parental duties towards him (e.g. Tan *Shemot* 1; ExodR 1:1).

Reflecting Gen 21:11, the Christian exegetical traditions also suggest that Abraham initially disapproved of Ishmael's expulsion, and support that Abraham was fond of the child. However, he did not want to challenge his beloved and wise wife, Sarah. Additionally, and more importantly, he had to obey Sarah's wish, since she gave voice to a divine plan. Finally, Abraham is not harsh in his behaviour, but he simply demonstrates

his immense trust in God (John Chrysostom, Hom.Eph. XX; Theodoret, Quaest. LXXIII).

It can be observed that in the context of this particular episode both rabbinic and Christian exegetical traditions emphasize Abraham's ultimate righteousness and exemplary trust in divine providence. These shared exegetical views express similar conclusions that could have been drawn independently from a careful reading and a literal interpretation of the biblical text (Gen 21:11–13). At the same time, however, they also reflect common ethical values and concerns, as well as shared moral expectations with regard to the ideal figure of a righteous patriarch.

The treatment of Hagar by Abraham was a further point of discussion by rabbinic exegetes. According to one approach, Hagar was under Sarah's command and so beyond Abraham's control (cf. GenR 45:6). Other traditions explain Abraham's unloving behaviour on account of Hagar's status as a servant (e.g. GenR 53:13). Her ultimate role as a servant and not a wife is also explicitly emphasized in PRE 30. This tradition explains that Abraham did not simply send Hagar away, but that he also divorced her before she left. Accordingly, PRE 30 teaches that Hagar was initially a second wife to Abraham, and then her status was reduced to that of servant by the time of the expulsion. As part of the discussion on the status of Hagar, and through connection of Gen 16:3 and Gen 25:1, it is not surprising to find the widely attested tradition in rabbinic sources that Abraham's second wife after Sarah's death, Keturah, was actually Hagar (e.g. GenR 61:4; BT Yeb 64a; Tg PsJon Gen 21:14 and 25:1; Tan *Hayye Sarah* 8; TanB *Hayye Sarah* 9). It is, however, surprising to find in PRE 30, which emphasized Hagar's status as a servant, the idea that Abraham loved both Ishmael and Hagar. He even continued visiting them after their expulsion from his household and remarried Hagar after Sarah's death.

The biblical text possibly facilitates a connection between Hagar and Keturah for later exegetes. In 1 Chronicles 32, Keturah is referred to as Abraham's concubine (MT: פִּילִגֶּשֶׁת; LXX: *παλλακή*), which would imply a comparable status to that of Hagar. However, although Hagar is treated like a 'concubine' throughout the biblical text, that is, a non-lawful wife, she is not called a 'concubine' but a 'maidservant' (MT Gen 16:1 שפחה, or MT Gen 21:10 אִמָּה; LXX: *παῖδισκη*), a clear indication of her dependent status in Abraham's household. According to Genesis 25, Keturah gives birth to six sons, who become also the ancestors of foreign nations.<sup>99</sup> Keturah's

<sup>99</sup> In Gen 25:5–6, it is stated that Isaac inherited everything that Abraham had, but the 'sons of the concubines' received only gifts and were sent away from his son, Isaac.



sons represent Arabian tribes, and thus they are implicitly associated with the Ishmaelites.<sup>100</sup> Therefore, these implicit biblical connections could have given rise to speculations on Hagar and Keturah as one and the same person.

A significant exegetical tradition for the encounter can be found in Jerome's work *Hebrew Questions*. Jerome reports a 'Hebrew' tradition according to which Keturah is the same person as Hagar. Abraham did not abandon his concubine and their child, but continued to visit them and even married Hagar lawfully after Sarah's death. This tradition rehabilitates all protagonists of the drama and provides the story with a final happy end. Jerome's elucidation can be compared to the many rabbinic sources that identified Hagar with Keturah (e.g. GenR 61:4; BT Yeb 64a; Tg PsJm Gen 21:14 and 25:1; Tan *Hayye Sarah* 8; TanB *Hayye Sarah* 9; TanB *Toledot* 5; MidrProv 26). However, the passage in Jerome is particularly close to the tradition in PRE 30, discussed above. Both sources state explicitly that in reality, and contrary to the information in the biblical text, Abraham never abandoned Hagar and Ishmael or severed his ties to them, but that he even (re)married Hagar towards the end of his life. Consequently, Jerome's dependence on rabbinic exegesis on the issue of Abraham's wives is conspicuous. His accurate knowledge of the rabbinic traditions discussed presents a strong case of an explicit exegetical encounter.

The reference to Ishmael as a 'wild ass' in Gen 16:12 is related, in rabbinic literature, to the character and behaviour of Ishmael as an adult, as described in Genesis 21. GenR 45:9 associates the angelic prophecy in Gen 16:11–12 with the fact that Ishmael was raised in the wilderness and not in civilization. The contrast drawn between 'wild Ishmael' and the civilized world is particularly strong, and his general hostility is presupposed on the basis of Gen 16:12: '*his hand will be against all*'. Furthermore, he is associated with murderous activities and increasing cruelty. A widely transmitted tradition claims that not just Ishmael but also his descendants, the Ishmaelites, are thieves (Mek *Bahodesh* 5; cf. PR 21:2/3). This negative portrayal of Ishmael or the Ishmaelites may be linked to the role of the Ishmaelites in the Joseph story. Moreover, these negative attitudes

---

However, it is Isaac and Ishmael that bury Abraham, and who are referred to as 'his sons'.

<sup>100</sup> See J.A. Montgomery, *Arabia and the Bible*, Philadelphia 1934, 45–74; I. Eph'al, 'Ishmaelites', *EncJud* 9:87–90; F.V. Winnett, 'The Arabian Genealogies in the Book of Genesis', in: H.T. Frank – W. LaForest Reed (eds), *Translating and Understanding the Old Testament*, Nashville TN 1988, 171–196.

may reflect a perception of Arab nomads by Jewish communities in Late Antiquity. In addition, PRE 41 and Tg PsJon Gen 21:13 claim that the Ishmaelites are a nation of robbers. Although these traditions were widely transmitted at an early date, the date of redaction of these particular texts leaves open the possibility that these traditions have been reused in a new context and reflect latent anti-Islamic polemics.

Certain later rabbinic traditions connected the Ishmaelites or Arabs with the Muslim Arabs. Significantly, an apocalyptic understanding of the Ishmaelites is found in Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer (e.g. PRE 30 and 32). According to PRE 32, the sons of Ishmael will cause despair at the end of days. The eschatological references to Ishmael in PRE 32 are associated with an etymological wordplay with his name, and emphasize that God will hear cries of distress from the people that will be oppressed by the descendants of Ishmael. Ishmael is placed in an eschatological context also in pre-Islamic texts, in which he is portrayed as acting against the Temple and receiving punishment in the next world (e.g. GenR 45:9). In this context, Ishmael represents (political) enemies of Israel from a general point of view. Hence, Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer contains traditions that link known eschatological motifs about traditional biblical enemies of Israel with contemporary political circumstances. This approach to emerging Islam is also reflected in apocalyptic midrashim of the period.

Similarly, in Christian literature, a negative image of Ishmael and his descendants is encountered. The hostile treatment of the Ishmaelites is based on exegesis of Gen 16:12, which indicates Ishmael's estrangement and hostility towards his 'brothers'. Other negative perceptions of the Ishmaelites in Christian literature imply that they were involved in slave-trading or plundering (*Cave of Treasures* XXXI.10–11; Ishodad, Comm.Gen. ad loc.). These views reflect exegetical approaches to the 'unflattering' biblical references to the Ishmaelites. They also remind of the rabbinic traditions discussed above. However, they do not present a case of a direct exegetical encounter, but rather a shared cultural understanding based on popular biblical associations.

The 'sons of Ishmael' became identified with the nomad desert dwellers, and, subsequently, with the Arab Muslims in Eastern Christian literature. This perception was accompanied by the negative associations of the biblical Ishmael and his sons that circulated in Christian exegetical literature for centuries before the rise of Islam. Biblical exegesis of Ishmael and his descendants shaped historical notions of the 'Ishmaelites', and formed popular clichés that were later attributed to the Muslim Arabs.

In the apocalyptic text that is attributed to Methodius of Olympus, the Muslim Arabs are understood as the ultimate apocalyptic destroyers. Pseudo-Methodius refers to events in the 'last millennium', and describes their devastating invasions with horrifying apocalyptic images. Moreover, in Christian sources, the 'sons of Ishmael' are envisioned according to traditional apocalyptic images, such as the 'fourth beast' of the book of Daniel or 'forerunners of the Antichrist'. Christian apocalyptic writers may also have been influenced in their perceptions of the 'sons of Ishmael' by earlier rabbinic sources that place Ishmael in a negative eschatological context.

Thus, a shared approach can be observed amongst rabbinic and Christian commentators regarding the foraying Muslims who will cause despair 'in the end of days'. The perception of the Muslim Arabs as an apocalyptic sign of the 'last days' in contemporary Jewish and Christian sources thus presents an interesting case of an interpretation of dramatic historical events held in common in the context of shared biblical exegetical approaches.

## CHAPTER SIX

### JACOB'S LADDER

*And he came upon the place and he spent the night there because the sun set; and he took from the stones of the place and he put [them] under his head and he lay down in that place. And he dreamed and behold a ladder was set up on the earth and the top of it reached to the heavens. And behold, angels of God were ascending and descending on it. (MT Gen 28:11–12)*

#### *Rabbinic Traditions*

The theme of restoration and Israel's relationship to God are prominent subjects in rabbinic exegesis of the story of Jacob's dream of the ladder at Bethel.<sup>1</sup> Although of varying date and place of redaction, these diverse traditions of restoration are primarily based on the promises first made to Abraham in Genesis 12, which are reiterated to Jacob in his dream in Genesis 28:12–15.<sup>2</sup>

One aspect of this theme is the relationship between God and Jacob, along with the other patriarchs and the righteous. One approach emphasizes that God supports the patriarchs and his presence is with them,<sup>3</sup> often highlighting Jacob's absolute trust in God, especially regarding the promises of the land.<sup>4</sup> The protection and security God provides Jacob is

---

<sup>1</sup> See J.L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 362–364 and 372–376; J.L. Kugel, *The Ladder of Jacob: Ancient Interpretations of the Biblical Story of Jacob and His Children*, Princeton 2006; E. Starobinski-Safran, 'Quelques interprétations juives antiques et médiévales du songe de Jacob (Gn 28,12–13)', in: J.-D. Macchi – T. Römer (eds), *Jacob—commentaire à plusieurs voix de Gen 25–36*, Geneva 2001, 373–393; J. Massonnet, 'Targum, Midrash et Nouveau Testament: le songe de Jacob (Gn 28,10–22)', in: C.-B. Amphoux – J. Margain (eds), *Les premières traditions de la Bible*, Lausanne 1996, 67–101.

<sup>2</sup> The traditions outlined here relate primarily to the theme of restoration, but other topics include religious observances, which are highlighted on the basis of the story of Jacob's Ladder. In particular, discussion is found on the institution of daily prayers (e.g. Mek *Beshallah* 6:79, GenR 68:9, PT Ber 4:1, 7a–b, BT Ber 26b, TanB *Miqqetš* 11, Tan *Miqqetš* 9, MidrPss 55:2, NumR 2:1). The law of tithes is also discussed, especially in relation to Deut 14:22 (e.g. PRK 10:6). A number of traditions are particularly concerned to show that the patriarchs kept the laws of the tithe and that they were even the first to undertake the practice (e.g. PR 25:3).

<sup>3</sup> E.g. TanB *Wayishlah* 27, Tan *Miqqetš* 5.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. Tan *Wayera* 2 and Mek *Pisha* 17:23 respectively.

expanded upon in a variety of traditions. Some exegetes discuss this in relation to Jacob's movements in and out of the promised land, while others refer to the protection of Jacob by God in preference to the ancestors of other nations such as Esau or Ishmael.<sup>5</sup> Related to traditions describing how God is present with Jacob, there is the much debated issue of whether or not God is with Jacob when he is outside of the land of Canaan.<sup>6</sup> God's support is also discussed in exegesis of the fear that Jacob experienced over his vision. Jacob's fear can give reassurance to Jacob's Israelite descendants if they are afraid; it also shows that people should not assume they are safe because they are righteous, as even Jacob was afraid. Other traditions try to explain why Jacob was afraid despite the assurances that God had given to him.<sup>7</sup>

Angelology is high on the exegetical agenda with discussion on the nature of the angels in Jacob's vision. A frequently repeated tradition understands the angels ascending and descending the ladder to represent the angelic princes of the four kingdoms.<sup>8</sup> Thus, the ladder is interpreted as relating to political events, namely the rise and fall of empires. A political perspective is also reflected in Tan *Wayishlah* 3 on the relationship between Israel and the current government using the symbols of Jacob and Esau. ExodR 42:2 gives attention to Israel itself, and suggests that the ladder represents the successes and failures of the nation. More broadly, the role of the angels as protectors of Jacob and the allocation of angels to different geographical regions is found.<sup>9</sup>

Political overtones are also found in the theme of the restoration of Israel. In particular, the promises in Gen 28:14 are used in interpretations regarding the numbers, inheritance and prosperity of Israel.<sup>10</sup> In a variety of ways, the sources emphasize the unending success of Israel in these matters.<sup>11</sup> The theme of restoration is further developed in interpretations regarding the Temple and heavens. One tradition refers to the building, destruction and rebuilding of the Temple. In another set of interpretations,

<sup>5</sup> E.g. GenR 79:2, NumR 4:1 and GenR 67:13 respectively.

<sup>6</sup> E.g. TanB *Wayeše* 21 and Tan *Wayeše* 10. God is only the God of Jacob in the land of Canaan in T AZ 4:5, and Jacob finds peace when he returns to the promised land in NumR 11:7.

<sup>7</sup> E.g. GenR 76:1, 76:2, BT Ber 4a, BT Sanh 98b and Tan *Beshallah* 28.

<sup>8</sup> E.g. GenR 68:14, LevR 29:2, PRK 23:2, PRE 35, MidrPss 78:6.

<sup>9</sup> E.g. GenR 68:12, Tg PsJon Gen 28:12, TanB *Wayeshev* 2, Tan *Wayishlah* 3, Tan *Mishpatim* 19.

<sup>10</sup> E.g. Sifre Deut 47, LevR 35:11 and PRK 2:8.

<sup>11</sup> This is with the exception of ExodR 25:8, which suggests that there is a limit to the numbers of Israel, although this is not to be understood negatively.

Jacob's identification of the Temple site is the focus, the heavenly Temple is discussed, and there is debate about the heavens in general.<sup>12</sup>

In the following analysis, the key traditions discussed relate to the topic of restoration.<sup>13</sup> In particular, the examples presented are linked to exegesis of the אבנים 'stones' of Genesis 28. References to a stone or stones, which Jacob used as a pillow while he was dreaming, are found at Gen 28:11 and 28:18:

ויפגע במקום וילן שם כי בא השמש ויקח מאבני המקום וישם מראשתיו וישכב במקום ההוא

*And he came upon the place and he spent the night there because the sun set; and he took from the stones of the place and he put [them] under his head and he lay down in that place.*

וישכם יעקב בבקר ויקח את האבן אשר שם מראשתיו וישם אתה מצבה ויצק שמן על ראשה

*And Jacob got up early in the morning, and he took the stone which he had put under his head and he set it as a pillar and he poured oil upon the top of it.*

The biblical verses pose a problem, as it refers to Jacob's pillow as 'stones' in the plural at Gen 28:11, yet only one 'stone' in singular is mentioned at Gen 28:18. This textual discrepancy needed to be resolved by rabbinic exegetes, but also allowed for a variety of interpretations and exegetical approaches regarding the stone(s) and their symbolic significance.<sup>14</sup>

#### *The Foundation Stone and the Temple Built, Destroyed and Rebuilt*

One exegetical approach to the significance of the stone(s) is that it represents the foundation stone, the אבן שתיה of the world upon which the Temple was founded. Job 38:6 and 1 Enoch 18:2 first mention a cornerstone of the world, and in various rabbinic traditions the foundation stone is understood to be both the centre of the created earth and a stone in the Temple upon which the divine name was written.<sup>15</sup> The association of

<sup>12</sup> E.g. Sifre Deut 352, GenR 69:7, TanB Behar 5, MidrPss 81:2.

<sup>13</sup> Restoration features heavily in rabbinic exegesis of Genesis 28 partly due to the reiteration of the Abrahamic promises of land and descendants to Jacob in his dream at Gen 28:12–15.

<sup>14</sup> This exegetical problem is explicitly identified in GenR 68:11, BT Hül 91b, Tan Wayese 1 and MidrPss 91:6. Jubilees 27:19–27 solves the problem by saying of Jacob that 'he took one of the stones of that place' in its retelling of Gen 28:11 (trans. O.S. Wintermute, OTP 2, 109).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. M Yoma 5:2, T Yoma 2:14, LevR 20:4, PT Yoma 5:4, 42c, BT Yoma 53b–54b, BT Sanh 26b, PRE 10, Tg PsJon Exod 28:30, TanB Qedoshim 10, MidrPss 11:2, NumR 12:4.

the Temple with the foundation stone is a very widely attested rabbinic tradition, but is explicitly associated with Jacob's stone in Genesis 28 in PRE 35.<sup>16</sup> The location of the Temple upon the foundation stone of the world connects this building with God's creation and highlights the centrality of the Temple to God's purpose for the world.<sup>17</sup> PRE 35 summarizes this tradition as follows:

וישב יעקב ללקוט את האבנים ומצא אותם כלם אבן אחת ושם אותה מצבה (בראשית כח יח) בתוך המקום וירד לו שמן מן השמים ויצק עליה שנאמר ויצק שמן על ראשה (בראשית כח יח) מה עשה הקב"ה נטה רגל ימינו וטבעה האבן עד עמקי תהומות ועשה אותה סניף לארץ כאדם שעושה סניף לכיפה לפיכך נקרא אבן השתיה שמשם הוא טבור הארץ ומשם נמתח כל הארץ ועליה היכל יי' עומד שנאמר והאבן הזאת אשר שמתי מצבה יהיה בית אלהים  
(ed. D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, 437 [218])

And Jacob returned to gather the stones, and he found that all of them had become one stone, and he set it as a pillar (Gen 28:18) in the midst of the place, and oil descended for him from heaven, and he poured (the oil) upon it, as it is said, *And he poured oil upon the top of it* (Gen 28:18). What did the Holy One, blessed be He, do? He stretched out his right foot, and sank the stone to the depths of the depths, and he made it the keystone of the earth, like a man who makes a keystone of an arch. Therefore it is called the foundation stone, because from there is the navel of the earth, and from there all the earth was extended, and the Temple of the Lord stands upon it, as it is said, *And this stone, which I have set as a pillar, will be the house of God* (Gen 28:22).

PRE 35 alludes to the textual problem of the singular and plural 'stones' of Jacob in the biblical text, but sees the change into the one stone of Gen 28:18 as a miraculous event. The tradition then describes how God pushed Jacob's stone into the depths and, as such, it became the keystone of the earth or foundation stone located at the navel of the earth. Interestingly, the text ignores chronology and suggests that it is at this point in the

---

See J. Klawans, *Purity Sacrifice and the Temple*, Oxford 2006, 283; P.S. Alexander, 'Jerusalem as *Omphalos*', 104–119.

<sup>16</sup> The tradition is also found in MidrPss 91:7, which has a late date of redaction although is widely acknowledged to contain much earlier material.

<sup>17</sup> This is connected to the rabbinic idea that the Temple or Tabernacle completed the creation of the world (cf. Tan *Naso* 19, Tan *Terumah* 9). The Temple was thought to establish creation in some traditions (cf. PRK 1:4 and NumR 12:12). Aspects of the creation are related to aspects of the tabernacle in detail in Tan *Pequde* 2 and NumR 12:13. As J. Klawans notes, these two sources present 'an extended comparison of the seven-day creation of the earth with the process of building the tabernacle, because the tabernacle is parallel to the world' (*Purity Sacrifice and the Temple*, 124); cf. Philo, *De Spec. Leg.* I.66–67. See also P. Hayman, 'Some Observations on Sefer Yesira: (2) The Temple at the Centre of the Universe', *JJS* 37 (1986), 176–82; P.S. Alexander, 'In the beginning': Rabbinic and Patristic Exegesis of Genesis 1:1, 8; and P. Schäfer, 'Tempel und Schöpfung', 144–53.

history of Israel that the stone became the cornerstone of the earth rather than at creation. PRE 35 teaches that all the earth stretched out from this stone, and the Temple was built upon it. Thus, the tradition identifies the site of the Temple with the holy place above the centre of the earth.<sup>18</sup> This association is proven by Gen 28:22, which verse connects *'this stone'*, or foundation stone, with *'the house of God'*.

The tradition in PRE 35 also includes the common rabbinic identification of Bethel, the place of Jacob's dream, with the Temple site. The connection of Bethel with the Temple site is not unsurprising, as, in Gen 28:17, Jacob declares that: *'this is none other than the house of God* (בית אלהים) *and this is the gate of heaven* (שער השמים)' followed by the naming of the place as Bethel (בית אל) in Gen 28:19. The connection with *'God's House'* is further affirmed in Gen 28:22 which states: *'and this stone* (והאבן הזאת) *which I have set as a pillar will be the house of God* (בית אלהים)'. This leads to a widely attested connection of Bethel with the Temple site, as the Temple in Jerusalem is the only legitimate religious centre and so any *'house of God'* must be referring to that Temple.<sup>19</sup>

In exegesis of Genesis 28, the Temple is also connected to the restoration of Israel as determined by God's promises to the patriarchs. An early and widely transmitted tradition of particular importance is the building, destruction and rebuilding of the Temple based on Gen 28:17. This tradition is first found in connection with Genesis 28 in Sifre Deut 352:

וכן אתה מוצא ביעקב שראה אותו בנוי וראה אותו חרב וראה אותו בנוי שנאמר וירא ויאמר מה נורא המקום הזה הרי בנוי, אין זה, הרי חרב, כי אם בית אלהים וזה שער השמים, הרי בנוי ומשוכלל לעתיד לבא.  
(ed. L. Finkelstein – S. Horovitz, *Sifre al Sefer Devarim*, 410)

Thus you find concerning Jacob that he saw it built, and he saw it destroyed, and he saw it rebuilt, as it is said, *And he was afraid, and he said, 'How awesome is this place—behold that it was built—this is none—behold that it was destroyed—other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven'* (Gen 28:17)—behold that it will be rebuilt and ornamented in the future.

<sup>18</sup> PRE 11 describes the creation of Adam: במקום טהור היה בטבור הארץ היה 'it was in a pure place, it was at the navel of the earth' (ed. D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, 113 [56]). Then PRE 12 identifies the טהור מקום 'pure place' with המקדש בית המקדש 'the place of the Temple' (ed. D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, 123 [61]).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Sifre Deut 352, Tg Neofiti Gen 28:17, GenR 68:12, 69:7, PR 30:3, 39:2, BT Pes 88a, PRE 35, Tg PsJon Gen 28:11, 28:17, TanB Wayeṣe 9, MidrPss 78:6, 81:2. This is also an early Jewish tradition as indicated by 11QTemple 29.8–10. GenR 69:7 suggests that the ladder stretched from Bethel to the Temple, thus linking but not identifying Bethel with the Temple site. The location of the Temple was a topic of great debate, and another frequent identification was made between the Temple site and Mount Moriah; cf. Josephus Ant. I.225–227, GenR 56:10, BT Erub 19a, MidrPss 92:6. See the chapter 'In Paradise' in this volume.



In this interpretation, the positive reference to the existence of *'this (זה) place'* in Gen 28:17 indicates the building of the Temple. The destruction of the Temple is indicated by the negative *'this is none' (זה אין)*, and the fact that the biblical verse once again refers to the positive *'and this is (וזה) the gate of heaven'* indicates the future rebuilding.

This early tradition is widely transmitted in rabbinic sources. GenR 69:7 contains the same tradition, but with additional argumentation through proof texts. The building of the Temple is understood by *'how awesome (נורא)* in Gen 28:17, which is further explained by the same word in connection with the Temple in Ps 68:36: *'awesome (נורא) is God out of your holy places'*. The destruction of the Temple is understood from *'this is none (זה אין)* in Gen 28:17, which is connected by wordplay with the destruction of the Temple in Lam 5:17: *'for this (זה) our heart is faint'*. The final part of Gen 28:17, which states *'than (כי) the house of God and this is the gate (שער) of heaven'*, is understood to refer to the rebuilding of the Temple based on connection with Ps 147:13: *'for (כי) he made strong the bars of your gates (שעריך)'*, in which the Psalm describes how God acts on behalf of his people.

PR 30:3 contains an abbreviated version of this tradition. The parashah examines the destruction of Jerusalem based on interpretation of Lam 1:2. The passage teaches that Jerusalem cannot be comforted by Jacob because he foresaw her destruction, as recorded in Gen 28:17: *'this is none (זה אין)*'. Another version of the tradition is also found in PR 39:2 (cf. MidrPss 81:2), which describes how, based on Gen 28:17, Jacob acknowledged the building of the Temple even before it existed. The passage outlines how because Jacob recognized the site of the Temple and called it the *'house of God'*, the Temple would also be called after his name as in Isa 2:3 and 2:5.<sup>20</sup>

TanB *Wayeṣe* 9 contains elements of the argumentation also found in Sifre Deuteronomy and Genesis Rabbah with some additional comments. The destruction of the Temple is indicated by reference to *'this (זה) place'* in Gen 28:17 and the connection with נורא in Ps 68:36. This is supported with a further proof text, Ps 78:54, which refers to *'the border of his sanctuary'* and *'this mountain'* in discussing the land of Israel. The destruction of the Temple is indicated by *'this is none (זה אין)* in Gen 28:17. The rebuilding is indicated by the ensuing positive statement in Gen 28:17: *'than (כי) the house of God and this is (וזה) the gate of heaven'*. The tradition in Tanḥuma Buber goes on to say that not only was this vision revealed to Jacob but

<sup>20</sup> Isa 2:3 states: *'Many peoples will come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob.'*

also to the prophets. The passage then emphasizes that God himself will rebuild the Temple in the world-to-come and take up his place within it before Israel, as in the prophecy in Isa 52:8.

Key to the development of the above traditions is the destruction of the Second Temple in 70CE, which was an inestimable blow to the Jewish community centred upon it, both politically and theologically.<sup>21</sup> The loss of the Temple is a prominent theme in rabbinic sources, as it was previously a sign of God's presence with his people and the Temple cult was a primary means of fulfilling covenant obligations.<sup>22</sup> The rabbinic communities post 70CE had to deal with these issues and explain why God's house had been destroyed and how the covenant could be maintained without it. By the amoraic period, the rebuilding of the Temple in the future age was a fundamental part of Jewish eschatology. The rebuilding would be an important sign of the restoration, reunification and election of Israel, and the presence of God with his people.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, the vision in Sifre Deuteronomy, and parallel traditions, of the building, destruction and rebuilding of the Temple provides Jacob with foreknowledge of the ultimate fulfilment of the promises made to him. It also serves to provide reassurance of ultimate redemption to the audience of these rabbinic teachings.

### *The Stone(s) as Nation Israel—Election and Fulfilment of the Promise*

A second approach to the symbolism of Jacob's stone(s) focuses on the number of stones that made up the plural אבנים in Gen 28:11 and their

<sup>21</sup> See G. Stemberger, 'Reaktionen auf die Tempelzerstörung in der rabbinischen Literatur', in: J. Hahn (ed.), *Zerstörungen des Jerusalemer Tempels*, Tübingen 2002, 207–236; S. Safrai, 'Jerusalem and the Temple in the Tannaitic Literature of the First Generation after the destruction of the Temple', in: A. Houtman et al. (eds), *Sanctity of Time and Space in Tradition and Modernity*, Leiden 1998, 135–152; R. Goldenberg, 'The Destruction of the Jerusalem Temple: Its Meaning and Its Consequences', in: S.T. Katz, *The Cambridge History of Judaism*. Vol. 4, 191–205; J.L. Moss, 'Being the Temple: Early Jewish and Christian Interpretative Transpositions', in: L.M. Teugels – R. Ulmer (eds), *Midrash and Context*, Piscataway NJ 2007, 39–59.

<sup>22</sup> A major exception is the Mishnah, which infrequently addresses the destruction of the Temple, e.g. M Sot 9:12: 'Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says in the name of R. Yehoshua: From the day that the Temple was destroyed there has been no day without a curse; and the dew has not fallen as a blessing and the taste of the fruits has gone. R. Yose says: The fatness of the fruits has gone'. On the location of God or Shekinah in exegesis of the Jacob's Ladder story, see T AZ 4:5, Mek *Pisha* 18:17, PT Ber 4:3, GenR 79:3, TanB *Wayeṣe* 21 and Tan *Bo* 12.

<sup>23</sup> There are numerous references to this theme, but, as a selection, see 1 Enoch 85–90, 4 Ezra 10:44–50, Testament of Levi 3:4–6 and 5:1–2, Tg Zech 9:1, Sifre Deut 1, T Suk 3:3–10, PT Sheq 6:2 and BT Yoma 77b–78a.

significance. A particularly widely transmitted tradition is that the initial number of stones Jacob collected in Gen 28:11 was twelve, the number of the tribes that were to descend from Jacob and form nation Israel. This interpretation was reinforced by the fact that the stones had become one stone in Gen 28:18.<sup>24</sup> This tradition is outlined in GenR 68:11:

ויקח מאבני המקום ר' יהודה א' י"ב אבנים נטל, אמר כך גזר הקב"ה שמעמיד י"ב שבטים, אברהם לא העמידן, יצחק לא העמידן, ואני אם מתאחות זו לזו יודע אני שאני מעמיד י"ב שבטים, כיון שנתאחו זו לזו ידע שמעמיד י"ב שבטים  
(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 2, 782)

*And he took from the stones of the place* (Gen 28:11). R. Yehudah said: He took twelve stones. He said as follows: 'The Holy One, blessed be He, decreed that twelve tribes should arise. Abraham did not produce them, Isaac did not produce them, but, if they (i.e. the stones) are joined together, I know that I will produce the twelve tribes'. When they were joined together, he knew that he would produce the twelve tribes.

In GenR 68:11, the joining together of the stones represents the unification of the twelve tribes into a nation fathered by Jacob.<sup>25</sup> The tradition in GenR 68:11 also records a further series of interpretations related to the issue of nationhood and the theme of election or fulfilment of the Abrahamic promises. An interpretation in the name of R. Nehemiah teaches that there were three stones, which represented the three patriarchs, and Jacob knew that if they became one it was an indication that he would share in his ancestors' blessings. In an alternative interpretation, Jacob's children are again the focus in the suggestion that there were two stones, a representation of the two children of Abraham and the two children of Isaac. Each patriarch had one child who was 'undesirable', namely, Ishmael and Esau respectively. Thus, if the two stones joined together Jacob would know that he would have no 'worthless' children.<sup>26</sup> As the stones

<sup>24</sup> There are interpretations that do not specifically mention twelve stones or the theme of nationhood, but address the discrepancy between the plural stones of Gen 28:11 and the single stone of Gen 28:18. For example, Tg Neofiti Gen 28:10 refers to the five miracles that Jacob experienced when he was outside of the land, the second of which is the joining together of the stones into one stone. In BT *Ḥul* 91b, an interpretation in the name of R. Isaac teaches that the stones gathered themselves into one place in an attempt to be the stone upon which the righteous Jacob would sleep. This is followed by a statement ascribed to a Tanna that the stones merged into one. Tan *Wayeṣe* 1 describes how the stones under Jacob's head joined into one at the sight of the glory of God.

<sup>25</sup> The interpretations in GenR 68:11 are closely paralleled in MidrPss 91:6. GenR 68:11 also contains speculation on the nature and purpose of the stones. For example, they were placed so as to protect Jacob from wild beasts and they became like a pillow.

<sup>26</sup> This particular tradition on the worthiness of the patriarchs' offspring is paralleled and expanded in TanB *Wayeṣe* 4. The contrast between the fates of Esau and Jacob is also

did indeed join together, this teaches that the children of Jacob, that is the nation of Israel, will be valuable in the eyes of God.

The fact that the stones of Gen 28:11 were twelve and symbolic of the twelve tribes and thus nationhood is also found in later texts. PRE 35 presents a development of this tradition and teaches that the twelve stones were the stones of the altar upon which Isaac had been bound; Jacob used them as a pillow to indicate that the twelve tribes would arise from him.<sup>27</sup> The potential sacrifice of Isaac, Jacob's father, posed a threat to the fulfilment of the promise of descendants. The fact that Jacob used the stones of the altar where his father may have died to sleep upon is a bold proof of the continuity of the promises to the descendants of Abraham. Indeed, the means of a potential end to the Abrahamic promises becomes a symbol of the fulfilment of the promise of descendants. The theme of nationhood is brought out particularly clearly in PRE 35 through use of 1 Chron 17:21 as a proof text: 'And they all became one stone, to make known to him that all of them were destined to become one people on the earth, as it is said, *And who is like your people Israel, one nation on the earth* (1 Chron 17:21)'.

Targum Pseudo-Jonathan also contributes to the theme of nationhood in discussion of the stones. Tg PsJon Gen 28:10 talks of the miracles that beset Jacob on his journey.<sup>28</sup> The second miracle is that the four stones that he used as a pillow had become one stone by morning, a motif reiterated in Tg PsJon Gen 28:11. The four stones represent the four wives of Jacob (Leah, Rachel, Bilhah and Zilpah) which when joined together represent the nation of Israel that they founded.<sup>29</sup>

Overall, there are a variety of interpretations in rabbinic traditions as to the number and significance of the stones, but one of the most prominent exegetical approaches is that they represent the future nation of Israel

---

connected to exegesis of Genesis 28 in certain traditions. For example, TanB *Toledot* 24 interprets the blessing of Esau and Jacob with reference to Gen 28:14. Esau cries over his lack of blessing, which makes God have compassion for him and He instructs Isaac to bless him too. As a result, Esau will be exalted for the glory of his ancestors, but afterwards Jacob will be exalted for both what his ancestors achieved and also his own deeds, based on Ps 46:11, Gen 28:14 and Mal 3:12. See C. Bakhos, *Ishmael on the Border*, 75–76, who discusses the theme of election based on traditions that indicate a preference for one sibling over the other.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Gen 22:9. For discussion on rabbinic exegesis of this chapter of Genesis, see E. Kessler, *Bound by the Bible*, esp. 119–137.

<sup>28</sup> See n.24 above.

<sup>29</sup> As A. Salvesen states: 'Jacob placed four stones under his head (symbolizing his four wives), and during the night they became one, i.e. the nation Israel' ('Keeping it in the Family? Jacob and His Aramean Heritage according to Jewish and Christian Sources', in: E. Grypeou – H. Spurling, *The Exegetical Encounter*, 216).

and, as such, fulfilment of the Abrahamic promise of descendants reiterated to Jacob in Genesis 28.

*The Messiah as Jacob's Stone or Cornerstone*

A typical subject associated with the theme of restoration in rabbinic literature is the role of the Messiah in the final redemption.<sup>30</sup> Given that restoration is a dominant theme in rabbinic exegesis of Genesis 28, it is, therefore, interesting that there is a paucity of messianic interpretations in relation to this chapter of Genesis. A messianic understanding of the stone(s) of Genesis 28 is first given significant elaboration in TanB *Toledot* 20.<sup>31</sup> This tradition contains a distinctive approach to exegesis of the stone of Gen 28:18 in that the stone is identified with the King Messiah.

TanB *Toledot* 20 represents a detailed homily on the King Messiah. In the full homily, the base verse is Ps 121:1: 'A song of ascents: I will lift my eyes (עֵינַי) to the mountains (הַהַרִּים); from where will my help come?'. While the remote verse is Zech 4:7: 'Who are you, great mountain (הַר הַגְּדוֹל)? Before Zerubbabel become a plain. And he will bring out the headstone (אֶת הַבֶּזֶק) with shoutings of grace grace to it. The homily explains that the Messiah is the 'mountain', which connects Ps 121:1 and Zech 4:7. As such, he is also the 'headstone' of Zech 4:7 and the 'help' of Ps 121:1. The exalted nature of the Messiah is presented, and he is described in favourable comparison to the patriarchs of Israel, including Abraham and Moses, and even the ministering angels.

The homily then moves on to the ancestry of the Messiah and discussion of his Davidic genealogy. This is established based on the detailed list of the descendants of David in 1 Chronicles, which is completed in 3:24 with the seven sons of Eliezer ending with Anani. First, through an argument by analogy, the 'seven' sons ending with 'Anani' (וְעֹנֵי שִׁבְעָה) are

<sup>30</sup> For a small selection of key works on this topic, see J. Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel*, London 1956; J. Sarachek, *The Doctrine of the Messiah in Medieval Jewish Literature* N.Y. 1968; G. Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism*, London 1971; W. Horbury, *Jewish Messianism and the Cult of Christ*, London 1998; idem, *Messianism among Jews and Christians*; P.S. Alexander, 'The King Messiah in Rabbinic Judaism', in: J. Day (ed.), *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East*, Sheffield 1998, 456–473; J.J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Ancient Literature*, N.Y. 1995; S.H. Levey, *The Messiah: An Aramaic Interpretation, the Messianic Exegesis of the Targum*, Cincinnati 1974; J. Neusner, *Messiah in Context*, Philadelphia 1984; M. Bockmuehl – J. Carleton Paget (eds), *Redemption and Resistance: The Messianic Hopes of Jews and Christians in Antiquity*, London 2007.

<sup>31</sup> The tradition is also paralleled in Aggadat Bereshit 45.

linked to the 'seven eyes' in Zech 4:10,<sup>32</sup> which is commonly given a messianic understanding. Secondly, Anani is related to the son of man who comes with the clouds (ענני) of heaven in Dan 7:13, which is also a well known messianic proof text.<sup>33</sup> In this way, through linguistic connections, 1 Chron 3:24 is understood to show that Anani the descendant of David is the ancestor of the Messiah.

The homily continues with further exegesis of the 'seven' of 1 Chron 3:24 by providing more information about the nature of the Messiah through connection to seven messianic proof texts:

ומהו שבעה [מה] שכתוב במשיח, שנאמר כי מי בז ליום קטנות ושמחי וראי את האבן הבדיל ביד זרובבל שבעה (הנה) [אלה] עיני ה' המה (משוטטות) [משוטטים] בכל הארץ (זכריה ד י), לכך נאמר מי אתה הר הגדול לפני זרובבל למישור, אותו שכתוב בו ושפט בצדק דלים והוכיח במישור וגו' (ישעיה יא ג): והוציא את אבן הראשה (זכריה שם), זו אבן של יעקב שנאמר וישכם יעקב בבקר ויקח את האבן וגו' (בראשית כח יח), וכן דניאל אמר חזה הוית עד די התגזרת אבן (חלא) [די לא] בידין וגו' (דניאל ב לד), וכתוב באדין דקו (בחדא) [כחדא] וגו', [ואבנא די מחת לצלמא הות לטור רב] [שם שם לה], ומהו לטור (רם) [רב], מי אתה הר הגדול, ומהיכן הוא בא, דרך ההרים, שנאמר מה נאוו על ההרים רגלי מבשר (ישעיה נב ז), באותה שעה ישראל מסתכלין ואומרין אשא עיני אל ההרים וגו' עזרי מעם ה' וגו': (ed. S. Buber, *Midrash Tanhuma: Seder Bereshit*, 140)

And what does 'seven' mean? [What] is that which is written concerning the Messiah? As it is said: *For who has despised the day of small things? They will rejoice and see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. [These] seven (שבעה) are the eyes (עיני) of the Lord [roaming] through all the land (Zech 4:10).* Therefore it is said: *Who are you, O great mountain (הר הגדול)? Before Zerubbabel, become a plain (מישור) (Zech 4:7).* This is what is written concerning him: *And he will judge the poor with righteousness and will decide with fairness (מישור), etc. (Isa 11:4). And he will bring out the headstone (אבן הראשה) (Zech 4:7).* This is the stone of Jacob, as it is said: *And Jacob got up early in the morning, and he took the stone (האבן), etc. (Gen 28:18).* And so Daniel said: *You looked on until a stone (אבן) was cut out, [but not] with hands, etc. (Dan 2:34).* And it is written: *Then were broken into pieces [together], etc. [and the stone (אבנא) that struck the statue became a great mountain (לטור רב)] (Dan 2:35).* What is meant by 'a [great] mountain' ([לטור רב])? *Who are you, O great mountain (הר הגדול)? (Zech 4:7).* And from where will

<sup>32</sup> Zech 4:10 states: 'These seven are the eyes of the Lord (שבעה-אלה עיני י') roaming through all the land'.

<sup>33</sup> The connection between Anani and the Messiah is also made in Tg 1 Chron 3:24; cf. J. Fitzmyer, *The One Who is to Come*, Grand Rapids 2007, 177 and S. Mowinckel, *He that cometh: the Messiah Concept in the Old Testament and Later Judaism*, Grand Rapids 2005, 389–90. On the names of the Messiah, see W. Horbury, 'The Messianic Associations of the Son of Man', *JTS* n.s.36 (1985), 34–55 and A. Goldberg, 'Die Namen des Messias in der rabbinischen Traditionsliteratur. Ein Beitrag zur Messiaslehre des rabbinischen Judentums', *FJB* 7 (1979), 1–93.

he come? The way of the mountains (ההרים), as it is said: *How beautiful upon the mountains (ההרים) are the feet of the one who brings good tidings* (Isa 52:7). At that moment, Israel will observe and say: *I will lift my eyes (עיני) to the mountains (ההרים), etc.* (Ps 121:1). *My help comes from the Lord, etc.* (Ps 121:2).

The messianic proof texts in this passage are all related back to Zech 4:7, the remote verse of the homily, which describes both the 'mountain' and the 'headstone'.<sup>34</sup> These two motifs provide the linguistic link to the messianic proof texts. The verses are Zech 4:10, Isa 11:4,<sup>35</sup> Gen 28:18, Dan 2:34–35, Isa 52:7 and Ps 121:1–2, which returns the homily to the original base verse. As can be seen from the brief quotation of this skilfully woven homily, the stone (האבן) of Jacob in Gen 28:18 is understood as a reference to the Messiah through analogy with the headstone (הראשה האבן) of Zech 4:7.<sup>36</sup> TanB *Toledot* 20 teaches that the 'headstone' or Messiah who will come forth in the future is the same as the 'stone' of Jacob, and the connection of Gen 28:18 with Zech 4:7 presents a strong messianic interpretation in Tanḥuma Buber, which is not found in earlier redacted sources.<sup>37</sup> Thus, the identification of the stone with the Messiah in this tradition builds on the connection between Genesis 28 and the theme of restoration.

### *The Anointed Stone*

A final set of interpretations based on exegesis of the stone(s) of Genesis 28 is centred on the anointing of the stone. This is described in Gen 28:18: *'And Jacob got up early in the morning, and he took the stone (את האבן) which he had put under his head and he set it as a pillar and he poured oil upon the top of it (על ראשה)'. The anointing of the stone does*

<sup>34</sup> There are a number of biblical passages that refer to an important stone, sometimes using the term האבן הראשה 'headstone' as in Zech 4:7, and sometimes in connection with the noun פנה 'corner' as in Isa 28:16, Ps 118:22 and Job 38:6.

<sup>35</sup> The linguistic link between Zech 4:7 and Isa 11:4 is מישור rather than a 'mountain' or 'headstone'.

<sup>36</sup> Clearly, the homily in TanB *Toledot* 20 understands Zech 4:7 messianically, and this approach is also found in Tg Zech 4:7, which states: 'And he will reveal his anointed one whose name is told from of old, and he shall rule over all kingdoms'. K.J. Cathcart and R.P. Gordon acknowledge the messianic interpretation of the 'stone' of Zech 4:7 and particularly draw attention to the pre-existence of the name of the Messiah with reference to Tg Micah 5:1, BT Pes 54a and 1 Enoch 48:3 (*The Targum of the Minor Prophets*, Edinburgh 1989, 194. Alternatively, GenR 97 understands Zech 4:7 to refer to Zerubbabel as the ancestor of the Messiah.

<sup>37</sup> This tradition is paralleled in Tan *Toledot* 14 without reference to Gen 28:18, but is closely paralleled in later sources such as Aggadat Bereshit 45. TanB *Wayeṣe* 2 also identifies the stone with Torah, an interpretation not found elsewhere in texts redacted before Tanḥuma Buber.

not receive a large amount of attention in rabbinic interpretations. Most traditions adopt a peshat explanation of Jacob's action, but one approach of note is the question as to where Jacob found the oil to anoint the stone.<sup>38</sup> These interpretations are primarily concerned with the historical reality of Jacob's situation rather than a theological interpretation that examines the significance or imagery of the anointing of the stone. GenR 69:8 describes how Jacob poured oil upon the stone כמיפי הפך 'as from the mouth of a flask'. This indicates that there was so much oil that it could have filled a vessel.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, PRE 35 teaches: 'he set it as a pillar in the midst of the place, and oil descended for him from heaven, and he poured [the oil] upon it, as it is said, *And he poured oil upon the top of it* (Gen 28:18)'. This expansion indicates that there was so much oil that it had to have come from heaven, as Jacob would not have been carrying this with him. In general, the anointing of the stone is treated in a very literal or historical way in the rabbinic traditions and does not receive detailed attention or elaboration.

### *The Christian Tradition*

The vision of Jacob at Bethel (Gen 28:10–22) was a prominent biblical episode in the context of the christological interpretation of the Old Testament by the Church Fathers. The biblical passage abounds with symbolism that could easily be read as directly relevant to key aspects of the Christian faith and doctrine. A ladder uniting heaven and earth, ascending and descending angels, a theophanic revelation, a divine promise and blessing, a place called 'the House of God' and 'the Gate of Heaven' and finally the erection and anointing of a stone, all of these elements of the biblical narrative must have appeared to the Christian writers as fascinating themes to explore exegetically.

One of the earliest Christian interpretations of Jacob's Ladder is found in the New Testament text John 1:51. The phrasing used by Jesus in John 1:51: 'I tell you the truth, you shall see the heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man', is generally held in modern scholarship to be an allusion to Jacob's vision in Bethel. The reference to the 'Son of Man' in John 1:51 is connected to the Hebrew text of

<sup>38</sup> E.g. GenR 69:8 and PRE 35.

<sup>39</sup> H. Freedman notes: 'The meaning is doubtful. Cur edd.: it was supplied to him from heaven in abundance, as though from a cruse full to the very top—the Midrash assuming that he would hardly have been carrying oil with him' (*Midrash Rabbah: Genesis*, London 1939, 635); cf. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck (eds), *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 2, 797.



Gen 28:12, which reads: כּוּ 'on it' referring to the ladder, a masculine noun in Hebrew, and which can also be understood as 'on him'. C. Rowland stresses that 'ambiguity is there and would have been exploited at very early times'.<sup>40</sup> Significantly, however, the LXX text used the feminine pronoun 'ἐπ' αὐτῆς', thus referring clearly to the 'κλίμαξ' ('ladder') a feminine noun in Greek. Apparently, for the LXX redactors there was no ambiguity about the meaning of the phrase. Most probably, John established a connection between Jacob's heavenly vision with the Son of Man on the basis of an understanding of the Son of Man as an exalted heavenly being usually associated with a retinue of angelic hosts.<sup>41</sup>

With regard to the patristic tradition, it is particularly striking that the exegetes do not connect the passage in the Gospel of John with Gen 28:12 until the beginning of the fifth century. As J.H. Bernhard rightly observes: 'When the proneness of the early exegetes to seek O.T. *testimonia* is remembered, this is remarkable'.<sup>42</sup> The first reference can be found most probably in the Western tradition, in Augustine's Homilies on the Gospel of John that date to 406–407 CE. In the Eastern tradition, Cyril of Alexandria is the first author to make the association explicitly in his work 'Glaphyra', which dates approximately to the first decades of the fifth century. In the context of Cyril's elucidation on the assisting role of the angels in Jacob's story, Cyril quotes John 1:51 faithfully and proceeds to clarify that the 'holy spirits' on the ladder were reaching Christ, who is not one of them but their Lord and God.<sup>43</sup>

Jacob's ladder was understood early on in the patristic literature as the struggle of the faithful to ascend to heaven and to reach God. The

<sup>40</sup> 'John 1.51, Jewish Apocalyptic and Targumic Tradition', *NTS* 30 (1984), 501.

<sup>41</sup> See A.J.B. Higgins, *Jesus and the Son of Man*, Cambridge 1964, 159. According to the scholarship, the starting point of this perception could have been synoptic and Jewish apocalyptic sayings about the Son of Man as a heavenly being, see H. Odeberg, *The Fourth Gospel Interpreted in its Relation to Contemporaneous Religious Currents in Palestine and the Hellenistic-Oriental World*, Uppsala 1929, 36. M. Werner argues for the Son of Man as a messianic title, whereby he would belong to the (highest) celestial realm of angels (*The Formation of Christian Dogma*, London 1957, 120). In the synoptic Gospels, the image of the Son of Man is encountered as an angelic prince who appears with his host of angels (Mark 8:38; Mark 13:26–27); see W. Michaelis, *Zur Engelchristologie im Urchristentum*; J. Barbel, *Christos Angelos*.

<sup>42</sup> *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John*, Edinburgh 1928, 70.

<sup>43</sup> 'Τοῦτο, οἶμαι, ἔστιν ἡ κλίμαξ "ἡ ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω τῶν ἁγίων πνευμάτων διαδρομή, πεμπομένων εἰς διακονίαν, διὰ τοὺς μέλλοντας κληρονομεῖν βασιλείαν". Ἐπεστηρίχτο δὲ τῇ κλίμακι Χριστός, ὡς μέχρις αὐτοῦ φθάνοντων τῶν ἁγίων πνευμάτων, καὶ αὐτὸν ἐχόντων τὸν ἐπιστάτην. Οὐχ ὡς ὄντα κατ' αὐτὰ, ἀλλ' ὡς Θεὸν καὶ Κύριον' (PG 69:189).

interpretation of Jacob's ladder as a metaphor for the ascetic quest was central in Christian exegesis that displayed a monastic outlook. The ladder is envisioned as a ladder of virtues that can lead to heaven, and it becomes a symbol for moral ascent or decline.<sup>44</sup> Jerome uses the story of Jacob's Ladder as a moral exhortation to Christian life. According to this metaphor, the Lord is standing on the top of the ladder supporting the faithful, but hurling down the sinners and the unworthy.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, John Chrysostom associates Jacob's ladder, which united heaven and earth, with the tortures that martyrs had to endure on the 'iron ladder' but which led them to heaven (Homily on Martyrs 5).<sup>46</sup> Cyril of Alexandria argues that Jacob was named 'Israel' by God because he saw the ascending and descending angels on the ladder. Moreover, the ladder also becomes a symbol for a vision of God.<sup>47</sup> Alternatively, Origen, in the third century, discusses the possibility that Jacob's vision was referring to Plato's theories about the ascent of the soul through the planets (Contr. Cels. VI.21.9).

The metaphorical approach to Jacob's vision at Bethel persists throughout the history of Christian interpretation of this episode. The ladder represents the ascetic struggle<sup>48</sup> or the piety of God.<sup>49</sup> It is also a symbol of spiritual progress.<sup>50</sup> Significantly, the monastic writer John of the Ladder (John Climacus; 575–650 CE) composed a famous treatise, known as 'The Ladder of the Divine Ascent', in which he employed the image of Jacob's Ladder in the context of a spiritual struggle by monks on the 'ladder of virtues' (PG 88: 841A; 1160C; 1132B).<sup>51</sup>

Later interpretations of Jacob's Ladder associate it with the Mother of God. John of Damascus in the early eighth century argues that the Mother of God unites the divine with the human nature of Jesus Christ in her

<sup>44</sup> John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 54.17–18; Hom.John 84; Gregory of Nazianzus Oratio 43.71; Isaiah of Sketis, Ascetic Discourses 4.

<sup>45</sup> Epistles 54.6; 22.4; 108.7; cf. 123.15; Against Jovinianus II.27; cf. also Procopius of Gaza, Comm.Gen. (PG 87:426f.).

<sup>46</sup> See St. John Chrysostom, *The Cult of the Saints: select homilies and letters*, ed. – trans. W. Mayer – B. Neil, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press 2006, 522.

<sup>47</sup> J. Reuss, *Matthaeuskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*, TU 61, 1957, zu Mt 2,6 (nr.11); see F.R. Gahbauer, 'Die Jakobsleiter, ein aussagenreiches Motiv der Väterliteratur', ZAC 9 (2006), 254.

<sup>48</sup> Andrew of Crete, Magnus Canon (PG 97:1347–8).

<sup>49</sup> Maximus the Confessor, Quaest. 88.

<sup>50</sup> Vita of Severus of Antioch, PO 2/3, 209, 7–14.

<sup>51</sup> See Saint John (Climacus), *The Ladder of the Divine Ascent*, trans. C. Luibhéid, London 1982; J. Chryssavgis, *John Climacus: from the Egyptian desert to the Sinaite mountain*, London – N.Y. 2004.

body, which is similar to the way Jacob's ladder connects heaven and earth (Hom. Dormit. B.V. Mariae 8; PG 96:712A).<sup>52</sup>

Another stream of exegesis employs a literal understanding of Jacob's story, and deals with practical issues in the narrative. John Chrysostom concludes that Jacob gave a name to the place of the vision as he wished to make it memorable. Furthermore, he poured oil over the stone because he was travelling and the oil was all he had with him (Hom.Gen 54.23). Similarly, Ephraem the Syrian suggests that Jacob either had the oil with him or that 'he had brought it out of the village' (Comm.Gen. XXVI.2), and Isaiah of Sketis describes how Jacob set off for his journey and took 'his rod and his bottle of oil' (Asc.Disc. 4).

A tradition that is preserved in an anonymous Catena fragment compares the anointing carried out by Jacob to the anointing with oil performed by priests on tables and columns of churches (Cat. Petit 1513).<sup>53</sup> In this context, Jacob's deed is set in a distinctly Christian liturgical frame of reference. This interpretation was probably supported by the fact that Jacob called the place a 'House of God', which recalls a common name for a church building.<sup>54</sup> According to Basil of Caesarea, Jacob showed that this was a place of God's spirit, when he claimed: 'The Lord is in this place' (On the Spirit 62).

However, the appellation '*House of God*' was problematic for those exegetes who understood the story in a literal or more practical context. Procopius (Comm.Gen., PG 87:429) and later Ishodad of Merv (Comm. Gen. ad Gen 28:21) explains that Jacob did not actually build a 'house', as this could not make sense when he had only used a stone. They suggest, instead, that he built an altar in honour of God.

A very characteristic literal interpretation is brought forward by Theodoret of Cyrrhus. Theodoret writes: 'This was how he made a return to the munificent Lord from his own possessions. Setting up a stone, which he

<sup>52</sup> Cf. also Andrew of Crete, Orat. 13,3 (PG 97:1104C–1105A).

<sup>53</sup> The anointing ceremonies described here reflect Eastern Church rites for the consecration of a church. During these rites, the altar table is washed and anointed. Then the bishop anoints the four walls of the church and holy icons with holy chrism. These rites reflect the consecration and anointing of the tabernacle and the vessels as in Exodus 40 and the consecration of the Temple of Solomon; 1 Kings 8 and 2 Chronicles 5–7; see A. King, *The Rites of Eastern Christendom*, vol. 1, Gorgias 2007, 93.

<sup>54</sup> 'A house of God' (Mark 2:26) or 'house of prayer' (Mark 11:17) was a designation for the Temple. In Heb 3:3–6 the Christian congregation is a 'house of God'. For the symbolism in the Syriac context, see C.A. Karim: 'Since the 'house of God' in Syriac Christianity is another name of the church, the Syriac Fathers looked at Bethel as a type of the Church' (*Symbols of the Cross in the Writings of the Early Syriac Fathers*, 60).

had put under his head, he poured oil on it. Even today you can observe a very similar practice among many Christian women. In God's chapels they often anoint with oil both the latticed gates of the shrines and the tombs of the holy martyrs, and this is an indication of their nobility of soul. Appreciating the intention behind the act, the loving Lord welcomes even insignificant gifts' (Quaest. LXXXV). Interestingly, Theodoret associates the biblical passage with a practice that he must have observed in his everyday life. However, although Theodoret places the performance of the anointing in a devotional context, he does not associate it with an official liturgical setting.<sup>55</sup>

A Syriac text attributed to Eusebius of Samosata describes a vision of archbishop Jacob of Nisibis to whom Jesus' cross appeared, just as the ladder appeared to Jacob. Then, Jacob of Nisibis was ordered to ask the bishop Eusebius for the building of a new church, following Jacob's example who erected a 'house of God' at Bethel.<sup>56</sup>

Finally, a fragment that is attributed to Diodore of Tarsus regards the anointing of the stone and the naming of it by Jacob as a 'house of God' as a model for the tent of Moses, which he also built, set up and anointed (Cat. Csl 238).<sup>57</sup> Ishodad of Merv offers a similar exegetical interpretation. He states that the anointing of the stone signified the future tabernacle of the covenant and the priests. However, in the same passage, he emphasizes that Jacob's actions were to be fulfilled in Christ (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 28:18).

### *The Angels on the Ladder and their Symbolism*

A common Christian approach to the story is that the vision served as God's sign to Jacob, so that Jacob could be reassured of God's present and future support, especially through the assistance of angels. Accordingly,

<sup>55</sup> John Chrysostom reports also of the practice of the faithful anointing themselves with oil that had touched holy martyrs (Hom. on Martyrs 93–7). On the veneration of martyrs in Early Christianity, see R. MacMullen, *Christianity and Paganism*, London 1997. See also E. Hunter, 'The Cult of Saints in Syria During the Fifth Century, A.D.', *Studia Patristica XXV* (1993), 308, who notes: 'By the fifth century A.D. the cult of saints and martyrs reached its apogee in Syria, where many of the sites associated with holy men had become internationally renowned'; cf. J. Lassus, *Sanctuaires chrétiens de Syrie*, Paris 1944, 129–132.

<sup>56</sup> See P. Davos, 'Le dossier syriaque de S. Eusebe de Samosata', *AnBoll* 85 (1967), 216f.; cf. F.R. Gahbauer, 'Die Jacobsleiter', 268.

<sup>57</sup> ἐπέχεεν ὁ Ἰακώβ ἔλαιον ἐπὶ τὸ ἄκρον τοῦ λίθου, καὶ ἐκάλεσε τὸν τόπον, Οἶκος Θεοῦ. Ἦν δὲ τὸ πρᾶγμα τύπος τῆς Μωσαϊκῆς σκιῆς, ἣν κατασκευάσας καὶ ἀναστήσας, ἔχρισεν (cf. Exod 40: 17–33; Lev 8:10–11; Num 7:1.); this fragment is also attested by Theodore of Mospuestia, *Fragmenta in Genesis* (PG 66:644); cf. also Procopius, *Comm.Gen.* (PG 87:428).

Origen stresses that Jacob's story demonstrates the assisting and protecting role of angels (Hom. in Psalm 36 (IV.3); PG 12:1356). Similarly, Ephraem the Syrian argues that the ladder was a sign from God that he would protect Jacob with his angels (Comm.Gen. XXIII.3). The ladder is, further, a symbol of the connection between heaven and earth, while the angels mediate between heaven and earth and help believers (Cyril of Alexandria, Glaphyra IV:4; PG 69:189).

Theodoret of Cyrillus notes: 'God immediately manifested this care by appearing to him. He showed him a ladder reaching as far as heaven and the holy angels ascending and descending, while God himself, standing on high, encouraged him and drove away his fear. Now the angels were clearly performing service to God, for as St. Paul said, 'Are they not all ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?' (Heb 1:14). Every detail of this vision was sufficient to instill confidence in the patriarch for it taught him that God does not leave outside his care and providence but governs the universe with the holy angels as his ministers' (Quaest. LXXXIV).

Other exegetical approaches argue that Jacob's vision offers instruction about angels, and especially about their role and services. Jacob's vision, according to Gennadius of Constantinople, is a proof for the existence of angels (PG 85:1649c; cf. Cat. Csl 233).<sup>58</sup> Jerome associates the descending and ascending angels on the ladder with Ps 82:6–7, which refers to the exalted angels who will fall and die like men (Ep. 22). Furthermore, the interpretation that the ascending and descending angels were a symbol for Jacob's descent to Mesopotamia and his return to the same place is also encountered.<sup>59</sup> According to another interpretation, the angelic vision could refer to Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. The angels would then

<sup>58</sup> Ἠνίπτετο δὲ διὰ τοῦτον καὶ τὸν Ἰακώβ ἐξεδίδασκεν, οὐ μόνον τὸ τοὺς ἀγγέλους ἐν τῷ καθ' ἡμᾶς εἶναι χώρῳ, τῷ ὑπουρανίῳ φημι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ μόνον τοῖς πᾶσιν ἄνωθεν ἐφροσάνασι κύριον, ἀγγελικαῖς δυνάμεσι τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς διοικούμενον, καὶ μηδὲν ἀπρονόητον τῶν τῆδε μηδὲ ὡς ἔτυχε νομίζειν φερέσθαι, μὴ τοῖνυν δεῖν διὰ τοῦτο μηδὲ αὐτὸν τὴν ἐκδημίαν ὀκνεῖν, οὐ γὰρ πείσεσθαι τι δυσχερὲς ἐν αὐτῇ, καὶ γὰρ εἶναι τὸν ἐμφανισθέντα νῦν αὐτῷ τοῦτον ἐκείνον τὸν πατρῶων θεὸν καὶ οὐχ ἕτερον, ὃς ἐπαγγέλεται σαφῶς αὐτῷ τε καὶ τοῖς ἐξ' αὐτοῦ τῆς ἐφ' ἧς νῦν καθεύδει γῆς τὴν κατάσχεσιν.

<sup>59</sup> Diodore of Tarsus: *Κλίμαξ ἐφάνη τῷ Ἰακώβ, καὶ ἀγγέλων πλῆθος ἀνιόντων καὶ κατιόντων, καὶ ὁ κύριος ἐστηριγμένος ἐπὶ τῆς κλίμακος. Ἐδήλου δὲ τὴν τε κάθοδον τοῦ Ἰακώβ τὴν εἰς Μεσοποταμίαν καὶ τὴν ἐκείθεν ἐπάνοδον, καὶ τὴν δι' ἀγγέλων αὐτῷ χορηγηθησομένην βοήθειαν, πρὸ δὲ πάντων, τοῦ κυρίου τὴν κάθοδον μετὰ ταῦτα ἐσομένην, τοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς κλίμακος ἐστηριγμένου, τὴν ἐξ' οὐρανῶν, καὶ τὴν ἐπάνοδον* (Cat. Csl 234).

represent the 'ministers of Zechariah and Mary, and the Magi and the shepherds (*Cave of Treasures* XXXI, 17–18, cf. Luke 2).<sup>60</sup>

Ishodad of Merv argues that Jacob's vision teaches that the heavenly regions can be reached first by the angels and then by all the righteous people. Furthermore, God's providence is manifested in that he distributes his benefits by sending the angels. It is also shown that this will be the land, in which God will be revealed at the end of time through a descendant of Jacob. In addition, the vision shows that only he is the Lord God, with commanding power, and that the angels are servants who follow his commands. The angels also demonstrate their good will in executing their mission. According to Ishodad, the angels can ascend to the top of the ladder, but they are not permitted to ascend more highly as a sign that they will receive the future world along with the entire creation. Furthermore, this means that because the angels, along with the people, are assigned a ministering role, God has designated this particular space between heaven and earth for all angels, so that they can provide for the needs of the people. Jacob could also observe how the angels were working for others, in the same way that he too should work for Laban's household. Accordingly, Jacob's future was revealed to him in this vision (*Comm.Gen. ad Gen 28:12–15*).

Thus, the ascending and descending angels on the ladder revealed various aspects of divine providence and assistance with respect to humankind in general, and to the patriarch, Jacob, in particular. Notably, Christian exegesis of Gen 28:12 reflected a variety of views on the role and function of the angels. Finally, Jacob's vision of the angels is also linked to Jesus coming into the world.

### *The Christological Interpretation of Jacob's Vision*

As already noted, the Christian exegetical tradition considered the vision at Bethel as a typological manifestation of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. Jacob sees Jesus and not God the Father on the top of the ladder. This interpretation is characteristic for Christian exegetes, who explain the theophanic episodes of the Old Testament in a christological typological way.

This line of interpretation is already developed by Justin Martyr. Justin Martyr argues that it is proven in Scripture that only Christ could have

---

<sup>60</sup> On angels in the NT, see G. Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 1, 13f.

manifested himself to Jacob, because only 'He, who is called God and appeared to the patriarchs is called both Angel and Lord' (Dial. LVIII). Thus, Justin Martyr interprets the promise that was pronounced to Jacob at Bethel christologically as a promise for Christ's advent (Dial. CXX). According to this exegetical approach, it was specifically Jesus who appeared at Bethel and not God.<sup>61</sup> This idea represents a common Christian exegetical understanding of the theophanic revelations of the Old Testament.<sup>62</sup>

John Chrysostom argues that the manifestation of the Lord on the Ladder was a prophecy that the Father would have a Son (Hom. Col. V; on Col 1:26–28). Ephraem the Syrian in his 'Homily on the Feast of Epiphany' compares Jesus on the day of his baptism in Jordan with Jacob's ladder, because he united the water on earth with the gate of heaven (Hymn. Epiphany. 11.11). Similarly, Severus of Antioch compares Jesus with the ladder. According to Severus: 'he will be a ladder from those lying down because of the sin and because of Adam's transgression and he will lead us up to heaven, being a magnificent and heavenly gate, revealing to us the Father, himself and the Holy Ghost, through the ladder which connects the heavenly with the earthly things' (Hom. Cath. 1,5–6, in Cat. Petit 1504).<sup>63</sup> Following a similar exegetical tradition, Jacob of Edessa in the seventh century understands Jacob's dream as a prophetic vision of Jesus, who descended from heaven so that through his descent humankind is able to ascend to heaven (Hexaemeron, ed. Vaschalde, 15).<sup>64</sup>

In this context of interpretation, the ladder becomes a symbol for the cross. Irenaeus of Lyons in the late second century develops this exegetical approach further: 'And Jacob, when he went into Mesopotamia, saw Him in a dream, *standing upon the ladder*, that is, the tree, which was set

<sup>61</sup> See G.M. Vian, 'Interpretazioni Giudaiche et Cristiane Antiche del Sogno di Giacobbe (Genesi 28, 10–22)', *Aug 29* (1989), 324, and A. Orbe, *Introducción a la teología de los siglos II y III*, Rome 1987, who argues that Irenaeus does not mention the angels specifically and neither does Justin because they focus their exegesis of the passage on the salvific economy of passion of the Logos on the cross for humanity.

<sup>62</sup> On Jacob in connection with theophanic revelations in the Old Testament, see G. Aeby, 'Les missions divines de Saint-Justin à Origène', *Paradosis* 12 (1958), 7–15; B. Kominiak, *The Theophanies of the Old Testament in the Writings of St. Justin*, Washington 1948; D. Trakatellis, *Pre-existence in the Writings of Justin Martyr*, Missoula MT 1976, 53–92; O. Skarsaune, *Proof from Prophecy*, 409–24.

<sup>63</sup> Αὐτὸς ἡμῖν καὶ κλίμαξ γενήσεται, τοὺς χαμαὶ κειμένους ὑπὸ τῆς ἀμαρτίας καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀδάμ παραβάσεως ἀνάγων εἰς οὐρανόν, καὶ πύλη περιφανῆς καὶ οὐράνιος ἀποκαλύπτων ἡμῖν τὸν πατέρα καὶ ἑαυτὸν καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, τῇ κλίμακι δι' ἧς συνήφθη τὰ ἐπίγεια πρὸς τὰ οὐράνια.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Cat. Petit 1505; Basil of Caesarea, Hom. Psalms 1.4 (PG 29:217–220); Cyril of Alexandria, Glaphyra IV.4 (PG 69:188–189).

up from earth to heaven; for thereby they that believe on Him go up to the heavens. For His sufferings are our ascension on high. And all such visions point to the Son of God, speaking with men and being in their midst. For it was not the Father of all, who is not seen by the world, the Maker of all who said: *Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me, or what is the place of my rest?* and who *comprehendeth the earth with his hand, and with his span the heaven*—it was not He that came and stood in a very small space and spoke with Abraham; but the Word of God, who was ever with mankind, and made known beforehand what should come to pass in the future, and taught men the things of God.' (Demonstrations 45).

Thus, Irenaeus argues that the ladder is a symbol for a 'cosmic tree', uniting heaven and earth. In this metaphorical way, Irenaeus refers to the cross, associating the tree with the sufferings of the Lord. In a further christological approach, he points to the salvific meaning of the cross, since through Jesus' suffering humanity may ascend to heaven and receive salvation. This additional point supports the christological theophanic argument that is brought forward by Irenaeus, as it proves that only Jesus could have appeared standing on the ladder, which is the cross. This interpretation is also encountered in Hippolytus of Rome. Hippolytus understands the ladder as the cross with celestial and cosmic dimensions (Homelies paschales, ed. P. Nautin, 177).

The cross as a ladder became a common image in early Christianity.<sup>65</sup> In the pseudepigraphon known as Acts of Philip, which dates to the mid to late fourth century, it states: 'And he [the Lord] drew a cross in the air reaching down into the abyss, and it was filled with light, and the cross was like a ladder' (138).<sup>66</sup>

The symbolism of the ladder as the cross was also popular in the Syriac tradition. Aphrahat, in the early fourth century, points to the ladder as a symbol for the cross (Dem. IV). The *Cave of Treasures* explains that the Lord stood on the top of the ladder, as he also stood on the top of the cross, so that he would descend to redeem humanity (XXXI.17–18). Jacob of Sarug in his 'Poem on Jacob's Vision at Bethel' describes how

<sup>65</sup> On the imagery of the cross in the Early Church according to Old Testament *testimonia*, see G.T. Armstrong, 'The Cross in the Old Testament according to Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem and the Cappadocian Fathers', in: C. Andersen – G. Klein (eds), *Theologia Crucis signum crucis*, Tübingen 1979, 17–38; see also M. Fédou, 'La vision de la croix dans l'oeuvre de saint Justin', *Recherches Augustiniennes* 19 (1984), 29–110.

<sup>66</sup> See J.K. Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 518; cf. Hannecke-Schneemelcher, *NT Apokryphen* II, 424ff.



'the mountain became the house of God for Jacob and the cross came and stood up in it like a ladder'.<sup>67</sup> In another poem, Jacob of Sarug recounts that Jacob truly saw the crucified Jesus on the ladder.<sup>68</sup>

The christological approach to this biblical episode, which understands Jacob's vision as a theophanic revelation of Jesus Christ is epitomized by the Syriac *Cave of Treasures*: 'And when God had shown the blessed Jacob the Cross of Christ by means of the Ladder of the Angels, and the coming down of Christ for our redemption, and the Church, the House of God, and the alter by means of the stone, and the offering by means of the tithes and the anointing by means of the oil, Jacob went to the east' (XXXI.19).

### *The Anointing of the Stone*

The typological interpretation of Jacob's vision at Bethel also focuses on the stone that Jacob uses as a pillow, and later sets up as a pillar and anoints.<sup>69</sup> As Justin remarks, Jacob himself bears witness to this vision of Christ by pouring oil on the stone. Justin connects the vision with the Anointed One, based on Ps 45:7 (LXX 44:7; cf. Heb 1:9):<sup>70</sup> 'He also claimed that he saw a ladder, and the Scripture has stated that God rested on it, and we have shown from the Scriptures that this was not the Father. And when Jacob had poured oil over a stone at the same place, God appeared to him and told him that he had anointed a pillar in honor of the God whom he had seen. We likewise had proved that in many Scriptural passages Christ is symbolically called a *Stone*. We have likewise shown that every chrism, whether of oil, or myrrh, or any other balsam compound, was a figure of Christ; for the Word says, *Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellow kings* (Ps 45:8). All kings and other anointed persons are called king and anointed *in participation in him*, just as he himself received from the Father the titles of *King*,

<sup>67</sup> Hom. 135 (P. Bedjan (ed.), *Homiliae selectae Mar Jacobi Sarugensis*, IV. 797); see also Hom. 166, (op. cit. V.474); see C.A. Karim, *Symbols of the Cross in the Writings of the Early Syriac Fathers*, 61f.

<sup>68</sup> Similar imagery can also be found in Narsai: 'this vision is the mystery of the crucified man' (Hom. 30, in: P. Bidjan (ed.), *Hom. sel. II:123*); see C.A. Karim, *Symbols of the Cross in the Writings of the Early Syriac Fathers*, 61.

<sup>69</sup> See M. de Jonge, 'The Word Anointed in the Time of Jesus', *NovT* 4 (1996), 132–148; cf. W. Bousset, *Kyrios Christos: A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus*, Göttingen 1921.

<sup>70</sup> See J.C. O'Neill: 'Justin Martyr drew attention to the tradition that a messianic significance was attached to the anointing of the stone by Jacob in Gen 28' ('Son of Man, Stone of Blood (John 1:51)', *NT* 45.4 (2003), 377f.).

and *Christ*, and *Priest*, and *Angel*, and all the other titles of this king which he has or had' (Dial. LXXXVI.2–3; cf. Dial. LVIII).<sup>71</sup>

Gregory of Nazianzus (Second Theological Oration XVIII) argues that Jacob saw the Lord at Bethel and: 'in a mystery anointed a pillar perhaps to purify the Rock that was anointed for our own sake'. Accordingly, Jacob's action acquires a certain liturgical significance.

Aphrahat (Dem. IV.5) develops an elaborate christological interpretation of Jacob's vision based on a series of testimonia.<sup>72</sup> He identifies the person on the ladder with Jesus, according to John 10:9 (Jesus as the gate of life). Furthermore, the ladder is a symbol for Jesus and God stands over him (cf. 1 Cor 11:3: God is the head of the Church). The ladder serves as a symbol for Jesus, who helps believers to ascend. Moreover, Jacob symbolically anoints the stones and his prayer reveals the call to the Gentiles. Summarising, Aphrahat stresses that Jacob's vision illustrates that the gate of heaven is Christ, the ladder is the cross and the stones are the Gentiles: 'For in Jacob's prayer the calling of the nations was symbolized'. Aphrahat is probably the earliest source that understands Jacob's vision as the call to the Gentiles explicitly. This approach is connected with the identification of the 'stones' with the Gentiles, which was common in the Early Church.<sup>73</sup>

---

<sup>71</sup> See O. Skarsaune: 'Jacob's anointing of the stone in Bethel is a type of Christ's anointing' also 'Ps. 45:8 is a direct testimony' (*Proof from Prophecy*, 276; cf. *ibid.* 215); cf. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.Hom.* 21.2. M. Albl notes that 'by the time of Justin, the title 'stone' for Jesus is so well established that Justin can simply make the identification without further comment ('*And Scripture Cannot Be Broken*'. *The Form and Function of the Early Christian Testimonia Collections*, Leiden 1999, 265). A 'stone' (lithos) is a name for Christ in the work of Justin (Dial. XXXIV; XXXVI). Justin stresses that Christ is called a stone and a rock in parables by the prophets (Dial. CXIII; cf. Dial. CXIV); cf. Ephraem, *Comm. on Tatian's Diatessaron* 21.21; Aphrahat, *Dem.* I.6; Eusebius, *Dem.Ev.* I.27–28. On rock/stone testimonia, see J.R. Harris, *Testimonies*, Cambridge 1916, 18–20, 26–32; C.H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*, London 1952, 21, 41–52; M. Albl, *op. cit.*, 265ff.

<sup>72</sup> As R. Murray, notes: 'He (Aphrahat) has three great themes (all familiar already from Justin and others), namely that Christ is called a Stone (Dem I.17–21) that he is the Light (*ibid.* 21–5; xvi, 780–1) and that the Gentiles have replaced the Jews.' (*Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 42f.). See also Aphrahat *Dem.* XVI. 'On the nations which have taken the place of the nation'.

<sup>73</sup> On the symbolism of the 'stones' as the Gentiles, also see Luke 3:8 and Matt 3:9: 'And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham'. This is connected to Isa 51:1–2; cf. J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu II B*, Göttingen 1958, 72ff. According to some scholars, the NT writers already saw a reference to the Gentiles (see H. Schuermann, *Das Lukasevan-gelium*, Freiburg 1969, I.165, n.31; R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Oxford 1996, 111). The association with Abraham might reflect the fact that Abraham was also born a Gentile. So, the Gentiles were from a certain point of view the 'sons of Abraham', see W.D. Davies –

A similar line of interpretation is followed by Ephraem the Syrian. According to Ephraem, the oil that Jacob poured on the stone was a symbol for Christ and the stone revealed the mystery of the Church of the Gentiles: 'In the rock the mystery of the church is also represented, for it is to her that vows and offerings of all nations were soon to come'. As R. Murray observes: 'both Aphrahat (Dem IV. 145) and Ephraem (Gen XXVI.3) see in Jacob's anointing of his stone at Bethel a type of Christ's 'anointing' believers who come from the Gentiles. This is the place where our authors would surely have used 1 Peter 2:4–8 on Christians as 'living stones', if they had known this epistle; but they can approach this theme only through their typology'.<sup>74</sup>

Cyril of Alexandria explains that the stone had been erected as a symbol for Christ and had been sprinkled with oil, just as Immanuel was anointed by the Father 'with the oil of gladness above his fellows' (Ps 45:7). After that, he was raised from the dead, even though he had descended to death voluntarily. According to Cyril, this is the true meaning of 'erecting a stone'. Thus, the 'erection of the stone' also becomes a symbol for the resurrection of Jesus. In addition, Cyril of Alexandria argues that Jesus is the cornerstone according to Isa 28:16, and maintains that: 'Because the people in faith reposed on Christ, who is the precious, honourable stone and the cornerstone this is the meaning of the phrase: 'he slept over the stone'.<sup>75</sup> The association of Jesus with the cornerstone, according to Isa 28:16, was common in patristic literature.<sup>76</sup>

Jerome suggests that the stone was the cornerstone mentioned in Isa 28:16, which served as the foundation of Zion. Furthermore, he identifies

---

D.A. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Gospel According to Saint Matthew I*, Edinburgh 1988, 307f. This theology is developed by Paul, Rom 4:12, Gal 3:16–29, 4:21–31; see E. Sanders, *Paul, the Law and the Jewish people*, Philadelphia 1983, 37–38; cf. Ignatius, Mag. 10, Eph. 9.1; Barnabas 6.2–4. Jerome (Comm.Matt. 3.9; cf. *ibid* 21:42) calls the Gentiles 'stones' on account of their initial hardness of heart; cf. Cyril of Alex., Comm. Luke, Hom. 7. Further on this motif in the Gospels and in John's Revelation against the background of the Qumran writings, see D. Flusser, *Judaism in the Second Temple Period*, Grand Rapids MI 2007, 317.

<sup>74</sup> *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 208.

<sup>75</sup> ἐπειδὴ δὲ ὁ ἐν πίστει λαὸς ἐπανευπάσατο τῷ Χριστῷ, ὅς ἐστι λίθος ἐκλεκτός, ἀκρογωνιαίος, ἔντιμος, τοῦτο γάρ, οἱμαί ἐστι τὸ ἐφυρνθῆναι τῷ λίθῳ (PG 69:189); cf. Procopius, Comm.Gen. (PG 87:427–428).

<sup>76</sup> The association of Jesus with the 'rejected cornerstone' is common in the New Testament (Mark 12:10; Matt 21:42; Luke 20:17–18; Acts 4:11; 1 Pet 2:4–8; Eph 2:20–22). The christological interpretation of this association is based on several passages from the Hebrew Bible (Ps 118:22; Isa 28:16, 8:14; Dan 2:34f. 44f.; Exod 17:6; Num 20:7ff.; Zech 4:10). On the Jewish background of the association of the Messiah with a stone, see J. Jeremias, 'Der Eckstein', *AITEΛOΣ* 1 (1925), 65–70; *idem*, 'Eckstein-Schlufstein', *ZNW* 36 (1937), 154–57.

the stone in Jacob's story with the stone described by Zech 3:9 that is engraved by Lord and has seven eyes (Ep. 108.13).<sup>77</sup>

A similar exegetical approach is encountered in a 'Homily on the Psalms', which is attributed to Eustathius of Antioch, but is preserved only in fragments.<sup>78</sup> Eustathius underlines the common christological interpretation of the story. Accordingly, the ladder indicates the cross. Eustathius states additionally that 'this stone also represents that cornerstone, which was rejected by masons but became the head of the corner (cf. 1 Petr 2:6–7). Interestingly, Eustathius expands his interpretation and adds that Jacob had a vision of the 'bodily appearance of Christ', which he later engraved on the stone. As he writes: 'and the one, who reported the vision, took the stone, on which he has rested, lying (down) his head on it, and established it as a pillar, a memorial of the story, and he engraved on it a picture of the face, which appeared to him, and he set so on this a recalling to memory'.<sup>79</sup> The idea of engraving a face appears to be close to Jerome's interpretation of the stone, according to Zech 3:9, outlined above. Eustathius' commentary, however, emphasizes the christological message of the story. Moreover, Eustathius seems to allude to an actual engraving of the stone without the metaphysical or eschatological significance of the Zechariah verse. Possibly, Eustathius referred to physical representations of Jesus that could have been observed in sanctuaries at the time.<sup>80</sup> Notably, Eustathius' christological interpretation is particularly

<sup>77</sup> 'et de Bethel, Domo Dei, in qua super nudam humum nudus et pauper dormivit Iacob; et posito subter caput lapide, qui in Zaccharia septem oculos habere describitur et in Isaia lapis dicitur angularis, vidit scalam tendentem usque ad caelum in qua Dominus desuper in nitebatur'.

<sup>78</sup> There are 92 fragments that are preserved in Catenae and Florilegia collections under the name of Eustathius of Antioch, although the actual authorship of many of them is uncertain, see F. Scheidweiler, 'Die Fragmente des Eustathius', *ByZ* 48 (1955), 73–85; cf. F.R. Gahbauer, 'Die Jakobsleiter', 215f. Eustathius, who must have died in the mid fourth century or c.370, was a follower of the Antiochean school of exegesis and opposed to the allegorical approach to the understanding of Scripture. See A. Grillmaier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, London 1965, 296ff; R.V. Sellers, *Eustathius of Antioch and his Place in the Early History of the Christian Doctrine*, Cambridge 1928.

<sup>79</sup> 'Ὡς οὖν ἰστόρησε τὴν τοιαύτην ὀπτασίαν, τὸν λίθον ἄρας ἐφ' ἣν τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀνακλίνας ἤσυχασεν, ἔστησε μὲν αὐτὸν εἰς στήλην, ὑπόμνημα τῆς ἱστορίας, εἰκόνα δὲ τοῦ φανέντος αὐτῷ προσώπου χαρακτηρίζων ἐν νῶ μνήμης ἀνανέωσιν ἱδρυσεν. (Fragment 64, in: Eustathii Antiocheni, *Opera omnia*, ed. Declercq, 134).

<sup>80</sup> See R. Milburn on stone engraving, especially on decorated sarcophagi in Early Christianity; a usual theme of the engravings was Christ in majesty (*Early Christian Art and Architecture*, Berkeley 1991, 58ff.); cf. R.M. Jensen, who observes that Jesus' images dominated third and early fourth century art, usually depicting Jesus 'in divine position as the Christian Messiah' (*Understanding Early Christian Art*, London 2000, 95).

detailed. He understands the pouring of oil as an allusion to Mary's pouring sweet oil (myrron) on Jesus' feet (John 12:3–7): 'which again happened to be a message of the grave, the way the Lord also declared it openly' (αὐτὸ δὲ ἐτύγγαθεν ἐκεῖνο, μῆνυμα τῆς ταφῆς, ὡς αὐτὸς ἐσαφήνισεν ἀναφανδὸν ὁ κύριος). Bethel, the 'House of God', is an allusion to the Temple, which is Christ's body, and which according to John 2:19 will be restored after three days.<sup>81</sup>

The association of the 'gate of heaven' in Jacob's vision with Jesus Christ is further encountered in Procopius of Gaza. Procopius explains that Jesus is the 'gate of heaven' through which one can enter heaven and approach the throne of God (PG 87:426f.). Similar ideas about the symbolic meaning of the stone, which is called a 'gate of heaven' and a 'house of God' can be found in an Anonymous Dialogue with the Jews, which dates to the sixth century (ed. Declerck). Following the same line of interpretation as the above outlined traditions, this polemical text argues that Jacob refers prophetically to Jesus. Anonymous Dialogue I.225 states:

Ἄλλ' Ἰακώβ ἐγίνωσκεν ὄντως καὶ τί εἶδε καὶ τί ἀκήκος καὶ τίνα εἶπεν πύλην τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τίνα οἶκον θεοῦ καὶ τί προετύπου ὁ λίθος ἐκεῖνος ἐλαίῳ χρισίμενος

But Jacob knew indeed what he heard and what he saw, and what he called 'gate of heaven' and what 'house of God' and of what form that stone was, which he anointed with oil.

Early Church Fathers, such as Justin Martyr, identified the anointed stone at Bethel with Jesus Christ. This line of interpretation was also followed up and elaborated upon by later patristic exegesis and dominated the Christian understanding of Jacob's vision. In connection with Ps 45:8 and Isa 28:16, Jacob's anointing of the stone was understood in a messianic sense. In alternative approaches, Jacob's vision also reveals the mystery of the Church of the Gentiles.

### *The Exegetical Encounter*

The traditions discussed in this chapter are primarily connected to the topics of election and expectation in both rabbinic and Christian sources. The

<sup>81</sup> 'Οἶκον δὲ δὴ θεοῦ προσειπὼν αὐτὸν, ἠνίττετο τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ λόγουν ναὸν, ὡς καὶ προσειπὼν αὐτὸς ἐξέφαινε ὁ τοῦ παντοκράτορος υἱὸς: Λύσατε τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον, καὶ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις ἐγερῶ αὐτόν' (Eustathii Antiocheni, Opera omnia, ed. Declerq, 134); see also Eustathius of Antioch, Homilia in Lazarum 213–222, in: *ibid.*, 219; cf. Mark 14:58; cf. also F.R. Gahbauer, 'Die Jacobsleiter', 271f.

dominance of these theological topics in exegesis of Genesis 28 is perhaps not surprising, if it is taken into account that this chapter reiterates the Abrahamic promises to Jacob. However, the development of non-biblically based motifs found in both traditions as well as theological arguments over controversial subjects indicates that an exegetical encounter should be explored. Although the examples discussed in this chapter are primarily of a controversial theological nature on issues such as the election of the Church and messianism, this chapter also contributes to the question of to what extent discussion of identity and expectations can be seen as an 'internal' argument, or response to an external stimulus.

Angelology provides an area of shared exegetical approach over the story of Jacob's Ladder. This is seen most strongly in the extensive discussion on the role and nature of the angels ascending and descending the ladder in Gen 28:12, which is examined by both rabbinic and Christian exegetes. In particular, the protection of the angels that Jacob received is a shared exegetical motif, and is a widely attested idea in rabbinic and Christian sources of varying date and provenance.<sup>82</sup> Indeed, Origen in his Homilies on Psalms 36 (IV.3) emphasizes that Jacob's story demonstrates the assisting and protecting role of angels, such that, according to J.H.C. Neeb, 'Origen cites this text more frequently than any other early Christian writer; rabbinic comment on the angels of God is extensive in the midrashic literature; Origen's citations occur in works written during his tenure in Caesarea, a time of interaction between Origen and the rabbis'.<sup>83</sup> However, the discussion of the angels in Genesis 28 represents a shared exegetical approach rather than strong evidence of encounter, as the motifs are closely related to the angelic imagery of Genesis 28.

The next examples for discussion examine the introduction of Temple imagery in exegesis of the story of Jacob's Ladder. In Gen 28:17, Jacob indicates that the place where he had his vision is the 'house of God', and there is a rabbinic approach that describes the building, destruction

---

<sup>82</sup> E.g. Origen, In Psalm 36 (IV.3), Ephraem the Syrian, Comm.Gen. XXIII.3, Theodoret of Cyrrihus (Quaest. LXXXIV); cf. GenR 68:12, Tg PsJon Gen 28:12, TanB *Wayeshev* 2, Tan *Wayishlah* 3, Tan *Mishpatim* 19.

<sup>83</sup> 'Origen's Interpretation of Genesis 28:12 and the Rabbis', in: G. Dorival – A. Le Boulluc (eds), *Origeniana Sexta*, Leuven 1995, 71. Another example of shared exegetical approach rather than encounter is illustrated by Diodore of Tarsus (Cat. Csl 234), who describes how the ascending and descending angels were a symbol for Jacob's descent to Mesopotamia and his return to the same place. Similarly, TanB *Wayeshev* 2 describes how Jacob saw some angels ascending yet others descending to go outside of the land with him. When Jacob returned to the land, God summoned those angels who had assisted him in the land.

and rebuilding of the Temple based on this verse. This tradition is found in connection with Genesis 28 in early midrashic texts, such as Sifre Deut 352, and is transmitted widely in later rabbinic sources with variations in the details.<sup>84</sup> The historical destruction of the Temple needed to be explained by rabbinic exegetes of all generations and is a prominent issue in rabbinic traditions. The Temple rebuilt is also a fundamental part of eschatological ideals and a sign of the restoration of Israel in the future age. As such, the condition of the Temple is an important sign of the election of Israel, and is often emphasized in discussion on the status of Israel. This subject matter is brought into exegesis of the Jacob's Ladder Story through mention of the 'house of God'.

An interesting contrast can be drawn between rabbinic traditions on the Temple at Bethel and Christian sources that identify the anointed structure of Gen 28:18 with a church building.<sup>85</sup> Indeed, for the Church Fathers, a connection between the sanctuary in Bethel and the Temple was not evident, as Bethel was situated in Samaria.<sup>86</sup> However, it is worthy of note that Diodore of Tarsus (Cat. Csl 238) connects the action of Jacob anointing the stone with the tabernacle of Moses. This exegetical approach is similarly found in the writings of Ishodad of Merv (Comm. Gen. ad Gen 28:12–15), who taught that the anointed stone was a sign of

<sup>84</sup> Cf. GenR 69:7, TanB *Wayeše* 9 and PR 30:3, 39:2.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. Mark 2:26 which refers to 'a house of God'; Mark 11:17 describes a 'house of prayer'; and a congregation is called a 'house of God' in Heb 3:3–6. See n.54 above. In patristic sources, the anointed stone is related to a church building, or liturgical practices within such a building in unidentified Catena fragment (Cat. Petit 1513), Theodoret of Cyrrhus (Quaest. LXXXV) and Eusebius of Samosata; cf. rabbinic sources which identify the site of Jacob's vision with the Temple site, including Sifre Deut 352, Tg Neofiti Gen 28:17, GenR 68:12, 69:7, PR 30:3, 39:2, BT Pes 88a, PRE 35, Tg PsJon Gen 28:11, 28:17, TanB *Wayeše* 9, MidrPss 78:6, 81:2.

<sup>86</sup> This disassociation may also be reflected in the Samaritan woman's question to Jesus in John 4:20. In John 4 Jesus rests at the site of Jacob's vision and enters into conversation with a Samaritan woman who asks: '*Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem*'. According to some scholars, the Jacob story may have been read as support for an alternate site to Jerusalem; cf. J.H. Neyrey, 'Jacob's traditions and the interpretation of John 4:10–26', *CBQ* 41 (1979), 426–429. See J. Gomes, *The Sanctuary at Bethel and the Configuration of Israelite Identity*, Tübingen 2006, esp. 62ff; cf. A.P. Ross, 'Jacob's Vision: The Founding of Bethel', *Bibliotheca Sacra* 142 (1985), 231. A similar approach might be reflected in the Book of Jubilees, according to J.C. VanderKam: 'In Gen 28.22, it sounds as if Jacob is vowing to build a temple there, as the city's name suggests he might. (...) God himself we learn, told Jacob: 'Do not build up this place, and do not make it an eternal temple. Do not live here because this is not the place' (32.22).' (*The Book of Jubilees*, 72).

the future tabernacle and priesthood.<sup>87</sup> It is possible that the association of Bethel and the tabernacle in Diodore of Tarsus, and also in Ishodad of Merv, demonstrates awareness of the widely attested rabbinic tradition connecting the site of Jacob's dream with the Temple which would house the tabernacle. This is supported by the lack of a connection between Bethel and the tabernacle as a 'house of God' in the broader Christian tradition. However, Ishodad of Merv (ad Gen 28:18) emphasizes the ultimate christological fulfilment of Jacob's actions, and so there is a clear divergence in theological aim from the rabbinic traditions, which variously assert that the Temple is a sign of Jewish restoration.

The tradition reflected in Sifre Deut 352 describes how the Temple will be destroyed and rebuilt based on Gen 28:17. Eustathius of Antioch refers specifically to the motif of the Temple destroyed and rebuilt in exegesis of Genesis 28. This is based on John 2:19 in which Jesus states that if the Temple is destroyed he will raise it again in three days, with John 2:20–22 going on to explain that the Temple Jesus mentioned is his own body.<sup>88</sup> As such, Eustathius of Antioch uses Gen 28:17 to refer to the Temple of God's son, which will be destroyed and raised again three days later in resurrection.<sup>89</sup> He understands the 'house of God' to allude to the Temple that is Jesus.<sup>90</sup> It is possible that the connection between Gen 28:17 and the Temple in rabbinic traditions from the tannaitic period onwards reflects a response to this metaphorical understanding of the 'Temple' in

---

<sup>87</sup> The tabernacle was the first 'house' for the divine presence eventually established in the Temple. The tabernacle, first described in detail in Exodus 25–27 was the symbol of divine presence and the temporary house for the ark of the covenant. David set up the tabernacle along with the ark of the covenant in Jerusalem as described in 2 Sam 6:1–18 and 1 Chron 15:1–16:43. The final resting place of the ark and tabernacle was in Solomon's Temple as outlined in 1 Kings 8:1–21.

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Mark 14:58; Matt 26:61.

<sup>89</sup> As noted by R. Kieffer, the concept of resurrection after three days in the New Testament may be based on Hosea 6:2 which outlines Israel's hope for restoration on the third day (*Oxford Bible Commentary*, 965). Interestingly, the concept of resurrection after three days is maintained in rabbinic traditions. For example, Hosea 6:2 is explicitly associated with the third day of resurrection in GenR 56:1; in EsthR 9:2 the dead will come to life after three days based on Hosea 6:2; and resurrection more broadly with reference to Hosea 6:2 is found in DeutR 7:6.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. 1QS 9.3–6 where the community behind the scroll portrays themselves as the Temple. The idea of the early Christian community as the true temple of God can be found already in Paul (1 Cor 3:16–17; cf. Eph 2:21) and is further developed in early Christian literature. See Barnabas 16:7–10; cf. 4:11; Origen, Comm. in Jer 9 on Jer 11:2; Comm. John 13:13; C. Cels 8.19. See H. Wenschkwitz, *Die Spiritualisierung der Kultbegriffe, Tempel, Priester und Opfer im Neuen Testament*, Leipzig 1932; J. McKelvey, *The New Temple: The Church in the New Testament*, Oxford 1969; D.C. Harlow, *The Greek Apocalypse of Baruch in Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity*, Leiden 1996, 105.



John 2:19–22 and subsequent Christian tradition as reflected in Eustathius. However, as emphasized above, the fact that Gen 28:17 explicitly refers to the ‘house of God’ would lead to a natural association of this verse with the Temple for rabbinic exegetes.

The topic of election and who is to fulfil the covenant with God is the focus of the next set of examples of exegetical encounter. This concept is particularly drawn out in rabbinic traditions on the plural stones of Gen 28:11, which turn into the singular stone of Gen 28:18. A widely attested motif is that there were originally twelve stones, which represented the twelve tribes of Israel and they turned into a single stone representing the nation of Israel.<sup>91</sup> This approach is far removed from the biblical story of Jacob’s Ladder, which understands the use of the stone(s) in a literal or historical way.<sup>92</sup>

Interestingly, the stone(s) of Genesis 28 are also used in some Christian sources to represent the Church of the Gentiles. This interpretation is found in sources broadly contemporary to Genesis Rabbah, which is the earliest midrashic source to elaborate on the idea of the stones as Israel. Aphrahat (Dem. IV.5) describes how the stones (plural) of Jacob in Gen 28:11 represent the nations who will go on to become the Church. Ephraem the Syrian (Comm.Gen. XXVI.3) retains the singular for the anointed stone, but understands that stone to represent the mystery of the Church.<sup>93</sup> A similar idea is also found in the New Testament, and Luke 3:8 may be in view, although this verse is not explicitly cited by these Syriac authors.<sup>94</sup> The inclusion of this tradition in both Aphrahat and Ephraem the Syrian again demonstrates the possibility of close links between the rabbinic and Syriac tradition on the controversial subject of election and fulfilment of the covenant. This interpretation in Syriac sources is theologically in direct opposition to the rabbinic exegesis on the stones representing the

---

<sup>91</sup> E.g. GenR 68:11, PRE 35 and MidrPss 91:6. This approach is also found with different numbers of stones in view, such as in the four stones representing Leah, Rachel, Bilhah and Zilpah as the founders of nation Israel in Tg PsJon Gen 28:11.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. C. Westermann, *Genesis 12–36: A Commentary*, 454.

<sup>93</sup> A. Salvesen discusses Targum Pseudo-Jonathan in comparison with Ephraem the Syrian and suggests that the four stones representing nation Israel in Tg PsJon Gen 28:11 may represent a ‘mirroring’ of the idea in Ephraem (Comm.Gen. XXVI.2–3) that the anointed pillar of Gen 28:18 hid the mystery of Christ and as such represents ‘the mystery of the Church’ (‘Keeping it in the Family?’, 216).

<sup>94</sup> Luke 3:8 may have had an influence on the interpretations, as it states: ‘*For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham*’. Similarly, Isa 51:1 states: ‘*Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and who seek the Lord: Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn*’.

nation of Israel, and yet is based on the same motif and argumentation regarding the nature and role of the stone(s).

Connected to this exegesis of the stone(s) is discussion on who will fulfil the covenant, or who are understood to be the elected descendants of Abraham. Justin Martyr interprets the promise to Jacob in Genesis 28 as a promise of the coming of Christ and the Church (Dial. CXX). In particular, the Abrahamic promises conferred on Jacob will be passed down through his descendants, namely Judah and David, and ultimately fulfilled in Jesus and so the Gentile Church. This theological approach can be contrasted with rabbinic traditions such as GenR 68:11, PRE 35 and Tg PsJon Gen 28:11, which emphasize the fulfilment of the promises to Jacob in nation Israel. These exegetical approaches illustrate the importance of the Abrahamic promises for each respective religious tradition.

The subjects of messianism and Christology are another source of potential encounter in exegesis of Genesis 28. The messianic interpretation of Jacob's stone(s) as a symbol of the Messiah, as found in TanB *Toledot* 20, is of particular interest in this regard. This tradition connects the stone of Jacob with the messianic stone of Zech 4:7. This interpretation in TanB *Toledot* 20 stands out for its distinctive approach, and its parallels with Christian exegesis of the same story.<sup>95</sup> Indeed, such an interpretation of the 'headstone' of Zech 4:7 resembles the broad and early usage of the cornerstone passages, such as Ps 118:22 and Isa 28:16, as referring to Jesus in the New Testament.<sup>96</sup> The widespread connection of the cornerstone and Messiah in Christian sources, and its presence in the New Testament, makes it more likely to have been known in rabbinic circles, and it is interesting that this exegetical motif, as found in Tanḥuma Buber, has not been preserved in more rabbinic texts.

The particular messianic interpretation preserved in TanB *Toledot* 20 understands the stone of Jacob in Gen 28:18 to refer to the Davidic Messiah of Jewish tradition. As such, the messianic motif is not in itself distinctive, rather the distinctiveness lies in the approach of connecting the messianic motif with Genesis 28. Indeed, the use of the messianic motif in TanB *Toledot* 20 stands out in classical rabbinic exegesis of Genesis 28. The apparent absence of this motif in earlier redacted rabbinic sources can be contrasted with this exegetical approach in Christian sources,

---

<sup>95</sup> This tradition is paralleled in Tan *Toledot* 14, but without reference to Gen 28:18. It is also closely paralleled in later sources such as Aggadat Bereshit 45. TanB *Wayeše* 2 also identifies the stone with Torah, an interpretation not found in texts with an earlier date of redaction.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. Matt 21:42; Mark 12:10; Acts 4:8–12; 1 Pet 2:6; Eph 2:20.

the popularity of which from the second century onwards is indicated in the previous section. It seems possible that earlier rabbinic exegetes may have avoided any similarity to such a well attested Christian exegetical approach. Similarly, the tradition preserved in TanB *Toledot 20* may reflect awareness of the christological typological approach to Jesus as the anointed stone, which is then adapted to emphasize a strictly Jewish messianic expectation.

Furthermore, there is a close correspondence between the messianic interpretation of the stone of Genesis 28 as found in TanB *Toledot 20* and the use of the same exegetical motif in Jerome. In Ep. 108.13, Jerome associates the stone of Jacob with the cornerstone and seven eyes of Zechariah. Jerome uses Zech 3:9 as the proof text, while TanB *Toledot 20* uses Zech 4:7 and 4:10. However, both Zech 3:9 and 4:10 refer to the concepts of the 'stone' and 'seven eyes'.<sup>97</sup> This represents not only the same exegetical motif and argumentation, but the use of the same biblical motifs as proof texts. Given Jerome's extensive knowledge of rabbinic exegesis, it is tempting to see further evidence of this in his Epistle. The writing of Jerome is earlier than the final redaction of Tanḥuma Buber, although Tanḥuma Buber undoubtedly contains traditions earlier than its date of redaction, and it is possible that this argumentation may have been transmitted in rabbinic circles in previous generations. However, given that such exegesis is not found in classical rabbinic sources, it is possible that this tradition in TanB *Toledot 20* represents evidence of direct encounter with Christian exegesis such as found in Jerome and wider Christian traditions. Interestingly, Jerome presents this exegesis as his own without reference to knowledge of the 'Hebrews', as in other places, which further supports that this motif in TanB *Toledot 20* may represent late rabbinic exegesis and the possibility of encounter.

As has been seen above, exegesis of the anointed stone in Christian sources is extensive and, broadly speaking, focuses on a christological or typological approach. This is an early motif as indicated by the work of Justin Martyr who writes that the anointed stone symbolically proclaimed Christ (Dial. LXXXVI). The typological christological approach to the anointed stone is found in a polemical context in the Anonymous Dialogue with the Jews, which dates to the sixth century (ed. Declerck). The text argues that Jacob knew the true meaning of the symbolism of the 'house of God' and the 'stone', but claims that the Jews deliberately

---

<sup>97</sup> Eustathius of Antioch also identifies the stone of Jacob in Gen 28:18 with the cornerstone, thus quoting Ps 118:22–23 in connection with Mark 12:10–11.

fail to understand. The explicit use of this argument in a text of a clearly polemical character might be an indication that the interpretation of Genesis 28 was indeed a common issue of controversy between rabbinic and Christian exegetes at this time.

When it comes to the rabbinic traditions, the anointing of the stone receives a relatively small space in the topics given exegetical attention. Indeed, the anointing of the stone is treated in a very literal or historical way with focus on the question of from where Jacob found the oil.<sup>98</sup> This is similar to the approach of John Chrysostom (Hom.Gen. 54.23) who taught that the oil was all that Jacob had with him.<sup>99</sup> However, overall, the absence of detailed expansion on this theme in rabbinic traditions, when contrasted with the extensive discussion on the meaning of the anointed stone in Christian sources of varying date and provenance, at the very least illustrates different exegetical interests in Gen 28:18, but may represent an attempt to avoid engagement with a popular approach in Christian exegesis.

This chapter is illustrative of exegesis that emphasizes and reinforces the respective claims of rabbinic and Christian traditions. The rabbinic exegetical approaches to Jacob's Ladder understand Genesis 28 to refer to themes of restoration for Israel. Discussion of the Temple, election and messianism is found in the context of the (future) restoration of Israel. This approach can be seen as pre-emptive exegesis of Jacob's Ladder to emphasize Jewish restoration and exclude the possibility of a Christian interpretation of this story, and may even represent evidence of a response to Christian exegesis.<sup>100</sup> Indeed, in a similar approach but with theological difference, there is a widespread emphasis in a variety of Christian sources on the christological interpretation of the anointed stone, the ladder as a symbol of the cross and the understanding of Genesis 28 to refer to the call of the Church of the Gentiles. Some specific points of encounter have been identified, but, overall, these two broad approaches to the story of Jacob's Ladder could reflect internal theological discussion or an apologetic argument against the exegesis of the other. Indeed, the traditions could be utilized and re-used in either way as the need arose and depending on the context.

---

<sup>98</sup> Cf. L. van Rompay who notes that certain Greek and Syriac Christian interpretations on the anointing of the stone focus on the typological and are far removed from a historical interpretation ('Antiochene Biblical Interpretation', 119).

<sup>99</sup> This more literal approach can also be seen in Ephraem the Syrian, Comm.Gen. XXVI.2.2 and Isaiah of Sketis, Ascetic Discourses 4.

<sup>100</sup> For the concept of pre-emptive exegesis, see P.S. Alexander, 'Pre-emptive Exegesis', 230–245.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### JOSEPH AND POTIPHAR

*And Joseph was brought down to Egypt, and Potiphar, officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard, an Egyptian man, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there. And the Lord was with Joseph, and he became a prosperous man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master.*  
(MT Gen 39:1–2)

#### *Rabbinic Traditions*

Exegesis of the Joseph stories represents a substantial part of rabbinic interpretations of Genesis, which is a reflection of the length of the narrative in Genesis 37–50. The volume of exegesis is also a reflection on the importance of the patriarch Joseph in rabbinic tradition; he is a paradigm of righteousness and virtue and the one from whom would ultimately descend the Messiah ben Joseph.<sup>1</sup> The range and diversity of themes and interpretations in rabbinic exegesis of the Joseph legends is naturally extensive. Constant discussion on the nature and character of Joseph is found throughout the material with particular reference to his virtue, youth, beauty, wisdom and strength in the face of temptation, all of which contribute to the suitability of Joseph for a role in the redemption of Israel.<sup>2</sup> Everything that happens to Joseph is part of the divine plan, and the Holy Spirit is often involved in Joseph's actions by giving him prophetic powers.<sup>3</sup> Joseph's relationship with his father, his special

---

<sup>1</sup> The Messiah ben Joseph is the warrior Messiah who will fight on behalf of Israel before the arrival of the Messiah ben David. See J. Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel*; D.C. Mitchell, 'Messiah ben Joseph: a sacrifice of atonement for Israel', *RRJ* 10.1 (2007), 77–94; D.C. Mitchell, 'Rabbi Dosa and the Rabbis Differ: Messiah ben Joseph in the Babylonian Talmud', *RRJ* 8 (2005), 77–90; D. Berger, 'Three Typological Themes in Early Jewish Messianism: Messiah son of Joseph, Rabbinic Calculations, and the Figure of Armilus', *AJS Review* 10.2 (1985), 141–164.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. on virtue see GenR 87:10, on youth see PRE 39, on beauty see GenR 86:6, on wisdom see Tg Onqelos Gen 37:3, GenR 90:3, 90:4, 93:7, PRE 39, TanB *Wayeshev* 20, on moral strength see GenR 90:3, Tg PsJon Gen 49:24, and on the role of Joseph in the redemption of Israel see GenR 84:13, Tan *Wayiggash* 4, TanB *Wayiggash* 3 and TanB *Wayeshev* 4.

<sup>3</sup> On the divine plan, see GenR 84:13, and, on the gift of prophecy, see Tg Neofiti Gen 40:12,18, 41:1, PRE 38, 39 and TanB *Wayeshev* 20.

status in his father's eyes and even his resemblance to his father in terms of his appearance, wisdom and experience are recurring themes.<sup>4</sup> Joseph's activities and success in Egypt are also discussed: his wisdom in explicating dreams, his administrative prowess, and quick action to prevent the starvation of the Egyptian people during famine.<sup>5</sup> His success was because of his faith and righteousness, but also because God was with him.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, Joseph's righteousness is indicated by the fact that he was born circumcised, and even the Red Sea is said to be parted for his sake.<sup>7</sup>

Although most interpretations offer a favourable view of Joseph, a critical approach can be discerned. In particular, he is denounced for bringing slander against his brothers. He is also criticized for his vanity and childish behaviour in exegesis concerned with his beauty and age.<sup>8</sup> These apparently unfavourable characteristics are indicative of how Joseph will suffer, as described in the biblical narrative. Just as Joseph was guilty of slander, so critical reports of him lead to his imprisonment, and Joseph's appearance leads to temptation through Potiphar's wife, because of her desire for his good looks.<sup>9</sup>

The episode of Joseph and Potiphar's wife is given extensive treatment in rabbinic exegesis.<sup>10</sup> A major exegetical approach variously expands on the moral stature of Joseph, who refrained from acting on the temptation presented by Potiphar's wife.<sup>11</sup> As a means of justifying the actions of Joseph in the biblical story, some rabbinic exegetes outline the excuses offered by Joseph to Potiphar's wife. A key question addressed by exegetes was why Joseph did not touch Potiphar's wife, with answers ranging from

<sup>4</sup> E.g. GenR 84:6, 84:8, PRE 38, TanB *Wayeshev* 5 and 19.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. GenR 86:1, 91:5, PRE 39.

<sup>6</sup> E.g. TanB *Wayeshev* 16, NumR 14:3, ExodR 23:2.

<sup>7</sup> On Joseph born circumcised, see GenR 84:6, on the importance of the land to Joseph see DeutR 2:8, on the parting of the Red Sea on his behalf see GenR 84:5, 87:8.

<sup>8</sup> On denouncement for slander, see for example GenR 86:1, 87:1, 98:18, 98:19, and on vanity see GenR 84:7.

<sup>9</sup> On these characteristics foreshadowing later events, see GenR 84:7 and 87:3. See the discussion of these traditions in the study of M. Niehoff, who states of Genesis Rabbah: 'The midrashic narrator enhances here a biblical allusion and establishes a causal connection between Joseph's behaviour and his fate' (*The Figure of Joseph*, 113).

<sup>10</sup> See an overview of this aspect of the Joseph narrative in Genesis Rabbah in M. Niehoff, *The Figure of Joseph*, 125–134.

<sup>11</sup> E.g. GenR 86:4, 87:2, LevR 21:0, 23:11, RuthR 6:2, EsthR 7:7, CantR 2:16, NumR 14:6; cf. LevR 11:7, RuthR proem 7, and EsthR proem 11. The special emphasis on Joseph's righteous and chaste behaviour in the episode with Potiphar's wife in apocryphal and pseudepigraphical literature is outlined by J.L. Kugel, *In Potiphar's House: the Interpretative Life of Biblical Texts*, Cambridge 1994, 17–26.

impotency to Joseph's lack of action because he saw his father's face and remembered his teaching.<sup>12</sup>

J.L. Kugel has noted of the Joseph narrative that 'Unlike many other biblical stories we have seen, Joseph's had little that seemed to *demand* explanation or interpretation. Interpreters instead devoted their energies to retelling his story in such a way as to highlight Joseph's many virtues, as well as to look deeply into its various little details'.<sup>13</sup> The details of the Joseph story that will be examined for evidence of exegetical encounter are the traditions related to the relationship between Joseph and Potiphar.<sup>14</sup>

### *The Beauty of Joseph*

Joseph first catches the attention of Potiphar because of his appearance, which makes Potiphar believe that Joseph could not in fact be a slave.<sup>15</sup> The appearance, and particularly the beauty of Joseph, is explicitly mentioned in the biblical text at Gen 39:6b:

ויהי יוסף יפה תאר ויפה מראה

*And Joseph was beautiful of form and lovely of appearance.*

The beauty of Joseph, based on Gen 39:6, is widely acknowledged in rabbinic traditions and often seen in comparative perspective with other important figures from the history of Israel. For example, GenR 86:6 teaches that Joseph was beautiful just as his mother Rachel was said to be beautiful in Gen 29:17; he inherited his appearance from her. GenR 84:8 teaches how Joseph resembled his father Jacob.<sup>16</sup> Isaac is the subject of comparison in TanB *Toledot* 7,<sup>17</sup> and even the beauty of Zion is compared to the beauty of Joseph in TanB *Wayeshev* 18 and TanB *Wayiggash* 11.

<sup>12</sup> E.g. GenR 87:5, 87:7, 98:20 and PRE 39.

<sup>13</sup> J.L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 438.

<sup>14</sup> For a full treatment of the figure of Joseph in Philo, Josephus, Genesis Rabbah and related rabbinic literature and the targumim, see M. Niehoff, *The Figure of Joseph*. Other key studies on Joseph during his time working for Potiphar include: R.S. Kraemer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph: A Late Antique Tale of the Biblical Patriarch and His Egyptian Wife Reconsidered*, Oxford 1999; J.L. Kugel, *In Potiphar's House*; and J.L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 437–458.

<sup>15</sup> GenR 86:3; cf. Testament of Joseph 11–16.

<sup>16</sup> Traditions on the resemblance of Joseph to Rachel and Jacob are discussed by J.L. Kugel, *In Potiphar's House*, 66–73; cf. Josephus, Ant. 11.9–10.

<sup>17</sup> This tradition is paralleled in Aggadat Bereshit 40.



GenR 87:3 represents an interesting divergence from the usual approach that praises Joseph for his beauty. First, the tradition is critical of Joseph for bringing a disparaging report of his brothers to their father, as in Gen 37:2.<sup>18</sup> In GenR 87:3, God reprimands Joseph for each count of defamation, with Joseph punished for the slander he brought against his brothers in kind.<sup>19</sup> Joseph accused the brothers of eating unclean meat, and so they would have the honour of partaking in ritual slaughter, based on Gen 37:31. Joseph reported that the brothers insulted those amongst their number whose mothers were concubines and called them slaves, and so Joseph would be sold as a slave, as in Ps 105:17. Finally, Joseph accused the brothers of acting immorally with the daughters of the land, and so is similarly punished through the unwanted attentions of Potiphar's wife on account of his beauty, as in Gen 39:6. Another tradition, also included in GenR 87:3, is critical of Joseph's vanity. Joseph is compared to a man who sits in the street putting on make-up and styling his hair. As such, Potiphar's wife desired him, and the attentions he receives from her are a consequence of his own conceit.<sup>20</sup>

In several rabbinic traditions, Gen 39:6 is connected to Gen 49:22, the blessing of Jacob on Joseph, which connection forms the basis for further development of the motif on the beauty of Joseph:

בן פרת יוסף בן פרת עלי עין בנות צעדה עלי שור

*Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a spring; branches climb over a wall.*

Gen 49:22 is difficult in its expression and ambiguous in meaning.<sup>21</sup> However, in rabbinic traditions, this verse is understood as a firm indication of

<sup>18</sup> In Gen 37:2, Joseph is said to have brought an 'evil report' of his brothers to their father (ויבא יוסף את דבתם רעה אל אביהם).

<sup>19</sup> The tradition teaches that Joseph accused the brothers of eating unclean meat (cf. Testament of Gad 1:6–7), of insulting each other about their parentage and for acting immorally towards the women of the land.

<sup>20</sup> This tradition is also found in later sources, e.g. Tan *Wayeshev* 7, 8 and Zohar I, 189b.

<sup>21</sup> The Hebrew בנות צעדה is uncertain. בנות could be the fem.pl. noun 'daughters', but is commonly translated as 'branches'; cf. F. Brown et al. (eds), *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Oxford 1906, 123. C. Westermann translates in his commentary: 'Joseph is a young and verdant tree, a young and verdant tree by the spring; its branches climb over the wall' (*Genesis 37–50*, 219). For analysis of the biblical verse, see R. de Hoop, *Genesis 49 in its Literary and Historical Context*, Leiden 1999, 180–187 and C. Westermann, *Genesis 37–50*, 236–237.

Joseph's attractive appearance.<sup>22</sup> Traditions that include this interpretation understand the בנות of Gen 49:22 to refer to 'daughters' rather than 'branches', and, as such, 'daughters' who find Joseph attractive. In particular, Gen 49:22 is interpreted to mean that Joseph was so handsome that Egyptian women would look at him and strive to catch his attention. This tradition is found in GenR 98:18:

בנות צעדה עלי שור וגו' את מוצא בשעה שיצא יוסף למלוך על מצרים, היו בנות מלכים מציצות עליו דרך החרכין והיו משליכות עליו שיריין וקטלין ונזמים וטבעות כדי שיתלה עיניו ויביט בהן, אף על פי כן לא היה מביט בהן, אמ' לו הקב"ה אתה לא תלית את עיניך והבטת בהן, חייך שאני נותן לבנותיך צעידה בתורה, מהו צעידה, פרשה:

(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 3, 1268–1269)

*Daughters step (צעדה בנות) over a wall*, etc. (Gen 49:22). You find at the moment that Joseph went out to rule over Egypt, daughters (בנות) of kings looked at him through the lattices and threw bracelets, necklaces, earrings and rings to him, so that he would raise his eyes and look at them; nevertheless he did not look at them. The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him: 'You did not raise your eyes and look at them. By your life, I will give to your daughters a step (צעידה) (לבנותיך) in the Torah'. What is a 'step' (צעידה)? A section.

GenR 98:18 not only emphasizes the appeal of Joseph, but also teaches of his virtue. Even though Egyptian princesses were trying to attract Joseph by throwing their jewellery to him, he was not tempted and did not raise his eyes to look at them.<sup>23</sup> This strength in the face of temptation is noticed by God, and he rewards Joseph by giving his own daughters a place in the Torah. This is a reference to Num 27:1–11, which lists the names of the daughters of Zelophehad, the descendant of Manasseh, son of Joseph. The 'section' of the Torah describes how they brought a case regarding the inheritance of property before Moses. They had no brother and so claimed the right to inherit the property of their father, which was agreed by Moses and made law.

The antiquity of the tradition on Joseph's attractiveness to the Egyptian women is confirmed by its inclusion in Tg Neofiti Gen 49:22, which may represent one of the earliest rabbinic sources on this tradition. It describes how even though the Egyptian princesses threw their jewellery

<sup>22</sup> Gen 49:22 is also used as the basis of comparison between the beauty of Joseph and the beauty of others. BT BM 84a describes the beauty of R. Yoḥanan, who declares that he is above temptation when women look at him. The Rabbis ask him if he is afraid of an evil eye, and the tradition records that R. Yoḥanan is descended from Joseph 'against whom an evil eye is powerless', based on Gen 49:22.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Joseph and Aseneth 7:3–4.

to him, Joseph rejected the Egyptian women and refused to look at them. This leads the Egyptian daughters to acknowledge the piety of Joseph. Joseph is rewarded for his actions with progeny who will inherit alongside his brothers, namely the two tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim, who will receive an inheritance in the division of the land.<sup>24</sup>

GenR 97 also includes a version of this tradition and teaches that Joseph would not look upon the Egyptian women, and so he merited both worlds because of his virtue. This approach, which sees Joseph's reward for his behaviour received in the future or the world-to-come, is also reflected in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan. Tg PsJon Gen 49:22 reports that Joseph behaved virtuously with respect to the Egyptian daughters of rulers in order that he would not be found guilty on the Day of Judgement.<sup>25</sup>

Finally, the tradition of Egyptian women lusting after Joseph's beauty is also found in PRE 39, which describes how Joseph was riding in a chariot, and Egyptian girls climbed up the walls in order to see him, and they threw rings of gold to him so that he might look at them, based on Gen 49:22. The tradition emphasizes that they could see the handsomeness of Joseph. In PRE 39, the focus is on the fact that Joseph was highly esteemed and not degraded by the behaviour of the women.<sup>26</sup>

It can be seen from these sources that the beauty of Joseph is an indication of his character, and especially his moral purity with regard to women. However, the beauty of Joseph is also the source of his trouble

---

<sup>24</sup> Cf. M. McNamara, *Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis*, 224. Tg Onqelos Gen 49:22 also refers to this reward, but without mention of the Egyptian women; cf. B. Grossfeld, *The Targum Onqelos to Genesis*, 169–179.

<sup>25</sup> For commentary, see M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 161.

<sup>26</sup> The legend of Joseph's beauty is also treated extensively in a variety of early pseudepigraphical sources. For example, Testament of Joseph 18:4, in a first person narration by the patriarch, describes how God gave Joseph 'mature beauty, more than those of mature beauty in Israel; he preserved me until old age with strength and beauty. In every way I was like Jacob' (trans. H.C. Kee, *OTP* 1, 823). This is reiterated in the Testament of Simeon 5:1, which reports that 'Because nothing evil resided in Joseph, he was attractive in appearance and handsome to behold, for the face evidences any troubling of the spirit' (trans. H.C. Kee *OTP* 1, 786). The tradition of Joseph's beauty is also elaborated upon in the works of Philo and Josephus. Philo in *De Iosepho* 40 says that Potiphar's wife was in love with Joseph because she was 'wrought up to madness by the beauty of the youth' (trans. F.H. Colson, 163). Josephus, in *Ant.* II.2.1 [9–10], describes why Joseph was envied by his brothers; their hatred was inflamed by Jacob's love of Joseph above his brothers: 'Joseph, whom Jacob begat by Rachel, was beloved of his father above all his sons, alike for the beauty of person that he owed to his birth and for virtuous qualities of soul, for he was endowed with exceptional understanding' (trans. H.St.J. Thackeray, 173); cf. Jubilees 39:5, which reiterates Gen 39:6, and Joseph and Asenath 7:3–4. This small selection of sources indicates the popularity of this tradition in early Jewish sources which form a background to the exegesis in rabbinic literature.

in relation to Potiphar's wife. Genesis Rabbah contains some traditions that are critical of Joseph and accuse him of vanity (e.g. GenR 86:1; 87:1; 84:7, 98:18; 98:19).<sup>27</sup> However, the predominant motif is on the 'beautiful' character of Joseph and his great virtue for which he is a paradigm in rabbinic traditions.

### *Potiphar and Joseph*

Potiphar is first introduced in the Hebrew Bible at Gen 37:36 where he is said to have bought Joseph from the Midianites. This is followed by the episode of Judah and Tamar, with the story of Potiphar and Joseph resuming at Gen 39:1:

ויוסף הורד מצרימה ויקנהו פוטיפר סריס פרעה שר הטבחים איש מצרי מיד  
הישמעאלים אשר הורדהו שמה

*And Joseph was brought down to Egypt, and Potiphar, officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard, an Egyptian man, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there.*

The biblical Potiphar has little revealed about his character, and he serves primarily to illustrate the increasing prosperity and success of Joseph. However, rabbinic exegetes took the opportunity to expand upon the nature of Potiphar and explain further his relationship with Joseph, including why Potiphar chose to buy Joseph in the first place. GenR 86:3 provides many of these details,<sup>28</sup> but of particular interest is the explanation of Potiphar as *פרעה סריס* 'officer of Pharaoh' or 'eunuch of Pharaoh':

סריס פרעה שנותרס בגופו מלמד שלא לקחו אלא לתשמיש וסירסו הקב"ה בגופו, לרוב שהיתה משכלת בבני אדניה אמ' פכרון ניביה כך מלמד שלא לקחו אלא לתשמיש וסירסו הקב"ה, הה"ד כי י"י אהב משפט לא יעזב את חסידיו (תהלים לז כח) חסידו כת' אי זה זה יוסף לעולם נשמרו וזרע רשעים נכרת (שם שם) שסירסו הקב"ה בגופו:

(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 2, 1054–1055)

*A eunuch* (סריס) of Pharaoh (Gen 39:1). This means that he was emasculated (שנותרס בגופו), teaching that he took him only for copulation, so the Holy One, blessed be He, emasculated him (וסירסו). This may be compared to a bear that worked destruction among the children of its master. He said: 'Break its teeth', thus teaching that he took him only for copulation, but the Holy One, blessed be He, emasculated him (וסירסו). Thus it is written, *For the Lord loves justice, and does not forsake his pious ones* (Ps 37:28). 'His

<sup>27</sup> See n.8–9 above and accompanying discussion. See also the analysis of the critical approach in Genesis Rabbah in M. Niehoff, *The Figure of Joseph*, 111–124.

<sup>28</sup> For example, GenR 86:3 describes Potiphar as an idolater, as cunning in the way he acquired Joseph, and as desiring Joseph.

pious one' is written. In what way should this be understood? This is Joseph. *They are preserved forever, but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off* (Ps 37:28) because the Holy One, blessed be He, emasculated him.

GenR 86:3 begins with the claim that Potiphar was emasculated or castrated. This interpretation is based on exegesis of סריס פרעה. The word סריס can refer to an 'officer' but also a 'eunuch', thus opening up the prospect that Potiphar was a eunuch. Such a possibility required further explanation, as Potiphar was married to the infamous temptress of Joseph, and eunuchs were not commonly married. This leads to the tradition that God castrated Potiphar after his marriage, because he desired and bought Joseph for sexual purposes. The passage goes on to teach that God would not allow Joseph to be treated in this way and so he castrated Potiphar. The situation is compared to breaking the teeth of a bear (i.e. emasculating Potiphar) that threatens its master's children (i.e. God's children, and in this case Joseph). The fact that God would intervene in this way on behalf of Joseph is proven by Ps 37:28, which states that God does not forsake 'his pious ones' and is understood as a reference to Joseph. The righteous, such as Joseph, 'are preserved forever' but 'the seed of the wicked shall be cut off', in other words, the seed of wicked Potiphar is 'cut off' through castration.<sup>29</sup>

A version of this tradition is found in BT Sot 13b, which discusses the greatness of Joseph. In this passage, Potiphar is described as buying Joseph for himself, thus alluding to the sexual purpose behind the transaction. God is not involved directly in castrating Potiphar, but instead sends an agent in the form of Gabriel: *'And Potiphar, officer of Pharaoh, bought him*

<sup>29</sup> Cf. CantR 1:1, which refers to Potiphar as a eunuch in interpretation of Joseph's release from prison in Gen 41:14. Philo also discusses Potiphar as a eunuch in a number of texts (e.g. De Iosepho 27 and 37, Leg. Alleg. III.236, De Mut. Nom. 173), and one of the main questions he addresses is how a eunuch could be married. In Leg. Alleg. III.236, he typically applies an allegorical interpretation to the difficulty raised by the biblical text: 'How, being a eunuch, he comes to have a wife, is a point to be considered: for those, who are occupied with the literal wording of the law rather than with its figurative interpretation, will find that it involves what appears to such a difficulty. For the Mind, that is really an eunuch and chief cook, dealing not in the simple pleasures only but in excessive ones also, deserves the title of eunuch as one who is incapable of begetting wisdom, seeing that he serves as eunuch none other than Pharaoh, the disperser of noble things' (trans. F.H. Colson, 461). Clearly, the motif of Potiphar as a eunuch was one discussed in early Jewish circles, but it was not until the rabbinic era that this was connected with the tradition of Joseph's beauty, and the associated interpretation of Potiphar's desire for Joseph and consequent castration. See R. Abusch, 'Eunuchs and Gender Transformation: Philo's Exegesis of the Joseph Narrative', in: S. Tougher (ed.), *Eunuchs in Antiquity and Beyond*, Swansea 2002, 103–121.

(Gen 39:1). Rav said that he bought him for himself. Gabriel came and castrated him. Gabriel came and mutilated him, for originally Potiphar was written, but afterwards Potiphera'. This exegesis is based on the understanding of פריס פריס as 'eunuch of Pharaoh', but also Gen 41:45 which refers to the figure of 'Potiphera the priest of On' (פוטִי פריס כהן). Potiphar (פוטִיפִר) is understood to be the same person as Potiphera (פוטִי פריס) with the change in the spelling of his name an indication of his castration. Gabriel had mutilated him (ופִירעו), thus connecting the name Potiphera (פוטִי פריס) with the piel verb פִרע 'mutilate'.

TanB *Wayeshev* 14 contains the tradition that Potiphar was castrated by God after taking Joseph for sexual purposes, and uses Ps 37:28 '*the seed of the wicked shall be cut off*' (נִכְרַת) as a supporting proof text. TanB *Wayeshev* 14 builds on this interpretation with further proof from Lev 22:24 that 'cut off' (נִכְרַת) denotes castration. The tradition also addresses the question of whether Potiphar was a eunuch already, and, if so, whether it was in fact God who castrated him. This is answered based on Gen 39:1: the biblical text states that Joseph was brought down to Egypt (Gen 39:1a), and only afterwards records that Potiphar was a eunuch (Gen 39:1b). As such, Potiphar became a eunuch only after Joseph's appearance.

Tg PsJon Gen 39:1 describes Potiphar as רבא דפריס 'an official of Pharaoh', and emphasizes that Potiphar only became impotent after he bought Joseph. In this interpretation, Potiphar is punished with impotency by divine decree, rather than castration by God. Tg PsJon Gen 39:1 states that Potiphar bought Joseph: 'because he saw that he was handsome, therefore he intended to practise homosexual relations (משכבי דכורא) with him. Immediately a decree was enacted against him (אתגזר עלוי), and his testicles dried up (ויבישו שעבזוי), and he was emasculated (ואיסתרס)'.<sup>30</sup>

Thus, the figure of Potiphar is the subject of exegetical comment especially in regards to his relationship with Joseph. Due to the beauty of Joseph, rabbinic traditions describe how Potiphar desired him and acquired him as a slave. However, Potiphar is portrayed as a eunuch and unable to act on his desires. A major approach is that Potiphar was castrated either by God (GenR 86:3) or an agent (BT Sot 13b) in punishment for his attentions to Joseph, whereas in Tg PsJon Gen 39:1 God decrees Potiphar to be impotent so he could not take advantage of Joseph. All the sources discussed agree that Potiphar was unable to perform sexually with

<sup>30</sup> A. Diez Macho (ed.), *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis*, 287; M. Maher notes that 'Ps.-J. is the only Targum of this verse to refer to sodomy, to Potiphar's testicles, and to his impotency' (*Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 130–131).

Joseph, but the direct prevention of this by God or his agent is a matter of interpretation.

*Potiphar, Potiphera and Asenath*

Joseph ultimately became intimately connected to Potiphar in rabbinic traditions through his marriage to Asenath. The relationship between Joseph and Asenath is first mentioned in the Hebrew Bible at Gen 41:45:<sup>31</sup>

ויקרא פרעה שם יוסף צפנת פענח ויתן לו את אסנת בת פוטי פרע כהן אן לאשר  
ויצא יוסף על ארץ מצרים

*And Pharaoh named Joseph 'Zaphenath-paneah', and he gave him Asenath, daughter of Potiphera priest of On, as a wife, and Joseph had authority over the land of Egypt.*

The biblical text refers to Asenath as the daughter of Potiphera, priest of On. However, rabbinic exegetes identified Potiphera with Potiphar, and GenR 86:3 again provides one of the earliest forms of this tradition:<sup>32</sup>

פוטיפר הוא פוטיפרע, פוטיפר שהיה מפטם פרים לעבודה זרה, פוטיפרע שהיה  
פוטר עצמו לעבודה זרה, כיון שירד הפר לשם נעשה פוטינון:  
(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 2, 1054)

Potiphar is Potiphera. He was called Potiphar because he fattened bulls for the purpose of idolatry. He was called Potiphera because he uncovered himself for the purpose of idolatry. But when the bull went down there, he became enlightened.

GenR 86:3, first of all, identifies Potiphar and Potiphera, and then proceeds to outline the character of Potiphar/Potiphera based on a series of word-plays. The focus is on his practise of idolatry. The first interpretation notes the similarity between the name Potiphar (פוטיפר) and the phrase 'fatten bulls' (מפטם פרים). This indicates that Potiphar was involved in offering bulls as part of his idolatrous activities.<sup>33</sup> The second interpretation also links the name Potiphera with idolatry because of the similarity between

<sup>31</sup> Asenath is subsequently mentioned as the mother of Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, at Gen 41:50: 'And to Joseph were born two sons, before a year of the famine came, which Asenath daughter of Potiphera priest of On bore for him (פוטי בת פוטי) (אשר ילדה לו אסנת בת פוטי)', and at Gen 46:20: 'To Joseph were born Manasseh and Ephraim in the land of Egypt, who Asenath daughter of Potiphera priest of On bore for him (אשר ילדה לו אסנת בת פוטי פרע כהן אן את מנשה ואת אפרים) (פוטי בת פוטי פרע כהן אן את מנשה ואת אפרים)'.  
<sup>32</sup> The connection between Potiphar and Potiphera is mentioned above in discussion of BT Sot 13b on Potiphar as a eunuch, but the connection between the two biblical characters is also made in earlier midrashic sources, such as GenR 86:3.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. TanB *Wayeshev* 16.

the name Potiphera (פּוֹטִיפֶרָה) and the phrase 'he uncovered himself' (פּוֹרַע עֲצָמוֹ), as thus Potiphera acted in honour of idols. Furthermore, following from the identification of Potiphar and Potiphera, the tradition teaches that 'when the bull (פָּר) went down there, he became enlightened (פּוֹטִינּוֹן)'. This last interpretation creates a *double entendre* between the use of bulls in idolatrous practices by Potiphar/Potiphera, and the enlightenment brought by Joseph, the bull of Deut 33:17. This series of interpretations is followed in GenR 86:3 by the tradition of Potiphar's castration, thus creating an implicit link between the change of name from Potiphar to Potiphera and his mutilation, as is also explicitly described in BT Sot 13b outlined above.<sup>34</sup>

The identification of Potiphar and Potiphera underpins the tradition that Asenath, who is the daughter of Potiphera in Gen 41:45, 50 and 46:20, is the daughter of Potiphar. This tradition raised two major difficulties that needed resolving. First, Potiphar was a eunuch, and so, if identified with Potiphera, how could he father a child? Secondly, Asenath was an Egyptian, and so Joseph apparently married a non-Jew, and even the daughter of a non-Israelite priest. The story of how Joseph came to marry Asenath and her relationship to Potiphar are the subject of a number of interpretations designed to address these difficulties.<sup>35</sup>

Targum Onqelos and Neofiti represent an early attempt to explain the relationship between Joseph, Asenath and Potiphar/Potiphera.<sup>36</sup> In these sources, the problem of Joseph marrying a daughter of a priest of On is addressed. Tg Neofiti Gen 41:45 (cf. 41:50) states: 'And Pharaoh named Joseph 'the man to whom hidden things are revealed'. He gave him Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, chief of Tanis, as a wife'.<sup>37</sup> Here, Asenath is the daughter of Potiphera (without identification with Potiphar), but he is no longer a priest but רבֵּה דְטַנִּס 'chief of Tanis', that is, an important man in the city. In Tg Neofiti Gen 46:20 the same principle is applied, but Potiphera is רבֵּה דְאֹן 'chief of On'. Tg Onqelos Gen 41:45, 50 and 46:20 also adopts this approach of identifying Potiphera as 'chief of On'

<sup>34</sup> See above on the traditions of Potiphar as a eunuch. The connection between Potiphar and Potiphera is already found in early pseudepigraphical sources. For example, Jubilees 40:10 also clearly makes the connection: 'And the king called Joseph 'Sephantiphans.' And he gave the daughter of Potiphar, the daughter of the priest of Heliopolis, the chief of the guard, to Joseph (as) a wife' (trans. O.S. Wintermute, *OTP* 2, 130). Thus, the connection between Potiphar and Potiphera is also made in early Jewish tradition.

<sup>35</sup> See the summary in R.S. Kraemer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph*, 307–313.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. R.S. Kraemer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph*, 309.

<sup>37</sup> A. Díez Macho (ed.), *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensis Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis*, 310, 354. For commentary, see M. McNamara, *Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis*, 189.



(רַבָּא דַּאֲוֹן), and Tg PsJon Gen 41:45, 50 and 46:20 refers to him as 'chief of Tanis' (רַבָּא דַּטְנִיִּס).<sup>38</sup>

A second exegetical approach clarifies the relationship between Potiphar and Asenath. GenR 89:2 teaches that Asenath was the biological daughter of Potiphar's wife and therefore of Potiphar himself.<sup>39</sup> The tradition states: 'Another interpretation: *'In all toil there is profit'* (Prov 14:23). Every trouble that Joseph suffered with his mistress, he had profit from it. Why? Because he took her daughter'. Here the passage understands Asenath to be the daughter of Potiphar's wife, and her marriage to Joseph is part of the restitution he received for the suffering that he previously endured in their house. Asenath is also considered to be the daughter of Potiphar's wife in GenR 85:2, which states that Potiphar's wife saw by means of astrology that a son would arise from Joseph, but she did not know whether it would be from her or from her daughter. Both of these interpretations are predicated upon the link between Potiphar and Potiphara, the biblical father of Asenath. These interpretations are also informed by the tradition of the timing of the castration of Potiphar, as described above; Potiphar was able to have children (i.e. Asenath) before Joseph came along because he only became a eunuch as punishment for desiring Joseph.

A third approach claims that Asenath was in fact the adopted daughter of Potiphar, an interpretation that is found in later sources, such as PRE 38:

שהיתה בתו של יעקב יושבת אוהלים ולא היתה יוצאת החוצה מה עשה שכס בן חמור הביא נערות משחקות חוצה לה מתופפות בתופים יצאה דינה לראות בבנות המשחקות ושללה [ושכב אותה] והרתה וילדה את אסנת ואמרו בני ישראל להרגה שעכשו יאמרו כל הארץ שיש בית זנות באהלי יעקב מה עשה יעקב הביא ציץ וכתב עליו שם הקדש ותלה על צוארה ושלחה והלכה לה והכל צפוי לפני הקב"ה וירד מיכאל המלאך והורידה למצרים לביתו של פוטיפרע שהיתה אסנת ראויה ליוסף לאשה והיתה אשתו של פוטיפרע עקרה וגדלה אותה כבת וכשירד

<sup>38</sup> A. Sperber (ed.), *The Pentateuch according to Targum Onkelos*, vol. 1, 70, 80; A. Díez Macho (ed.), *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis*, 311, 355; R.S. Kraemer has noted that these targumic sources translate סַרִּיס in terms of an 'officer' rather than a 'eunuch' which enables Potiphar to have a child and so Asenath is understood to be the natural daughter of Potiphar (*When Asenath Met Joseph*, 316). B. Grossfeld notes of Targum Onkelos that 'This interpretative tradition, also followed by Tgs. Neof. and Ps.-Jon., was the result of a situation that presented two problems: 1.) The Patriarch Joseph marrying the daughter of an idolatrous priest just as later Moses' marriage to the daughter of an idolatrous Midianite priest posed a serious problem to Rabbinic theology. 2.) Only Aaron and his descendants could be genuine *kohanim*, making it inadmissible to have a non-Aaronide depicted as a *kohen*' (*The Targum Onkelos to Genesis*, 139).

<sup>39</sup> R.S. Kraemer, *When Asenath Met Joseph*, 307–308.

יוסף למצרים לקחה לו [לאשה] שנאמר ויתן לו את אסנת בת פוטי פרע כהן אן  
 (ed. D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, 479–481 [239–240]) לאשה

Because the daughter of Jacob was dwelling in the tents, and she did not go outside, what did Shechem, the son of Hamor, do? He brought laughing girls outside for her, who were striking timbrels. Dinah went out to see the daughters, the ones playing, and he carried her off [and slept with her] and she conceived and bore Asenath. The sons of Israel said to kill her, because now all the land will say that there is a house of prostitution in the tents of Jacob. What did Jacob do? He brought a plate, and wrote the name of the Holy One upon it, and he hung (it) upon her neck and sent her away, and she went her way. Everything is foreseen before the Holy One, blessed be He, and Michael the angel descended and brought her down to Egypt to the house of Potiphera. Because Asenath was predestined to be the wife of Joseph. And the wife of Potiphera was barren, and she brought her up as a daughter. When Joseph went down to Egypt he took her for himself [as a wife], as it is said, *And he gave him Asenath, daughter of Potiphera priest of On, as a wife* (Gen 41:45).

In PRE 38, Asenath is portrayed as the daughter of Dinah.<sup>40</sup> In this tradition, Asenath was forced to leave her family so as not to bring shame upon them because of the rape of her mother, as described in Gen 34:2.<sup>41</sup> The angel Michael brought her to Potiphera in Egypt where she grew up as an adopted daughter until her marriage to Joseph. This tradition not only provides a fuller background to the character of Asenath, but legitimates Joseph's marriage to her, as she was really an Israelite descended from Dinah the daughter of Jacob.

This line of interpretation is also found in PRE 36, which describes the births of the sons of Joseph. The passage teaches that all of Jacob's sons were born with their partners, but the exception was Joseph as he was destined to marry Asenath the daughter of Dinah. Soferim 43b also reiterates this tradition, as Asenath is described as Dinah's daughter, and Michael takes the baby to Potiphar's house. Finally, Tg PsJ on Gen 41:45 (cf. 41:50 and 46:20) states: 'And he gave him Asenath as a wife, whom Dinah had borne to Shechem (דילידת דינה לשכם), and whom the wife of Potiphera, chief of Tanis had raised (ורבייתה איתת פוטיפרע רבא דטניס)'.<sup>42</sup> Tg PsJ on Gen 41:45 combines the tradition that Dinah is the mother of Asenath with the adopted parental rights of Potiphera as רבא דטניס 'chief of Tanis'.

<sup>40</sup> The story of Dinah, the daughter of Leah and Jacob, is found in Genesis 34, which describes how she was raped by Shechem, the Hivite ruler of the land that Jacob and his family inhabited at that time.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. R.S. Kraemer, *When Asenath Met Joseph*, 309–313.

<sup>42</sup> A. Díez Macho (ed.), *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensis Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis*, 311. For commentary, see M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 138.

As R.S. Kraemer notes, 'for the 'author' of *Pseudo-Jonathan*, the priesthood of Potiphara was not the only concern: Asenath's Egyptian birth (and implicit conversion?) were also disturbing'.<sup>43</sup> Ultimately, the exegetical approach in these traditions sees Asenath as an adopted child in the house of Potiphar/Potiphara with legitimate Jewish heritage.<sup>44</sup>

In dealing with the relationship between Joseph and Asenath, Potiphar again features heavily in the exegesis. Potiphar is identified with Potiphara, the father of Asenath, as in GenR 85:2 and 89:2. However, the connection between the eunuch Potiphar and the father of Asenath created an exegetical problem that needed to be explained, namely, how a eunuch could father a child. This was overcome by saying that Potiphar only became a eunuch after Joseph's arrival in his household. However, an alternative approach sees Asenath as the biological daughter of Dinah, and then as the adopted daughter of Potiphar, an exegetical move which also gives Asenath an Israelite heritage.

### *The Christian Tradition*

In Christian exegetical literature, Joseph was the biblical figure *par excellence* that represented a type for Jesus.<sup>45</sup> Joseph, the unjustly persecuted righteous man, who triumphs against his enemies but who also forgives them, offered a plethora of metaphors to the Church Fathers and other Christian writers to exploit in a christological frame of interpretation. Significantly, according to an anonymous fragmentary Coptic text, Joseph resembled the Saviour in his goodness and love.<sup>46</sup> Jacob of Serugh claimed

<sup>43</sup> *When Asenath met Joseph*, 313.

<sup>44</sup> Kraemer also notes a fourth approach whereby Asenath is portrayed as a proselyte, as found in texts such as Tadshe 21 and NumR 8:4, which due to date of redaction are beyond the scope of this study (*When Asenath Met Joseph*, 308–309).

<sup>45</sup> See Justin, Dial. CXXVI.1; Hippolytus, Fragments ad Gen 49:21–26 (PG 10:596–602); Irenaeus of Lyons, Fragment 17 (PG 7:1240); Origen, Gen.Hom. XV; Jerome, Ep. 109, 2; Cyril of Alexandria, Glaphyra VI.3–4 (PG 69:296. 300); Procopius, Comm.Gen., PG 87: 469/470; 475–476 (Latin); Cat. Petit 1867; 1877; see also Cat. Petit 1749b (Gennadius); Cat. Petit 1750 (Diodore); Cat. Petit 1753 (Eusebius). See also M. Dulay, 'Joseph, le patriarche, figure du Christ', in: P. Maraval (ed.), *Figures de l'Ancien Testament chez les Pères*, Strasbourg 1989, 83–105; according to Dulay, 'Joseph est une préfiguration du Christ des les premiers texts patristiques, sur la base notamment des Benedictions de Moïse (Dt 33,13–17): en Joseph, 'taureau premier-né', dont les cornes sont les cornes de l'unicorne: une image du Christ crucifié (Melito, Fr. SC 123, 247; Just. Dial. XCI.1–3; Hippolyt, Bened. PO 27, 173–174)'; cf. J. Danielou, 'La typologie biblique traditionnelle dans la Liturgie du Moyen Age', in: *La Bibbia nell'Alto Medioevo*, Spoleto 1963, 150.

<sup>46</sup> See E.O. Winsted, 'Addenda to Some Coptic Apocryphal Legends', *JTS* 39 (1909), 411.

that Joseph's beauty was the 'beauty of the Messiah, with which all righteous are adorned'.<sup>47</sup>

The christological approach to Joseph expanded upon the episode of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, which will be discussed below in more detail. Joseph is understood as a type for Jesus because he stoically endured the evil machinations of his master's wife and triumphed over her, as Jesus also did with his adversaries.<sup>48</sup> It is further described how Joseph was held fast by the woman, just like Jesus, who was held by death for a short time. Moreover, Joseph took off his clothes and threw them at the lascivious woman, like the resurrected Jesus, who took off his clothes and threw them into the grave (Cat. Petit 1867; cf. Procopius, *Comm.Gen.*, PG 87:475–476).<sup>49</sup> According to a similar line of interpretation, the Egyptian woman symbolizes the persecutors of Christianity, as demonstrated in the case of the Holy Apostles, who also 'fell into temptations and were imprisoned' and they were hated by the world 'exactly as the lustful woman hated Joseph' (Cyril of Alexandria, *Glaphyra VI*, PG 69:32).

The typological approach to Joseph is particularly prominent in the Syriac tradition.<sup>50</sup> According to Aphrahat, Potiphar's wife, who stripped Joseph of his garment, symbolizes the soldiers at Jesus' crucifixion who took his clothes and divided them among themselves (cf. John 19:23; Dem. XXI.9). In Narsai's lyrical retelling of the story, Joseph's mistress, who 'confined Joseph in the prison', is paralleled with 'Zion that confined our saviour in the tomb' (N. 44.8–9).<sup>51</sup>

Furthermore, Joseph's marriage to Asenath, a heathen girl, was widely understood as a metaphor for the union of Jesus with the Gentile church (Ephraem, *Hymn. Virg.* 21.9 and Aphrahat *Dem.* XXI.9). R. Murray notes that, according to Aphrahat, 'Asenath is the first of several types of the

<sup>47</sup> H. Näf, *Syrische Josefgedichte*, Zurich 1923, 45, *apud* R.R. Phenix, *The Sermons on Joseph*, Tübingen 2008, 72, n.2.

<sup>48</sup> John Chrysostom, *Hom.Matth.* LXXXIV.4; Cyril Alex., *Glaphyra*, PG 69:24A; Procopius, *Comm.Gen.* PG 87:475–476.

<sup>49</sup> A metaphorical understanding of the clothes as the carnal body is implied here; cf. Aphrahat who also connects Joseph's clothes with Jesus' body (*Dem.* XXI.9; cf. R. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 310).

<sup>50</sup> Narsai writes that 'this monstrous story is full of symbols and types of the son of God'; see K. Heal, 'Joseph as a type of Jesus in Christian Syriac Literature', *BYU Studies* 41.1 (2002), 32. Aphrahat lists eighteen points of comparison between Joseph and Jesus (see K. Heal, *op. cit.*, 31); see also Jacob of Serugh, *Sermons on Joseph*; Balai of Qenneshrin, *Sermons on Joseph*; Ishodad of Merv, *ad Gen* 38:36.

<sup>51</sup> See K. Heal, 'Joseph as a type of Jesus', 36f.

Church as Bride of Christ'.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, Aphrahat writes: 'Joseph married the daughter of the unclean [i.e. Gentile] priest, and Jesus brought to himself the Church from the unclean Gentiles' (Dem XXI.9; trans. Murray, 136). This tradition was also widespread in the Greek tradition.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, in the Armenian commentary to Genesis attributed to Ephraem, the mistress is compared to the first 'murderous congregation', while Asenath is a symbol for the 'holy Church'.<sup>54</sup>

The following discussion of Christian exegesis will focus on Joseph's biblically attested comely appearance, especially against the background of his encounter with Pharaoh's courtier, Potiphar, and his wife.

### *The Beauty of Joseph*

The Eastern Orthodox Church celebrates the memory of 'St. Joseph the all-comely' ("Άγιος Ἰωσήφ ὁ Πάγκαλος) on the 31st of March. Joseph's beauty became his most remarkable and prominent trait, and the attribute by which Eastern Christianity commemorates him to this day.

Scripture praises Joseph's attractive physical appearance emphatically (LXX Gen 39:6b: Καὶ ἦν Ἰωσήφ καλὸς τῶ εἶδει καὶ ὠραῖος τῆ ὄψει σφοδρὰ (*And Joseph was handsome in physique and very pleasing in appearance*; NETS). In Narsai's poems, when Potiphar encounters Joseph in the slave market, he believes that he is the son of a king because of his striking beauty.<sup>55</sup>

Above all, however, Christian exegetes saw in his attractive looks a symbol for his spiritual beauty and virtue. As John Chrysostom explains, 'Why does the text describe to us his physical charm? For us to learn that he was striking not only for charm of soul but also for his person' (John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 62:16). Joseph's moral superiority, wisdom and intelligence are praised, along with his physical appearance, by the Church Fathers (see for example, Ishodad, Comm.Gen. ad Gen 37:3). Joseph's

---

<sup>52</sup> *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 136. Murray assumes that there is a 'midrashic tradition' behind this typology, which was developed in the pseudepigraphical Hellenistic text 'Joseph and Aseneth' (op. cit. 135f.). The Jewish origin, as well as an early dating of this particular text, is, however, uncertain; see J.R. Davila, *The Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha*, 191ff.; additionally, the issue of the conversion of Joseph's bride was handled in very different ways by the various Jewish and Christian exegetical traditions, as will be discussed below.

<sup>53</sup> See Cyril of Alexandria, Glaphyra VI.3, PG 69:324; cf. Procopius, Comm.Gen., PG 87:479; Cat. Petit 1946.

<sup>54</sup> Ed. Matthews, 143; this text contains a remarkably long list of detailed parallels between Jesus and Joseph, see esp. 143ff.

<sup>55</sup> See E. Hirscher, 'Der biblische Joseph in orientalischen Literaturwerken', *MIO* 4 (1956), 84.

purity of soul, righteousness and chastity, as demonstrated in Genesis 39, became very popular ideas in Christian interpretation. Not only do these characteristics match Joseph's portrayal as a type for Jesus, but they also become a model for Christian life conduct.<sup>56</sup> R. Phenix argues that Church Fathers such as Origen adopted 'the Hellenistic concept of inner virtue manifested by external radiance', and concludes that 'Joseph's radiance is made known in Genesis because Potiphar's wife tested it'.<sup>57</sup>

Eusebius of Caesarea illustrates Joseph's physical and inner qualities as follows:

Joseph indeed having first been crowned with the rewards of chastity, and afterwards having received the government of Egypt, displayed the divinely favoured character of the Hebrews. (...) For I pass by all the rest of his advantages in regard to beauty and strength of body and comeliness, though the Scriptures record that he excelled all in prime of beauty: but his qualities of soul how could anyone describe, though he purposed to speak his praise in a manner worthy of his virtue. The story is that he had by nature the stamp of gentle birth, and the nobility of his disposition blooming upon his face: and so excellently was he endowed with the eminent graces of piety, that his soul shone bright in chastity and justice, in prudence and manliness, and above all in knowledge and piety towards the God of all, which his parents are said to have implanted in his soul from the cradle. (Praep.Ev. 7.8)

The reference to Joseph's attractive appearance is implicitly presented in the biblical text as the logical explanation for the actions of Potiphar's wife, who could not but notice his beauty and feel attracted to him (Gen 39:6–7). Christian tradition follows the explanation of the biblical text and elaborates on this episode in dramatic descriptions. John Chrysostom, for example, describes how 'the Egyptian woman was under the spell of the young man's beauty in inviting him to that illicit association' (John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 62.16). Infatuated by his good looks,

---

<sup>56</sup> Origen, Gen.Hom XV; Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Fornicarios* (PG 46:493f.); Basil of Caesarea, *Sermo* xix (*De temperantia et incontinentia*; PG 32:1348) and *Epistles* ii; xlvi. See H.W. Hollander, who stresses that 'in later Christian literature, the positive image of Joseph remains intact. He continues to be a hero, a virtuous, chaste, and pious man who in times of distress is confident in God's help' ('The Portrayal of Joseph in Hellenistic Jewish and Early Christian Literature', in: M.E. Stone – T.A. Bergren (eds), *Biblical Figures Outside the Bible*, 259); cf. A.W. Argyle, 'Joseph the Patriarch in Patristic Teaching', *ExpTimes* 67 (1955–56), 199–201.

<sup>57</sup> See R.R. Phenix, *The Sermons on Joseph*, 233 on Origen, *De oratore* 29.18; cf. Philo, *De Iosepho* 57. Phenix remarks that both Origen and Philo use the word '*sophrosyne*' to describe Joseph's virtue.

Potiphar's wife is compared to a she-lion (John Chrysostom, *Epistulae ad Olympiadem* III,11; PG 52:584; *Cat. Petit* 1851).

Joseph's beauty became so legendary that, according to certain traditions, it fascinated all Egyptian ladies and not just his mistress. Jerome records a tradition that understands Gen 49:22 (Jacob's blessing on Joseph) as follows: 'O my son Joseph, you are so handsome that the whole host of the maidens of Egypt look forth at you from the walls and the towers and the windows' (Hebr. *Quest.* 49:22–26).

This exegesis is clearly related to the Hebrew text of this biblical verse (see the discussion of rabbinic traditions). The LXX differs considerably from the MT here.<sup>58</sup> The Peshitta translation is closer to the Hebrew text, and has influenced exegesis of the verse in the Syriac tradition accordingly.<sup>59</sup> Ishodad of Merv appears to know of the Hebrew wording specifically, and offers an exegetical approach that is comparable to the tradition transmitted by Jerome. According to Ishodad, 'In Hebrew: 'Go up, eye of the daughters that stroll on wall', that means the daughters of king that stroll on the walls of the royal house and they observed how he was going up and he gradually rose up to the royal house' (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 49:22). However, Ishodad's explanation does not address Joseph's physical attractiveness, but treats Joseph's rise to power in Pharaoh's court in a metaphorical way.

### *Joseph and Potiphar's Wife*

According to Christian exegetes, the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife is primarily set in a moralistic context of interpretation. Joseph serves as a model of virtue and endurance against the temptation and evil intentions of the 'wife of the Egyptian'. Accordingly, Joseph represents the exemplary man of faith opposed to the evil foreign woman. Interestingly, Epiphanius of Salamis compares Joseph's ordeal over Potiphar's wife with his own experience as a youth in Alexandria in Egypt, when women from a liberatinistic Gnostic sect tried to seduce him (Pan 26.17.5).

<sup>58</sup> LXX: υἱὸς ἠὺξήμενος Ἰωσήφ, υἱὸς ἠὺξήμενος, ζηλωτὸς, υἱὸς μου νεώτατος· πρὸς με ἀνάστρεψον (*Joseph is a grown son, an enviable grown son, my youngest son; return to me; NETS*).

<sup>59</sup> Peshitta Gen 49:22:

ܕܝܘܫܘܥ ܕܒܢܝܢ ܕܕܘܠܘܩܝܢܝܘܬܝܢ ܕܡܪܝܚܝܢ ܕܕܘܠܘܩܝܢܝܘܬܝܢ ܕܕܘܠܘܩܝܢܝܘܬܝܢ ܕܕܘܠܘܩܝܢܝܘܬܝܢ ܕܕܘܠܘܩܝܢܝܘܬܝܢ ܕܕܘܠܘܩܝܢܝܘܬܝܢ

Joseph is a disciplined son, an educated son; a fruitful bough by a spring, whose branches run over the wall'; cf. Ephraem the Syrian: 'he went up on the wall, because he was perfected and crowned with the best things' (Comm.Gen. XLII.13).

John Chrysostom remarks that Joseph was 20 years old,<sup>60</sup> when the lascivious woman tried to seduce him. More importantly, she tried to seduce him over a long period of time, and not just for one or two days, thus prolonging and intensifying Joseph's ordeal (Ad Stagiriam II.12; PG 47:470—Cat. Petit 1855; cf. Procopius, *Comm.Gen.*, PG 87:473–474). John Chrysostom vividly describes how the woman 'fell upon the young man like a wild animal grinding its teeth' (*Hom.Gen.* 62.19). He further argues that Joseph would not have been admirable if he had rejected his mistress' advances without having felt any desire at all. Accordingly, Joseph's merit lies in his spiritual strength and continence to resist real physical temptation (Ad Stagiriam II.12, PG 47:470; Cat. Petit 1854). Joseph, who was not only young but also a slave, a stranger, an immigrant, lonely and stateless, would have been an easy victim for his mistress. Moreover, the advances of the woman would have been facilitated by Joseph's young age and natural urges (John Chrysostom, *Epistula ad Olympiadem* III.12; PG 52:585; Cat. Petit 1861).

John Chrysostom stresses that Joseph, who as discussed above is a type for Jesus, prevails over his enemies and also over the wantonness and maliciousness of Potiphar's wife, who pursued and stalked him fervently. The woman is portrayed as misguided by the devil. The passion of this 'diabolical woman' is similarly described as a 'diabolical love'. John Chrysostom emphasizes the moral strength and superiority of the 'wretched prisoner' compared to the 'noble' lady who abided in royal chambers (*Hom. Matth.* LXXXIV.4). Joseph's struggle to resist her advances and his efforts to reason with her were particularly admired by John Chrysostom (*Hom.* 1Cor. XIX.5). Moreover, Procopius notes that if Joseph had succumbed, he would have transgressed the commandment that prohibits adultery (cf. *Exod* 20:13; *Deut* 5:17; Procopius, *Comm.Gen.*, PG 87:475–76; Cat. Petit 1864).<sup>61</sup>

---

<sup>60</sup> According to *Gen* 37:2: 'Joseph was seventeen years old, when he was tending flock with his brothers', and thirty years old when 'he entered the service of Pharaoh' (*Gen* 41:46). Thus, John Chrysostom suggests that Joseph stayed in Potiphar's household for three years, followed by ten years in prison. Alexander Polyhistor calculates that Joseph stayed thirteen years in prison, thus implying that Joseph stayed for only a very short period of time in Potiphar's house (Eusebius, *Praep.Ev.* 9.21); cf. *Jubilees* 46:3: 'And Joseph died at one hundred and ten years of age. And seventeen years he remained as a slave and three years in the prison and eighty years under the king ruling all the land of Egypt' (trans. O.S. Wintermute, *OTP* 1, 137).

<sup>61</sup> Cf. *Jubilees* 39:6: 'And he (Joseph) did not surrender himself but he remembered the LORD and the words which Jacob, his father, used to read, which were the towards of Abraham, that there is no man who (may) fornicate with a woman who has a husband'



An anonymous exegetical tradition reports that Joseph was subjected to ten trials or ordeals. Six of them relate to his treatment by his brothers, and the remaining four to his experience with his mistress. Accordingly, she started meeting Joseph and baring herself in front of him, while pleading with him. When she found him on his own, she locked all the doors, stood naked in front of him and forced herself upon him. As she was rebuffed by him, she accused him in front of his master. Finally, as a consequence of the above, Joseph was thrown into prison by his master (Cat. Petit 1852 anon.). The sexual details that are provided in the description of the efforts of the woman are strikingly vivid in this context. Interestingly, this fragment stresses that it is the woman who bares herself in front of Joseph. By contrast, the biblical text specifies that it was Joseph who had to leave his clothes behind (Gen 39:12–16). The idea implied by the scriptural passage, that Joseph might have stood naked in public, appears to have disturbed certain Church Fathers. Notably, Ishodad of Merv clarifies that Joseph left behind his coat or his cape but that he was not totally naked, as Adam was (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 39:12).<sup>62</sup>

In Syriac literature, Joseph is also praised as a model for chastity and self-restraint. Although Ephraem the Syrian does not comment in detail on this episode in his Commentary on Genesis, nevertheless, as R. Phenix argues, 'from the number of allusions to Gen 39.7–12, one can determine that the temptation of Joseph is one of the most important episodes for Ephraem in his poetic work (Hymn.Eccl. 51.1; CarmNis. 18.7; Hymn. Parad. 7.7)'.<sup>63</sup>

K. Heal notes that Aphrahat makes specific reference to Joseph as 'among those whose purity was a perfect fast before God, (...) and those whom Satan attacked by means of women'.<sup>64</sup> Significantly, Narsai compares Potiphar's wife to the devil in Matt 4:8–9, who tempts Jesus

---

(trans. O.S. Wintermute, *OTP* 1, 129). However, it is worth noting that Codex Justinianus proscribed the death sentence for a free woman who had intercourse with her slave (Codex Justinianus 9.11.1par., in: M.R. Lefkowitz – M.B. Fant, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome*, London 1992, #144, 118); cf. C. Osiek, 'Female Slaves', 266.

<sup>62</sup> Ishodad here argues explicitly *contra* the Interpreter (i.e. Theodore of Mopsuestia), see Comm.Gen. 221, n.3 on the discussion among Syriac writers as regards Joseph being fully or partly naked when he ran out into the street after the assault of Potiphar's wife; cf. Balai of Qenneshrin's Sermons on Joseph: 'he (*Joseph*) was not ashamed to be naked in the market place' (see R.R. Phenix, *The Sermons on Joseph*, 89). The explanation for Joseph's 'nakedness' in the slave market is because his brothers stripped him of his cloak before throwing him into the pit and selling him to the Midianite merchants.

<sup>63</sup> *The sermons on Joseph*, 96.

<sup>64</sup> 'Joseph as a Type of Jesus', 30.

in the wilderness and demands that Jesus worships him. As K. Heal further remarks, 'It is not surprising that the author, writing for a monastic community steeped in a misogynistic tradition, would equate Potiphar's wife—and also, by implication, women in general—with the adversary'.<sup>65</sup>

Expansions of Joseph's story with Potiphar's wife became very popular in Eastern Christian literature.<sup>66</sup> The essential narrative was based on the vain efforts of the 'Egyptian' woman to seduce young Joseph. The attempted—albeit failed—seduction is presented as a battle between good and evil, virtue and corruption, angels and demons, and so on. Ultimately, it is a struggle between proper faith and idolatry. Joseph's natural beauty is contrasted with the artificially made-up woman, who uses a whole range of cosmetic devices in order to make herself look attractive and conquer Joseph.<sup>67</sup> All these works stress Joseph's endurance and self-restraint. For example, a Coptic fragment reads: 'And again he had not taken yet a wife, that thou mayest not say he consoled himself with the assistance of his own wife. And again there was no continent

---

<sup>65</sup> 'Joseph as a Type of Jesus', 37. The temptation by the devil through a woman was a *topos* of the early monastic tradition. K. Heal mentions 'the list composed by Aphrahat on which the devil has tempted men by means of women' (ibid.). On the identification of women with the devil in monastic environments, see D. Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monks: Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity*, Cambridge MA – London 2006, 182ff. Brakke quotes a typical saying of the Desert Fathers in this context: 'It is through women that the enemy makes war against the saints' (op.cit., 201); cf. also the anonymous Syriac poem edited by S.P. Brock, in which Potiphar's wife is compared with Gehenna: 'Am I not beautiful?—halleluia!—Do I not possess a regal presence, O Hebrew man? Joseph: 'You are very fine, O lady,—a Gehenna all in readiness!—If I approach you,—halleluia!—this fire will set me alight and burn me up, Egyptian lady' ('Joseph and Potiphar's Wife (Genesis 39): Two Anonymous Dispute Poems', in: W.J. van Bekkum et al. (eds), *Syriac Polemics*, Leuven 2007, 55).

<sup>66</sup> See esp. *De Ioseph et de Castitate* by Ps.-John Chrysostom (PG 56:587–590); *Histoire copte de Joseph*, ed. C. Wessely; J. Zandee, 'Iosephus contra Apionem. An Apocryphal Story of Joseph in Coptic', *VC* 15 (1961), 193–213; G.T. Zervos, 'History of Joseph', *OTP* 2, 467–475; J. Dochhorn – A.K. Petersen, 'Narratio Iosephi: A Coptic Joseph-Apocryphon', *JSP* 30 (1999), 431–463; E. Isaac, 'The Ethiopic History of Joseph. Translation with Introduction and Notes', *JSP* 6 (1990), 3–125. For a survey of Eastern Christian reworkings of the Joseph literature, see E. Hirscher, 'Der biblische Joseph in orientalischen Literaturwerken', *MIO* 4 (1956), 81–108; K. Heal, 'Identifying the Syriac Vorlage of the Ethiopic History of Joseph', in: G. Kiraz (ed.), *Malphono w-Rabo d-Malphone, Studies in Honor of Sebastian Brock*, Piscataway 2008, 205–208. As E.O. Winsted remarks, the story of Potiphar's wife offered an 'opportunity to lecture the contemporaries on their vices' ('Addenda to Some Coptic Apocryphal Legends', 389).

<sup>67</sup> On the use of make-up in the ancient world, see K. Olson, 'Cosmetics in Roman Antiquity: Substance, Remedy, Poison', *CW* 102 (2009), 291–310; V.S. Eifert, 'The Ancient Art of Beautification', *Natural History* (1937), 663–667; R.J. Forbes, *Studies in Ancient Technology*, Leiden 1955. On the condemnation of such practices in early Christianity in general, see Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* II.8.

man in Egypt to rival him and conquer in this great war which is worse than all wars'.<sup>68</sup> The praise of Joseph in Christian tradition reflects the ethical values of Eastern Christian communities in Late Antiquity.<sup>69</sup> Significantly, Romanos the Melodos composed two hymns praising Joseph. One of those hymns, which is also one of Romanos' longest works, describes Joseph's encounter with Potiphar's wife and her efforts to seduce him in the form of a poetic dialogue with highly dramatic overtones.<sup>70</sup>

Similar dramatic and lyrical illustrations of the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife became particularly popular in Syriac literature.<sup>71</sup> This edifying body of literature stands out for its imaginative use of thrilling details that intensify the drama and passion of the story. However, in spite of her indisputably leading role in this drama, the woman remains nameless, as in the Bible. She is usually referred to either as 'Potiphar's wife' or as the 'Egyptian woman'.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>68</sup> E.O. Winsted, 'Addenda to some Coptic Apocryphal Legends', 410.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. H.W. Hollander: 'In these texts (4Mac 2:1–4; 4Mac 18:11; 12th Hellenistic Synagogal Prayer v. 65 [in Apostolic Constitutions 8.12.24]), Joseph's stance toward Potiphar's wife, characterized by religious devotion and temperance, is interpreted as a central lesson of the Genesis story. His exaltation and appointment as king of Egypt, rewards for his pious and wise behaviour, are also mentioned repeatedly' ('The Portrayal of Joseph in Hellenistic Jewish and Early Christian Literature', 241).

<sup>70</sup> See R.J. Schork, *Sacred Song from the Byzantine Pulpit*, Gainsville FL 1995, 158ff.; Schork remarks: 'One of the most compelling aspects of the work is the cosmic demonic level on which the struggle is waged' (op. cit., 161); cf. also the pseudepigraphical writing 'In Joseph pulcherrimum' (BHG 2200; CPG 3938), which is attributed to Ephraem Graecus; this was a particularly popular work as evidenced from the numerous translations and mss in which it is preserved, see P.-H. Poirier, 'Le sermon pseudo-éphrémien In Pulcherrimum Joseph', *Cahiers de Biblia Patristica* 2 (1989), 107–122.

<sup>71</sup> M. Grabowski, *Die Geschichte Josefs von Mar Narse*, Leipzig 1889; *Die Geschichte Josefs* (ed. M. Weinberg 1893; II., S.W. Link, 1895); P. Bedjan (ed.), *Historie complete de Joseph: poème en douze livres*, Leipzig 1891 (extensive cycle of 12 memre attributed to [Ps.-] Ephrem); P. Bedjan (ed.), *Homiliae Mar Narsis in Joseph*, Paris – Leipzig 1901 (four memre attributed to [Ps.-] Narsai); H. Näf, *Syrische Josefgedichte*; S.P. Brock, 'Joseph and Potiphar's Wife', 41–58. As K. Heal observes, the main motif of this literature is the presentation and praise of Joseph the righteous ('Reworking the Biblical Text in the Dramatic Dialogue Poems on the Old Testament Patriarch Joseph', in: B. ter Haar Romeny, *The Peshitta*, 67–98, esp. 89).

<sup>72</sup> On the namelessness of Potiphar's wife in the Bible and in the majority of parabiblical literature, see T. Ilan, 'The Names of Biblical Women in the Apocryphal Traditions', *JSP* 11 (1993), 41. However, Ilan's suggestion that the epithet 'Memphe', which can be found in Testament of Joseph, is not a geographical designation (the 'Memphian' woman, as it is commonly translated) but perhaps her actual personal name is intriguing but philologically uncertain. In later Muslim tradition, she is known as *Ra'il* (al-Tabari), *Baka* (Tha'labi) or *Zulayka* (al-Kisa'i); the same name can also be found in Sefer ha-Yashar, see *ibid*.

Moreover, further elaborations on the story of the fate of Potiphar and his wife after Joseph's rise to power are also encountered in the Syriac literature. Ephraem the Syrian describes how Potiphar expresses his fear to his wife on account of Joseph's new powerful position: 'Joseph, out servant, has become our master. He whom we sent to prison without clothing, Pharaoh has now clothed with a garment of fine white linen' (Comm. Gen. XXXV.8). Potiphar's wife then admits to her husband that she has falsely accused Joseph. Moreover, she argues that Joseph will not harm them, because he is truly just and he knows that all his afflictions served a divine plan. As she concludes, 'Although we did not actually exalt him, it is as if we did exalt him, for it was due to our afflicting him that he has been accorded such honour and has become second to the king' (Comm. Gen. XXXV.8).<sup>73</sup>

In Ephraem's reading of the story, all protagonists serve God's plan for Joseph's final exaltation. Potiphar's wife is almost presented in a favourable way, as not only—contrary to the scriptural passage—does she confess to her husband her abusive behaviour towards Joseph, but she is also the one to explain to her husband the divine plan. As S.P. Brock also notes, 'Ephraem, whose empathy for biblical women is not infrequently to be observed in both his prose and his verse writings, handles the episode concerning Potiphar's wife in a remarkable way, gradually—and with great delicacy—presenting her as finally confessing her actions, and thus (incidentally) providing the first step on the path by which she becomes a model for repentance in Islamic tradition (see Sura 12:51) (...)'.<sup>74</sup>

Christian exegetical tradition primarily expands upon the episode of Joseph and Potiphar's wife within a strongly moralistic frame of reference. Joseph as a type for Jesus becomes a model of chastity and endurance for all Christians. The struggle of virtue against temptation is further interpreted as a divine test for the righteous.

### *Potiphar: A Eunuch?*

As discussed, the LXX narrates that Potiphar, the eunuch, was married to a lascivious and cunning woman. The fact that a 'eunuch' was supposed

---

<sup>73</sup> According to Severus of Antioch, however, it is Potiphar himself who realizes Joseph's special role in the context of God's providence (Hom.Cath. XCI).

<sup>74</sup> 'Joseph and Potiphar's wife', 57. This tradition was also quite popular in the later Syriac literature. According to other versions of this motif, Potiphar's wife writes a letter to Joseph asking for forgiveness, as a result of which Joseph invites the couple to the palace and showers them with gifts and honours, see E. Isaac, 'The Ethiopic History of Joseph', 13f.

to have a 'wife' was a further exegetical issue that was addressed by the Christian exegetical tradition.<sup>75</sup> The LXX uses two different words to describe the Egyptian courtier who bought Joseph: Gen 37:36 reads: 'οἱ δὲ Μαδιηναῖοι ἀπέδοντο τὸν Ἰωσηφ εἰς Αἴγυπτον τῷ Πετεφρῆ τῷ σπάδοντι Φαραῶ, ἀρχιμαγειρῷ' (NETS: *Now the Madianites had sold Joseph in Egypt to Petephres, Pharaoh's gelding (spadon), a chief butcher/cook*). Later, however, Gen 39:1 reads: 'Ἰωσηφ δὲ κατήχθη εἰς Αἴγυπτον, καὶ ἐκτίσατο αὐτὸν Πετεφρῆς ὁ εὐνοῦχος Φαραῶ, ἀρχιμαγειρος, ἀνὴρ Αἰγύπτιος' (NETS: *Now Joseph was brought down to Egypt, and Petephres, the eunuch of Pharaoh, a chief butcher an Egyptian*).

In Greek, the word σπάδων derives from the verb σπάω (to pluck off, to tear off) and explicitly refers to an emasculated person. This Greek word is also used as a translation of the Hebrew סִרְסוּ in Isa 39:7. The term εὐνοῦχος is etymologically associated with the expression 'ὁ τὴν εὐνὴν ἔχων' (the one who is in charge of the bed/chamber), and refers to a chamberlain whose duty was to attend to the women of the court. In the course of time, and in different cultural environments, the men trusted with this duty were castrated.<sup>76</sup> Reflecting the cultural context in which they lived, Christian exegetes assumed that the term referred to a physically 'castrated person'.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>75</sup> However, the custom of married eunuchs was not unusual in ancient Rome, where at times the act of emasculation consisted of a vasectomy rather than a fully fledged castration; on married eunuchs in ancient Rome, see P. Scholz, *Eunuchs and Castrati. A Cultural History*, London 2000, 120; on sexually potent eunuchs, see A. Rousselle, *Porneia*, Oxford 1988, 122–123.

<sup>76</sup> Interestingly, in a medical treatise that is dated to the second to third centuries CE, the following explanation is encountered: 'What is the difference between a spadōn and a eunuch? That the eunuch has been deprived of his testicles while an adolescent, but the spadōn when he has already advanced further in age' Book II.2.3 of Pseudo-Aristoteles (Pseudo-Aristoteles (Pseudo-Alexander), *Supplementa Problematorum*, ed., trans. and comm. K. Kapetanaki – R.W. Sharples, Berlin 2006, 120). P. Scholz remarks, however, that 'there are many indications that in antiquity the word 'eunuch' may have been a purely courtly title—while 'spado' was a castrated person' (*Eunuchs and Castrati*, 82).

<sup>77</sup> See G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, Oxford 1961, 571f. However, the existence of eunuchs in Pharaonic Egypt is highly disputed; see G.E. Kadisch, 'Eunuchs in Ancient Egypt?', in: idem, *Studies in Honor of J.A. Wilson*, Chicago 1969, 55–62, *contra* F. Jonckheere, 'L'eunuque dans l'Égypte pharaonique', *Revue d'Histoire des Sciences* 7.2 (1954), 139–155, who suggested that the existence of eunuchs cannot be totally dismissed. H. Tadmor notes, however, that 'Egyptologists who have treated this story have noted that there is hardly any evidence of native castrates at the court of the Pharaonic Egypt. This may well be so, but Joseph's story was composed, after all, by a Hebrew speaker and was addressed to an Israelite audience' ('Was the Biblical saris a Eunuch?', in: Z. Zevit et al. (eds), *Solving Riddles and Untying Knots*, Winona Lake IN 1995, 321). Interestingly, the presence of 'homosexual' priests in Egypt is attested by Eusebius in the *Life of Constantine*: 'And in as much as the Egyptians, especially those of Alexandria had been accustomed to honour their river through a priesthood of effeminate men, a further law was passed

The social institution of the eunuchs was already established in Hellenistic times.<sup>78</sup> The famous saying of Jesus in Matt 19:12 on the 'eunuchs for the sake of heaven' presupposed this common understanding of the word as 'castrated' or 'sexually impotent' by the time of Jesus.<sup>79</sup>

Theodoret of Cyrrhus notes that a 'eunuch' or a 'castrated' person can mean various things. He adds, however, that at that time it was not unusual even for a eunuch to have a woman at home who would take care of the household. Accordingly, Theodoret actually understands Potiphar's wife to be his housekeeper (Quaest. C; cf. Procopius, Comm.Gen., PG 87: 475–477; Cat. Petit 1864).<sup>80</sup>

Eusebius of Emesa discusses this problematic issue in more detail:

*And they sold him, he says, to Petaphres, the eunuch of Pharao, the chief butcher. Now the Syrian calls a eunuch and a loyal man by the same name. The Hebrew, however, really speaks about a eunuch. And how does he say that he had a wife? According to the Hebrews it should be understood in*

---

commanding the extermination of the whole class as vicious, that no one might hence found tainted with the like impurity' (Vit.Const. IV.25). Accordingly, the institution of eunuch priests in Egypt may have been a familiar sight for Christian writers.

<sup>78</sup> P. Scholz observes that there are seven Greek terms for emasculation and ten in Latin, each describing a different manner of castration. This multitude of terms points to a widespread practice (*Eunuchs and Castrati*, 112). Eunuch priests in the service of fertility deities were common in Oriental cults of the Roman Empire (see Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*, Book 8; Lucian of Samosata, *De Dea Syria* 15.43.51f.). As P. Scholz further notes, 'In this so-called Age of Hellenism castrated eunuchs became increasingly important in religion, cults and a life at court, as was particularly evident in late antiquity and then in Byzantium (...). Some examples from the Ptolemaic period indicate the historical continuity of eunuchism, which reached its zenith during the Age of Hellenism' (*Eunuchs and Castrati*, 70); see also M. Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch. Masculinity, Gender, Ambiguity and Christian Ideology in Late Antiquity*, Chicago 2001; K.M. Ringrose, *The Perfect Servant: Eunuchs and the Social Construction of Gender in Byzantium*, Chicago 2003; D.F. Caner, 'The Practice and Prohibition of Self-Castration in Early Christianity', *VC* 51 (1997), 365–415.

<sup>79</sup> A.E. Harvey notes that at the time of Jesus eunuchs were a 'recognizable class of people, normally of foreign extraction, with a distinctive appearance and certain proverbial traits of character' ('Eunuchs for the Sake of Kingdom', *HeyJ* 48 (2007), 7), and further that 'There were indeed men who castrated themselves for the sake of a religious vocation' (*ibid.*, 10); cf. the reference in Acts 8:27–40 to the Ethiopian eunuch, who was in charge of all the royal treasures. As D.F. Caner also observes, 'Eunuchs were no new breed to the Roman empire of the Christian era. Castration had long been the physical mark of slavery (of slaves brought in from outside the empire) and of religious devotion in the so-called oriental cults' ('The Practice and Prohibition of Self-Castration in Early Christianity', 398).

<sup>80</sup> Theodoret seems to hint here at the institution of the *virgines subintroductae*, which was, however, denounced by mainstream Church tradition; cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *De virg.* 23.4.5–13; John Chrysostom, *Contra eos qui apud se habent subintroductas virgines* 13 (PG 47:514); for a similar approach, see Gennadius, *Cat. Csl* 275; cf. H. Achelis, *Virgines subintroductae*, Leipzig 1902; S. Elm, *Virgins of God: the Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity*, Oxford 1994, *passim*.

this way, that it is a matter of a position (at the service) of kings; if one is not married, one cannot obtain this position; and for this reason, although he was a eunuch, he had a wife. And the passion of the woman gives evidence (of this), for if she had really been the wife of a man (that was) intact, then she would not have quarrelled with him. (*Armenian fragments*, ed. Hovhannessian, 86,93–87, trans. Romeny, *A Syrian in Greek Dress*, 112)<sup>81</sup>

Interestingly, Eusebius of Emesa argues for the semantic ambivalence of the Syriac term, but maintains that the Hebrew word means solely ‘eunuch’. A similar interpretation can be found in Diodore of Tarsus, who probably depends on Eusebius here. Diodore omits the last sentence of Eusebius and adds instead that ‘And (this is) not extraordinary, as Abraham and Isaac and Jacob (are called) anointed, for he says: *Do not touch my anointed (servants)*’ (Ps 104:15). And even Cyrus the Persian is called ‘anointed’ (cf. Isa 45:1). Thus in the same way the chief butcher, even though he had a wife, received the appellation of *castrated person* on account of his goodwill<sup>82</sup> (Cat. Csl 276, trans. Romeny, 341; cf. Cat. Petit 1847 [anon.]). Thus, according to Diodore, the term εὐνοῦχος is not used literally as a means of designating Potiphar’s physical condition, but is used in order to explain Potiphar’s position on account of a wordplay with the word εὐνοία (goodwill, favour). As he further explains, similar metaphorical usages of designations are not unusual in Scripture.

<sup>81</sup> See Romeny’s discussion of the fragments, op. cit., 340f. and 394f. As Romeny explains, ‘As regards his remark on the Syrian, Eusebius is referring to the word *mhmimna*, which—if taken as a passive participle—does indeed have the two meanings he attributes to it. Originally the word means ‘trusted’, ‘trustworthy’, but via the meaning ‘loyal servant’ or ‘minister’ it has also acquired the sense of ‘eunuch’, as some court officials were castrated. With respect to Potiphar, it is used in the Peshitta here and in Gen 39:1’ (*A Syrian in Greek Dress*, 397). A similar approach is encountered in Ishodad of Merv: ‘*Potiphar the loyal man, the chief of the guards of Pharaoh, that is the chief of the soldiers*. The Greek reads: *the chief-cook*, that is the man who was in charge of the affluence of the royal table. The Hebrew calls *mhaymna* the geldings or the emasculated ones but also the high officers, even when they had a wife. It is probable that at that time they were not yet castrated’ (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 37:36).

<sup>82</sup> ‘Εἰ εὐνοῦχος ὁ Πετεφρῆς, πῶς εὐρίσκειται γυναῖκα ἔχων; Ἄλλ’ ὁ μὲν σύρος μᾶ προσηγορίᾳ τὸν τε σπάδοντα καὶ τὸν πιστὸν ἄνδρα λέγει τοῖς δεσπότηταις—ὁ δὲ ἔβραϊος ἀληθῶς εὐνοῦχον καὶ τοῦτον ἀπὸ τῆς πίστεως, ἐπεὶ διὰ φιλεῖ τὸ τῶν εὐνοῦχων γένος μάλιστα πιστεῦσθαι τὰ τιμιώτατα τῶν κτημάτων, καὶ αὐτὴν τῶν βασιλέων τὴν σωτηρίαν. Καὶ οὐ θαυμαστὸν, ὅπου γε καὶ Ἀβραάμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ χριστοὶ—Μὴ ἄπτεσθε γὰρ φησι τῶν χριστῶν μου. Λέγεται δὲ καὶ Κύρος ὁ Πέρσης χριστός. Οὕτως ἄρα καὶ τὴν τοῦ σπάδοντος ὁ ἀρχιμάγειρος προσηγορίαν ἔσχεν, καὶ τοῦτο γυναῖκα ἔχων, διὰ τὴν εὐνοίαν’. Cf. Gennadius, Cat. Csl 275. C.T.R. Hayward observes that this approach presents ‘a *katachresis*, that is the ‘abuse’ of a term which might also include a quite radical adaptation of its meaning. One interpretation of the word ‘eunuch’ in this verse may be ‘benevolent’, *eunoun*, a sense which is clearly dependent on the Greek translation, not the Hebrew text of the Bible’ (*Hebrew Questions*, 220, n.4).

A very similar idea (and formulation) is preserved by Procopius of Gaza (Comm.Gen., PG 87:475; cf. Cat. Petit 1847 [anon.]). Procopius additionally mentions that sometimes people are called ‘eunuchs’ because they behave as such on the grounds of their life conduct and faith, implying that they follow an abstinent way of life.<sup>83</sup>

Finally, an interesting approach is provided by Jerome in his work ‘Hebrew Questions’, where he outlines a cluster of exegetical motifs on the same issue:

In most places, Scriptures speaks of *archimageiros* (that is, chief of the cooks) instead of *master of the army*, because *mageireuein* in Greek means ‘to kill’. Therefore Joseph was sold to the chief of the army and the fighting men, not to Petephre as is written in Latin, but to Phutiphar the eunuch. Then people ask how it is that later on he is said to have a wife. The Hebrews hand on a tradition that Joseph was bought by this man for base use because of his very great beauty, and that his genital organs were withered by the Lord; and afterwards he was chosen in accordance with the custom of hierophants for the office of high priest of Heliopolis; and the daughter of this man was Aseneth, whom Joseph later took as wife. (Hebr.Quest. 37:36)

Jerome addresses in a summarized form a number of exegetical problems that have also been tackled by other Church Fathers.<sup>84</sup> First, he explains that the correct interpretation of ‘archi-mageiros’ is ‘chief of the army’ and not ‘chief cook’. Jerome derives this explanation from the meaning of the verb ‘μαγειρεύειν’ (*mageireuein*) as ‘to kill’. However, the common meaning of the word was ‘to cook’ (or: ‘to slaughter meat’/ ‘to butcher’). Jerome opts for the more uncommon meaning in order to conform the Greek word to his understanding of the Hebrew expression שר הטבחים

<sup>83</sup> Cf. John Chrysostom, Ad Stagirium II.12 (PG 47:470); Cat. Petit 1854. This positive understanding of the term ‘eunuch’ as a symbol of abstinence in Christian literature is also reflected in Jesus’ saying (Matt 19:12) mentioned above. It is interesting to note that Philo uses the same positive symbolism, which he applies to Joseph (see Leg.Alleg. III.236–37). As R. Abusch observes, ‘(...) for Philo, the figure of eunuch served as a fertile cultural signifier (...). In a number of little-known passages, Philo portrays the biblical character, Joseph, conventionally as a eunuch. (...) This characterization, coupled with the nature of Joseph’s career—first as a household slave and then as a powerful figure within Egyptian bureaucracy—lends credence to Philo’s suggestion that Joseph’s career is the classic career of a eunuch’ (‘Circumcision and Castration under Roman Law in the Early Empire’, in: E.W. Mark (ed.), *The Covenant of Circumcision: New Perspectives*, Lebanon NH 2003, 80).

<sup>84</sup> As C.T.R. Hayward observes, ‘Jerome clearly prefers this Jewish resolution of the difficulty to the efforts of Diodore (Petit, II.256), who presents ‘the Syrian’ and ‘the Hebrew’ as making ‘eunuch’ do duty for ‘faithful man’, since the eunuch is most often in charge of royal possessions’ (*Hebrew Questions*, 220).



as ‘master of the army’.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, Jerome discusses the problematic issue posed by Scripture that a ‘eunuch’ could have a ‘wife’. He proceeds to recount a ‘Hebrew’ tradition, according to which the ‘eunuch’ bought Joseph as a slave for homosexual purposes and, as such, God punished him with a ‘physical’ castration. Accordingly, he became a ‘eunuch’ only after meeting Joseph. This hypothesis also serves as an explanation for the identification of Potiphar, court officer, with Potiphar, the priest of Heliopolis, the later father-in-law of Joseph.

*Potiphar: Joseph’s Father-in-Law?*

The name of Potiphar appears again later in the Joseph story. As narrated in Scripture, Pharaoh gave Joseph ‘Asenneth, daughter of Potiphar (*Petephres*), priest of Heliopolis as a wife to him’ (NETS Gen 41:45b; ‘καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ τὴν Ασεννεθ θυγατέρα Πετεφρη ἱερέως Ἡλίου πόλεως αὐτῷ γυναῖκα’). The Greek text of the LXX calls Joseph’s master, the eunuch, the priest of Heliopolis and Joseph’s father-in-law by the same name, that is Petephres (Πετεφρῆς; cf. Gen 39:1; 41:45; 41:50; 46:20).

John Chrysostom explains that Joseph’s father-in-law simply had the same name as Joseph’s former master. Significantly, the text adds his profession, ‘the priest of Heliopolis’, in order to avoid confusing him with his former master (John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 63.17). The Syriac patristic tradition also does not seem to know of an identification of the two persons. Notably, their names in the Peshitta—as in the MT—are not exactly identical.<sup>86</sup>

In Christian literature, an explicit identification between Joseph’s master and his father-in-law is suggested by Jerome, as already discussed above. In addition, he notes in his comment on Gen 43:45: ‘He (*Joseph*) had taken as wife the daughter of his former lord and purchaser, who was hitherto the priest of Hieropolis. For it was not lawful to be high priest of that idol without being a eunuch: consequently the notion of the Hebrews about him, which we have already related earlier, is proved to be true’ (Hebr. Quest. 43:45). Clearly, Jerome regards Potiphar as a eunuch-priest of an Oriental deity that he does not specify.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Cf. also the discussion in C.T.R. Hayward, *Hebrew Questions*, 221f. The Hebrew noun can mean the ‘chief of the butchers’, but, in other passages, the MT also uses this expression with the meaning of a military captain (2 Kings 25:8; Jer 39:9), who often was an executioner as well.

<sup>86</sup> Gen 39:1: ܩܦܬܝܦܗܪܐ and Gen 41:45; 41:50; 46:20: ܩܦܬܝܦܗܪܐ.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Ishodad of Merv, who follows the Peshitta here, and refers to Joseph’s father-in-law as ‘priest of On’, understanding ‘On’ as the great God of Egypt. Ishodad also quotes the

Origen records both traditions with regard to the identity of Joseph's father-in-law. He reports that 'οίησεται δέ τις ἕτερον εἶναι τοῦτον τὸν ἄνδρα παρὰ τὸν ὠνησάμενον τὸν Ἰωσήφ.' (it is assumed that this is not the same man, as the man, who had bought Joseph). However, Origen continues and adds that 'οὐ μὴ οὕτως ὑπειλήφασιν Ἑβραῖοι' (the Hebrews do not think the same), instead they know from an apocryphal text that the master and the father-in-law are the same person. They also claim that Aseneth revealed to her father that it was her mother who preyed on Joseph, and not the other way around. Furthermore, due to Joseph's prudence, her mother did not suffer any harm, contrary to her own claims. Subsequently, after he examined the matter and found that his daughter had indeed observed Joseph's honesty, Asenath's father gave her to Joseph as a wife to show to his fellow Egyptians that no sins are committed in his house. Origen does not seem to support this allegedly 'apocryphal' tradition.<sup>88</sup> This tradition is in accordance with the biblical text, and underlines the evil and licentious nature of Potiphar's wife. By contrast, Potiphar and his daughter demonstrate moral integrity by vindicating Joseph's honour. It is interesting to note that the marriage of Joseph to Aseneth is described as a moral reward, which restores the moral order in Potiphar's household and saves the reputation of his family.

Interestingly, in spite of the obvious confusion caused by the use of the same form of the Egyptian name in the LXX, the Christian commentators were not particularly interested in establishing a connection between the two figures with the same name.

### *The Exegetical Encounter*

The 'Joseph story' was significant for both rabbinic and Christian exegetes in varied ways. The ordeals and misfortunes of Jacob's favourite and gifted son up to his final vindication and exaltation bore a multifaceted symbolism in both the rabbinic and Christian contexts of interpretation. Above all, Joseph was the symbol of divine protection and compensation for

---

Greek text, according to which he was the 'priest of Heliopolis; that is the city of the sun, because it was built in honour of the sun' (ad Gen 41:45). Hence, according to Ishodad, On does not refer to the name of the Egyptian city but to a particular Egyptian deity.

<sup>88</sup> See Origen, Sel. in Gen. 41:45 (PG 12:136); Cat. Petit 1940 ad Gen 41:45; cf. N. de Lange, *Origen and the Jews*, 129, who notes that 'One would have expected this identification to derive from the LXX, where the names are the same'.

those who remain faithful to God and pure in heart, in spite of all the hardships that they may have to suffer.

As the biblical text indicates (Gen 39:6), Joseph's beauty sparked a series of fateful events in his life. It was thus logical that rabbinic and Christian exegetes expanded on this motif based on a straightforward exegesis of the biblical narrative.

Rabbinic traditions discuss Joseph's handsomeness in a variety of ways, including in terms of his resemblance to his parents (e.g. GenR 86:6; GenR 84:8). In particular, GenR 86:3 extensively elaborated on Joseph's physical attractiveness as proof of his noble ancestry. This motif is encountered in a similar form in the Eastern Christian dramatic literature, which reiterates on many occasions that Joseph was not a slave by birth as proved by his aristocratic appearance (*De Ioseph et de Castitate*, et al.). This shared perception, however, most probably reflects contemporary views on slavery and nobility that were current in the world in which Jews and Christians lived in Late Antiquity.

Still, although there are rabbinic traditions that outline how Joseph's beauty reflects his virtuous character, alternative views of Joseph are depicted. In GenR 87:3, Joseph's ordeal with Potiphar's wife is understood as a punishment for his vanity and effeminate care for his looks. This particular understanding of Joseph as a vain person contrasts not only with the majority of rabbinic traditions on Joseph's beauty but also with the patristic portrayal of Joseph as a person who is unaware of his good looks. In Christian literature, it is the woman who makes herself up in order to seduce the young man, who is naturally handsome (*De Ioseph et de Castitate*).

Most rabbinic interpretations depict a very positive image of Joseph. However, there is one approach in rabbinic sources, such as in GenR 86:1 and GenR 87:1, that discusses the shortcomings and faults of his character, especially in the context of his behaviour towards his brothers. It is difficult to establish here a direct connection to the Christian approach to Joseph's character. However, it is significant that against the background of an emphatic christological approach, the Christian exegetical tradition emphasizes the hostility of Joseph's brothers, who symbolize the Jews, whereas Joseph as a type for Jesus could be only and fully pure, virtuous, righteous and wise (Justin, *Dial.* XXXVI; Origen, *Gen.Hom.* XV; Cyril of Alex., *Glaphyra* VI.3–4).

Rabbinic exegetical traditions, as presented in GenR 84:13, and Christian commentators, such as Ephraem the Syrian (*Comm.Gen.* XXXV.8), share the common theological approach that Joseph's ordeals were part of a divine plan, which would lead to his final miraculous exaltation.

This particular line of interpretation does not present a strong case of an exegetical encounter. Still, it reveals a shared theological concept about God's role and intervention in the life of the righteous, and especially the patriarchs.

In the context of the praise of Joseph's beauty, certain rabbinic traditions connect Gen 39:6 with Gen 49:22. The latter biblical passage is included in Jacob's blessing on Joseph. In spite of the ambiguity in the meaning of the biblical Hebrew text of Gen 49:22, a number of rabbinic exegetical traditions discuss this verse as an additional proof text for Joseph's comely appearance (cf. Tg Neofiti Gen 49:22; GenR 98:18; PRE 39; Tg PsJon Gen 49:22). It is possible to read the Hebrew biblical text of Gen 49:22 as 'daughters step over a wall'. As such, according to the interpretations cited above, Gen 49:22 refers to Egyptian women, who spied on Joseph through the lattices (of windows) and threw jewellery at Joseph in order to attract his attention, albeit in vain. Joseph does not show any interest either in the ladies or in their valuables, and he is rewarded by God for his self-restraint in various ways. The range of interpretations on this theme attests to the antiquity and popularity of this rabbinic tradition.

As noted above, this particular tradition, which is based on the Hebrew text of Gen 49:22, is almost unknown in the Christian tradition. Consequently, it is striking that a variation of this tradition can be found in Jerome's work *Hebrew Questions on Genesis 49:22–26*. Jerome explains that Joseph was so handsome that all Egyptian girls would watch him (admiringly) 'from the walls and towers and the windows'.<sup>89</sup> Another exception is an implicit reference in the late exegetical commentary of Ishodad of Merv (*Comm.Gen. ad Gen 49:22*), who actually quotes the Hebrew text as well. The knowledge of this motif by Jerome and Ishodad presents a strong case of a direct exegetical encounter.

The marriage of Joseph to the daughter of a heathen priest was addressed in rabbinic sources in various ways. According to targumic traditions,

---

<sup>89</sup> The exegetical tradition of Joseph's popularity among Egyptian ladies on account of his great beauty is also attested in the pseudepigraphon 'Joseph and Aseneth'. According to this text, 'they would send emissaries to him with gold and silver and valuable gifts' (8:7). Moreover, Aseneth sees Joseph for the first time when she leans out of the window of her house (8:2). J.L. Kugel considers this text to be the first attestation of this tradition. As he comments, 'There the motif is garbled somewhat, but nevertheless recognizable' (*In Potiphar's House*, 88). However, it should be noted that the discussed exegetical motifs in this text could only derive from a Hebrew (or Syriac) scriptural *Vorlage* of Gen 49:22. As analyzed above, the wording of LXX Gen 49:22 is very different from both the MT and Peshitta, and does not allow for a reading relevant to 'daughters step over a wall'.

Asenath is the daughter of the master of Tanis (Tg Neofiti Gen 41:45, 50; Tg PsJon Gen 41:45,50, 46:20) or the master of On (Tg Neofiti Gen 46:20; Tg Onqelos Gen 41:45,50, 46:20). Consequently, she is not explicitly the daughter of a pagan priest. However, the exact identity and function of the 'master' remains obscure. Furthermore, a rabbinic tradition is found which maintains that Asenath was an adopted daughter of Potiphar and his wife, and the biological daughter of Dinah and Shechem. Therefore, Asenath was Joseph's niece and an Israelite (from her mother's side). This motif represents a later preserved rabbinic tradition and possibly reflects contemporary community concerns with regard to intermarriage, and also the need to give Asenath an Israelite ancestry (PRE 38; cf. Tg PsJon Gen 41:45).<sup>90</sup>

Interestingly, in Jewish Hellenistic literature, such as in Philo and Josephus, the issue of Joseph's marriage to a heathen girl was positively received. Thus, Josephus comments on Joseph's bride enthusiastically: 'He (Joseph) married a wife of very high quality; for he married the daughter of Petephres, one of the priests of Heliopolis' (Ant. II.6). Similarly, Philo praises Asenath: 'and he (the Pharaoh) gave him (Joseph) the most beautiful and noble of all women, the daughter of the priest of the sun' (De Iosepho 21).

Interestingly, the Christian writers that tackle this issue, such as Aphrahat (Dem. XXI.9) and Ephraem (Hymn. Virg. 21.9), in fact present it in a very favourable light, since Asenath symbolizes Jesus' bride, that is, the Gentile Church. Clearly, there is a strong internal tradition in rabbinic sources on the issue of intermarriage with regard to Asenath. However, considering that traditions that give Asenath an Israelite origin are found in rabbinic sources with a late date of redaction, the possibility cannot be ruled out that, in addition to addressing issues of intermarriage, the rabbinic traditions here could have also countered Christian claims with regard to the positive symbolism of Asenath as the Gentile Church.

Furthermore, it seems that the highly positive portrayal of Asenath in Jewish Hellenistic and Christian sources is connected to the tradition that her father was a renowned priest, but not Joseph's eunuch master. Significantly, neither Philo (De Iosepho 21) nor Josephus (Ant. II.4; 6.1) explicitly connect these two persons. The identification of Joseph's father-in-law with his former master was also not common in the Christian tradition.

---

<sup>90</sup> See L.H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian*, Princeton 2001, esp. 288ff; L.H. Schiffman, *Who was a Jew?*, 14–16.

The wide lack of discussion of this possibility in Christian sources is striking considering that in the LXX their Greek names sound exactly the same. John Chrysostom argues, quite logically, that they were not the same person since they had different professions (Hom.Gen. 63.17). Obviously, Christian exegesis of this episode was determined by the understanding of the word 'eunuch' as meaning a sexually impotent man, who could not produce any offspring.

The identification of these two figures was well attested in early Jewish tradition. Probably the earliest source that refers to Potiphar's double identity is the Book of Jubilees, which implies an identification between the chief cook/chief of the guards and the priest of Heliopolis. Jubilees 40:10 suggests that Potiphar, Asenath's father, was both the priest of Heliopolis and the chief cook/chief of the guards. The connection is further established in rabbinic traditions, such as in GenR 86:3, on the grounds of a series of etymological puns.

Furthermore, GenR 86:3 and similar traditions explain in more detail how this identification was possible. According to the biblical text (Gen 39:6–7), the beauty of Joseph incites the desire of his *mistress*. However, in GenR 86:3, the beauty of Joseph incites the desire of his *master*. Moreover, GenR 86:3 quite bluntly suggests that Potiphar bought Joseph for sexual purposes.<sup>91</sup> Naturally, God could not have allowed the sexual exploitation of Joseph, so he intervened and emasculated Potiphar. This tradition does not specify when or how exactly the emasculation takes place, but it implies that Joseph remains unharmed. The late castration of Potiphar further explains his marital status, despite the fact that he was a eunuch. Clearly, in GenR 86:3 the ambiguous biblical term סריס is understood to mean a 'eunuch'. As such, it explains in a figurative way the semantic ambivalence as well as the semantic shift of the biblical term. In other words, the tradition represented in GenR 86:3 sought to conform the biblical text to the contemporary understanding of this word. This tradition can also be found in versions with extra details in the story with regard to various castration or emasculation methods that God could have used in order to neutralize Potiphar's masculinity (TanB *Wayeshev* 14; Tg PsJon Gen 39:1). The change in Potiphar's nature is indicated by a change in his name, since he is called Potiphara after his emasculation (cf. Gen 41:45, Potiphara, the priest of On; BT Sot 13b). Accordingly, this

---

<sup>91</sup> On the sexual vulnerability of slaves in the ancient world in general, see the chapter on 'Hagar and Ishmael' in this volume.

tradition suggests that Potiphera, the priest and father-in-law of Joseph, is the same person as Potiphar, his master, who became impotent only after his encounter with Joseph.

The identification of Joseph's former master and his father-in-law was also known to Origen (Sel. in Gen. 41:45) and Jerome (Hebr. Quest. 43:45). Origen attests to a tradition according to which 'the Hebrews' believe that both persons are one and the same. Origen claims that this is an 'apocryphal tradition'. In some aspects, Origen's version of the story reflects the rabbinic tradition as represented by GenR 89:2, in which Potiphar seeks to rehabilitate the reputation of his family and so he gives his daughter to Joseph as a wife, as a gesture of compensation for Joseph's ordeal with his mistress. V. Aptowitz believes that Origen is a testimony for the dating of this tradition, which he argues must have been current among the Jews as early as the late second or early third century.<sup>92</sup> Similarly, N. de Lange argues that 'Origen is our earliest source for the legend of Asenath's betrayal of her mother's plot, so that it is impossible to decide for certain what the apocryphon which Origen mentions was. In the writer's opinion it was quite probably a midrash, perhaps in Greek translation (but not the Romance of Joseph and Asenath, although our story belongs to a similar romantic tradition)'.<sup>93</sup>

As discussed above, this was quite a common motif in rabbinic literature. Still, in spite of Origen's testimony, this tradition did not become part of common Christian exegetical knowledge. This motif is only encountered again in the late fourth century in Jerome's work. Jerome establishes the identification of Potiphar, the eunuch, and Potiphara (or Potiphera), the priest, on the evidence of a 'Hebrew tradition', which he explicitly accepts. Jerome's line of argumentation is based on the invention of a life story for Potiphar, who was first a chief cook (or rather a chief of the army), a family man and father of Joseph's future bride. Due to his evil intentions towards Joseph, he found himself castrated by God, so he changed his profession and started a new career as a eunuch high priest in renowned Heliopolis. Jerome's illustration clearly reflects the widely transmitted rabbinic tradition as represented in GenR 86:3 and parallel interpretations.

Jerome's unique approach to this issue is especially striking when placed in the context of the Christian exegetical tradition on this episode.

---

<sup>92</sup> 'Asenath, the wife of Joseph. A Haggadic Literary-Historical Study', *HUCA* 1 (1924), 257.

<sup>93</sup> *Origen and the Jews*, 129.

As noted, the broader Christian tradition focuses exclusively on the illicit passion of Potiphar's wife, as evidenced by the numerous retellings and expanded narratives dedicated to this incident in Eastern Christian literature up to medieval times. Clearly, for Christian exegetes, the central message of the story is the necessary fight of chaste *men* against the dangers of unrestrained female sexuality.<sup>94</sup>

Both Origen and Jerome quote 'the Hebrews' as their source for both traditions, which suggests that the Jewish sages were a possible source. Significantly, both Church Fathers are renowned for their efforts to learn Hebrew, and for their contacts with Jewish contemporaries.<sup>95</sup> As is well known, Jerome studied Hebrew systematically in order to approach the biblical text in the original language.<sup>96</sup> The study of the Hebrew language with Jewish teachers in Palestine must have provided Jerome with first-hand knowledge of contemporary Jewish biblical exegesis.<sup>97</sup> However, as

---

<sup>94</sup> L. Ginzberg suggests that the identification of Joseph's former master with his father-in-law was an early tradition to which the tradition of Potiphar's castration was later added. This inner development of the tradition would explain why Jerome knew the story of the castration, while Origen did not ('Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern', 541). However, Ginzberg's suggestion remains purely speculative and cannot be supported by the rabbinic evidence.

<sup>95</sup> On Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew, see the discussion below. Origen's knowledge of Hebrew is disputed among scholars. Both Eusebius (H.E. VI.16) and Jerome (De vir. ill. 54) assert that Origen was the first Greek speaking Church Father who learned Hebrew. The *communis opinio* among modern scholars is that Origen knew some Hebrew, but probably only superficially, see the discussion in N. Fernandez-Marcos – W.G.E. Watson, *The Septuagint in Context*, 204ff. According to Origen's biographical information, Origen already had contacts with Jewish teachers in Alexandria, but, most importantly, also after his emigration to Caesarea, where he spent the last two decades of his life. Notably, at that time Caesarea was an important centre of rabbinic learning in Palestine, see L.I. Levine, *Caesarea under Roman Law*, Leiden 1975, 95ff. On Origen's interaction with Jewish teachers, see also: G. Bardy, 'Les traditions juives dans l'oeuvre d'Origène', *RB* 34 (1925), 217–252; N. de Lange, *Origen and the Jews*; P. Blowers, 'Origen, the Rabbis, and the Bible: Towards a Picture of Judaism and Christianity in Third-Century Caesarea', in: C. Kannengiesser – W.L. Petersen, *Origen of Alexandria: His World and Legacy*, 96–116.

<sup>96</sup> See S. Kalmin, 'The Theological Significance of the *Hebraica Veritas* in Jerome's Thought', in: M.A. Fishbane et al. (eds), '*Sha'aarei Talmon*': *Studies in the Bible, Qumran and the Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon*, N.Y. 1992, 243–254; G. Miletto, 'Die Hebraica veritas in S. Hieronymus', in: H. Merklein et al. (eds), *Bibel in jüdischer und christlicher Tradition. FS Johann Meier*, Frankfurt a.M. 1993, 56–63; C. Marksches, 'Hieronymus und die Hebraica veritas: ein Beitrag zur Archäologie des protestantischen Schriftverständnisses', in: M. Hengel – A.M. Schwemer (eds), *Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum*, Tübingen 1994, 131–181; M. Graves, *Jerome's Hebrew Philology: A Study Based on Jeremiah*, Leiden 2007.

<sup>97</sup> See C.T.R. Hayward, *Hebrew Questions*, 15ff.; J.N.D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings and Controversy*, London 1975, 46ff.; A. Kamesar, *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible: a Study on the Questiones hebraicae in Genesin*, 41ff.; G. Bardy, 'Saint-Jérôme et ses maîtres hebreux', 145–164; G. Stemberger is sceptical about the extent of Jerome's personal contacts with contemporary Jews in Palestine, see 'Hieronymus und die Juden seiner Zeit', in:



C.T.R. Hayward points out, 'It is impossible to know, whether Jerome derived this information from written or oral sources, or from a combination of both of these'.<sup>98</sup> According to Hayward, Jerome's knowledge of rabbinic traditions demonstrates an affinity to the exegetical material preserved in the Targumim probably due to the popular character of this particular genre.<sup>99</sup> Moreover, he received part of his biblical exegetical information through the mediation of Christian or other Jewish—non rabbinic—primary sources.<sup>100</sup> Nevertheless, his work can still be regarded as a source for authentic Jewish traditions, which he has collected through personal enquiry of Jewish informants.<sup>101</sup>

Significantly, Jerome's knowledge of his Jewish sources is often strikingly accurate. M.H. Williams stresses that 'As Jerome's scholarly method matured, he became more and more willing to distance himself from his Greek sources and to emphasize his independent access to Jewish material'.<sup>102</sup> Jerome's knowledge of rabbinic exegetical traditions, in particular as attested in his work 'Hebrew Questions on Genesis', is remarkable. Jerome's collection of rabbinic traditions presents an important contribution to the historical study of rabbinic literature because it provides the rabbinic traditions with a *terminus ante quem*.<sup>103</sup>

A. Kamesar argues that 'Jerome no doubt saw it as his own responsibility to determine which Jewish exegesis was appropriate, and although the

---

D.A. Koch – H. Lichtenberger (eds), *Begegnungen zwischen Christentum und Judentum in Antike und Mittelalter*, Göttingen 1993, 347–364. On Jerome's actual knowledge of Hebrew, see S. Rebenich, 'Jerome: the vir trilinguis and the *Hebraica veritas*', *VC* 47 (1993), 56–62; H.I. Newman, 'How should we measure Jerome's Hebrew Competence?', in: A. Cain – J. Lössl (eds), *Jerome of Stridon: His Life, Writings and Legacy*, Farnham 2009, 131–152, who gives also an overview and a full bibliography of the discussion. Newman concludes that 'the precise extent of Jerome's command of Biblical Hebrew is ultimately unknowable' (op. cit., 140).

<sup>98</sup> *Hebrew Questions*, 19; cf. C.T.R. Hayward, 'Some Observations on St. Jerome's 'Hebrew Questions on Genesis' and the Rabbinic Tradition', *PIBA* 13 (1990), 58–46.

<sup>99</sup> See C.T.R. Hayward, 'Saint Jerome and the Aramaic Targumim', *JSS* 32.1 (1987), 105–123.

<sup>100</sup> On the influence of Greek and, in particular, Antiochene exegetical traditions on Jerome, see A. Kamesar, *Jerome*, 44 and 97ff; cf. C.T.R. Hayward, *Hebrew Questions*, 15.

<sup>101</sup> See C.T.R. Hayward, *Hebrew Questions*, 15ff.

<sup>102</sup> *The Monk and the Book: Jerome and the Making of Christian Scholarship*, Chicago 2006, 66; cf. M.H. Williams, 'Lessons from Jerome's Jewish Teachers: Exegesis and Cultural Interaction in Late Antique Palestine', in: N.B. Dohrmann – D. Stern (eds), *Jewish Biblical Interpretation and Cultural Exchange: Comparative Exegesis in Context*, Philadelphia 2008, 66–86, who argues that Jerome exemplifies an early Christian exegete who appropriated Jewish exegesis in order to define his own identity as a Christian in the empire.

<sup>103</sup> See C.T.R. Hayward, *Hebrew Questions*, 21; cf. S. Krauss, 'The Jews in the Works of the Church Fathers', 122–157, esp. 249f.; cf. J. Braverman, *Rabbinic and Patristic Tradition in Jerome's Commentary on Daniel*, Yeshiva University 1970.

criteria he employed in making this judgment are complex, the basic rule seems to have been that it was fitting to a Christian context'.<sup>104</sup> However, our examples in this context prove otherwise. Jerome opts for the 'Hebrew' tradition, because it provides the most convincing and interesting explanation of the biblical story in his view, and he practically and quite openly ignores the Christian exegetical tradition relevant to this topic. Both Origen and Jerome, in the particular exegetical context analyzed above, present a significant case of an explicit encounter on the basis of a genuine interest on the side of the Church Fathers in the exegetical traditions of their Jewish contemporaries.

---

<sup>104</sup> A. Kamesar, *Jerome*, 177.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE BLESSING ON JUDAH

*Judah, you your brothers shall praise; your hand is on the neck of your enemies; the sons of your father shall bow down to you. Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as a lioness; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. Binding his foal to the vine and his ass's colt to the choice vine; he washes his garment in wine and his robe in the blood of grapes. (MT Gen 49:8–12)*

#### *Rabbinic Traditions*

The blessing on Judah in Gen 49:8–12 was of enormous importance to rabbinic exegetes for discussion of both the history and future of Israel. As J.J. Collins states, the blessing of Judah by Jacob in Gen 49:8–12 is an *ex eventu* prophecy regarding the rise of the Davidic monarchy from Judah.<sup>1</sup> The blessings given by Jacob to his sons relate to the future and, with regard to Judah, the emphasis is on his future authority over his brothers and their descendants. This is manifested through kingship, and a kingship that will be marked by prosperity.<sup>2</sup> This blessing or prophecy prompted rabbinic interpretations on the character of Judah the man, the tribe named after him and the Davidic nation that would descend from him. Furthermore, rabbinic exegetes also saw in the blessing on Judah a description of the eschatological future, with Gen 49:8–12 used as a popular series of messianic proof texts.<sup>3</sup> Messianic speculation related to the figure of Judah and his descendants based on Gen 49:8–12 is widely attested, complex and highly developed in midrashic and targumic sources, and the traditions

---

<sup>1</sup> J.J. Collins, 'Messianism and Exegetical Tradition: The Evidence of the LXX Pentateuch', in: idem, *Jewish Cult and Hellenistic Culture*, Leiden 2005, 66; C. Westermann, *Genesis 37–50*, London 1987, 215–244.

<sup>2</sup> For an analysis of the passage, see R. de Hoop, *Genesis 49 in its Literary and Historical Context*, esp. 114–148 and 289–294.

<sup>3</sup> A number of verses in the Hebrew Bible, including Gen 49:10–12, but also prominently Exod 40:9–11, Num 24:17–20, Isa 11:1–16 and 53:8–12 and Lam 4:21–22, provoke discussion on messianic ideas in connection with future hopes for the nation of Israel in rabbinic traditions.

present a variety of different exegetical approaches and nuances in interpretation.<sup>4</sup> In the following discussion, the focus is on those motifs relevant to the exegetical encounter, and so there is a particular emphasis on messianic and eschatological ideas in exegesis of Gen 49:8–12, with reference to the place of these interpretations within the broader exegetical traditions on this passage.

### *Judah is Praised (Genesis 49:8)*

The first examples of rabbinic motifs for consideration represent an explanation of the reason why Judah would be praised by his brothers according to Gen 49:8:

יהודה אתה יודוך אחיך ידך בערף איביך ישתחוו לך בני אביך

*Judah, you your brothers shall praise; your hand is on the neck of your enemies; the sons of your father shall bow down to you.*

### *Praise for Judah's Actions*

The reason for the praise of Judah by his brothers is discussed at length in rabbinic traditions.<sup>5</sup> One of the earliest interpretations of Gen 49:8 can be found in Targum Onqelos: 'Judah, you confessed and were not ashamed; therefore your brothers shall praise you' (יהודה את אודיתא ולא בהיתתא) (בך יודון אחך ידך).<sup>6</sup> The theme of confession and repentance is key to the understanding of Gen 49:8 in this tradition. In Targum Onqelos, the verb ידי is used, which can mean both 'confess' and 'praise', and reflects the similar ambiguity of the original Hebrew verb ידה hiphil. A similar exegetical approach is also found in Tg PsJon Gen 49:8, which claims that because Judah confessed concerning the incident with Tamar (cf. Genesis 38)

<sup>4</sup> The bibliography on this topic, and specific themes within it, is extensive. To name a few key general studies, see M. Bockmuehl – J. Carleton Paget, *Redemption and Resistance: The Messianic Hopes of Jews and Christians in Antiquity*; P.S. Alexander, 'The King Messiah in Rabbinic Judaism', 456–473; W. Horbury, *Messianism among Jews and Christians*; P. Schäfer, 'Die messianischen Hoffnungen des rabbinischen Judentums zwischen Naherwartung und religiösem Pragmatismus', in: idem, *Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie des rabbinischen Judentums*, 214–243; J. Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel*; J. Sarachek, *The Doctrine of the Messiah in Medieval Jewish Literature*; G. Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism*. For further bibliography, see also L.H. Schiffman, 'Messianism and Apocalypticism in Rabbinic Texts', in: S.T. Katz, *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, Vol. 4, 1053–1072.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. GenR 97, 98:6, 99:8, Tan *Wayehi* 10 and the targumic traditions on Gen 49:8.

<sup>6</sup> A. Sperber (ed.), *The Pentateuch according to Targum Onkelos*, vol. 1, 85. Interestingly, Tg Neofiti Gen 49:8 gives an alternative and more historical interpretation that Judah is praised by his brothers because Judah's name will become the name for all the Jews. This is also found as an alternative interpretation in GenR 97, GenR 98:6, Tg PsJon Gen 49:8 and TanB *Wayehi* 12.

his brothers would praise him (עובדא דתמר בגין כן) יהודה את אודיתא על (לך יהודון אחך).<sup>7</sup>

The connection between praise and confession is found in a developed form in GenR 97.<sup>8</sup> GenR 97 contains a detailed homily on Gen 49:8, and offers several extensive and detailed interpretations on the descendants of Judah and the history of Israel up to the messianic era. Of particular interest is a tradition that interprets the praise of Judah in Gen 49:8 in terms of the actions of Judah towards Joseph and Tamar:

יהודה אתה יודוך אחיך לפי שהודית יודו לך אחיך בעולם הזה ובעולם הבא [...] ולפי שזכה יהודה והציל לתמר ולשני בניה מן המיתה, והציל את יוסף מן המיתה שנ' ויאמר יהודה אל אחיו מה בצע (בראשית לו כו), והציל לפרץ זורח וכבר נשתלמה צורתן במעי אמן תמר, שהיה לה שלשה חדשים מעוברת שנ' ויהי כמשלש חדשים (שם לח כד), לפיכך הציל הקב"ה מזרעו ארבעה, אחד מן הבור, ושלשה מן האש, דניאל כנגד יוסף, חנניה מישאל ועזריה כנגד פרץ זורח ותמר שנ' הוצאוה ותשרף (שם שם)

(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 3, 1207–1209)

*Judah, you your brothers shall praise* (יידוך) (Gen 49:8). Because you confessed (הודית), your brothers shall praise (יודו) you in this world and in the world-to-come [...] because Judah behaved properly and saved Tamar and her two sons from death, and saved Joseph from death, as it is said, *And Judah said to his brothers: What profit* (Gen 37:26)? He saved Perez and Zerah. Already their form was complete in the womb of their mother, Tamar, for she was three months pregnant, as it is said, *And it came to pass after three months* (Gen 38:24). Therefore, the Holy One, blessed be He, saved four of his descendants: one from the pit and three from the fire: Daniel corresponds to Joseph; Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah correspond to Perez, Zerah and Tamar, as it is said, *Bring her out, and let her be burnt* (Gen 38:24).

GenR 97 connects the praise of Judah by his brothers with confessions Judah made over his previous actions, and with his deeds in saving Tamar (and her two sons) and Joseph from death. First, GenR 97 interprets *Judah*

<sup>7</sup> A. Díez Macho (ed.), *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis*, 385. For commentary, see B. Grossfeld, *The Targum Onqelos to Genesis*, 158–162 and M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 158.

<sup>8</sup> There are three midrashim on the blessing on Judah in the edition of J. Theodor and Ch. Albeck (*Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, Jerusalem 1965). The first is in parashah 97 under the title 'שיטה חדשה'. It is homiletic in style, focusing on Gen 49:8 as the lemma for comment. This midrash is found in most MSS, but an alternative parashah 97 is given in MS Vatican 30. The second midrash is given in parashah 98, and is equivalent to MS Vatican 30 parashah 99. This midrash gives a verse by verse exegesis of Genesis 49 and, according to Theodor and Albeck, is an original part of Genesis rabbah found in the MS British Museum, Add. 27169. The third midrash is in parashah 99 under the title 'לישנא אחרינא'. It is found in MST and is probably an interpolation from Tan *Wayehi* 10 to which it is nearly identical. See G. Stemmerger, *Introduction*, 276–283 for an outline of the dating and redaction of the work.

*your brothers shall praise you*' in light of Judah's plea to save Joseph in Gen 37:26–27. This passage refers to Judah's intervention in the desire of his brothers, Simeon and Levi, to kill Joseph. Judah instead suggests that, rather than kill Joseph, they sell him for profit. Secondly, in this interpretation, Judah will be praised for saving Perez (the ancestor of the Messiah), Zerah and their mother, Tamar, who was pregnant with the twins, because he acknowledged his responsibility regarding Tamar, as in Gen 38:26.<sup>9</sup> As such, by revoking the decree of death upon Tamar pronounced in Gen 38:24, Judah saved both Tamar and their two sons from death. Thus, Judah saved four lives (Joseph, Tamar, Perez and Zerah), and God responds in kind by saving four of Judah's descendants, namely Daniel and his associates. In this way, Judah has not only acknowledged his own wrongdoing, 'confessed' and saved four lives, but also preserved the messianic line.

This tradition in GenR 97 is found alongside descriptions highlighting the kingship that will descend from Judah. In particular, it outlines how the blessing of Jacob on Judah meant that thirty kings would descend from Judah up to the rule of Zedekiah, but even beyond into the messianic era. GenR 97 outlines in detail the descendants of Judah up to the time of the Messiah, based on Gen 49:8, in order to emphasize the continuity of the blessing bestowed on him, which is ultimately fulfilled in the messianic age.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, it is likely that the rabbinic exegesis describing the 'confession' of Judah is designed to portray Judah, as the ancestor of the Messiah, in a positive light.

Another form of this interpretation is again found in GenR 97, which discusses the righteous who defeat their evil inclinations and confess their wrongdoings. This interpretation teaches that those who confess their evil deeds will merit the future world, based on Ps 50:23. Judah is the example of one who confessed with respect to Tamar, who was going to be burnt, and, as a result, God saved his descendants, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, from the same fate and Judah was granted life in the world-to-come.

Another section of the homily in GenR 97 further explains how Judah saved Joseph, and, as such, his brothers. It teaches how Simeon and Levi wanted to kill Joseph, based on Gen 37:19f, but Judah claimed that there

---

<sup>9</sup> Cf. discussion on Tamar in Jewish tradition in E.M. Menn, *Judah and Tamar (Genesis 38) in Ancient Jewish Exegesis: Studies in Literary Form and Hermeneutics*, Leiden 1997 and S. Reif, 'Early Rabbinic Exegesis of Genesis 38', in: E. Grypeou – H. Spurling, *The Exegetical Encounter*, 221–244.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. TanB *Wayehi* 12 and NumR 13:14.

was no profit in killing him. During the biblical narrative of Joseph and his brothers in Egypt, Jacob rebukes his sons for depriving him of some of his children (cf. Gen 42:36–38). In GenR 97, Judah turns pale at the rebuke (fearing that he too would be rebuked for the incident with Tamar), but he is told by Jacob to be reassured because his brothers will praise him. The tradition continues that God knew that Judah had rescued Joseph from being killed by Simeon and Levi. As such, Judah would be praised by his brothers for saving them from committing murder and thus preventing a fate for the brothers in Gehinnom.<sup>11</sup>

Similarly, the tradition regarding Judah's actions is reiterated in GenR 99:8, paralleled in Tan *Wayehi* 10, in which Jacob states that because of Judah's confession in the matter of Tamar his brothers will 'acknowledge' (יִדְּוּ) Judah as king over them. GenR 99:8 (and Tan *Wayehi* 10) uses the verb הִי' hi. to indicate the acknowledgement of Judah's kingly authority by his brothers.

#### *Praise for Judah's Victories*

The next traditions under analysis explain that the understanding of the praise of Judah in Gen 49:8 is to be found in the interpretation of '*your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies*'. The interpretation of Gen 49:8 as the historical legacy of Judah, namely the victories won by Judah's descendants, is found in Tg Onqelos Gen 49:8. This tradition expands that the hand of Judah will prevail against enemies until they are shattered and turn away.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Tg Neofiti Gen 49:8 describes how Judah will be avenged of his enemies until his brothers salute him. Additionally, Tg PsJon Gen 49:8 teaches that Judah's hands will avenge him of his enemies by throwing arrows at them until they turn their back.<sup>13</sup> However, the broader messianic context of Gen 49:8–12 in these targumim should remain in view.

<sup>11</sup> This part of the homily concludes by saying that Judah will also be praised because all the tribes will be called 'Jews' after his name. This point is also made in GenR 98:6, but is further expanded to say that Judah was the most beloved of the brothers, and therefore he received a special inheritance alongside the portion he would receive together with his brothers.

<sup>12</sup> See B. Grossfeld, *The Targum Onqelos to Genesis*, 162, who points out that the expression 'your enemies shall be shattered' mirrors the idiom used in 2 Sam 22:41, which describes Davidic victories.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. GenR 97 and BT AZ 25a.



An historical interpretation of Gen 49:8 as reference to Judahite victories, and, in particular, Davidic victories as recorded within the history of Israel in the Hebrew Bible, is also found in GenR 98:6:

ידך בעורף אויביך כמה נתחבט יהושע שינתן לו עורף ולא נתן לו שנאמר בו אדוני מה אומר אחרי אשר הפך [ישראל עורף לפני אויביו] (יהושע ז ח), ולמי נתן, לדוד ואויבי תתה לי עורף (ש"ב כב מא), למה שהיה פטיריקין שלו שכתוב בו ידך בעורף אויביך:

(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 3, 1257–1258)

*Your hand shall be on the neck (עורף) of your enemies (Gen 49:8).* How did Joshua prostrate himself in prayer that the neck (עורף; of his enemies) should be given to him, but it was not given to him, as it is said concerning the matter, *Lord, what can I say, after [Israel] has turned [their neck (עורף) before their enemies]* (Josh 7:8). And to whom was it given? To David: *You made my enemies give their neck (עורף) to me* (2 Sam 22:41). Why? Because it was his ancestral legacy, as it was written concerning the matter, *Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies (Gen 49:8).*

GenR 98:6 addresses what is meant by the blessing that ‘*your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies*’. The tradition first considers the battles led by Joshua, and, in particular, the battle against Ai in Joshua 7. This is based on wordplay of עורף in Gen 49:8 and Josh 7:8, thus connecting the blessing with military activity. In the biblical story, Joshua fails to defeat the people of Ai because God did not support his actions after Achan took banned items as spoil. As such, Joshua prays to God over Israel’s defeat. In GenR 98:6, Joshua’s activities are dismissed as those in view in the blessing on Judah, and attention is turned to military successes. Davidic victories are identified as those predicted in the blessing, and GenR 98:6 explicitly claims that the Davidic victories are due to his ‘ancestral legacy’ as indicated in Gen 49:8. The connection with Davidic victories is again based on wordplay with עורף, as Gen 49:8, ‘*on the neck of your enemies (בעורף אויביך)*’, is connected to 2 Sam 22:41: ‘*you made my enemies turn their backs (lit. give their neck) to me (ואיבי תתה לי ערף)*’.<sup>14</sup> The verse in 2 Samuel belongs to David’s song of praise following his defeat of the Philistines. This represents a straightforward connection between the defeat of Judah’s enemies and the defeat of David’s enemies. Indeed, in analysis of prophetic words regarding Judah, it would be a logical step to compare the prediction with the circumstances of his descendants, in this case David.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> This interpretation is found in a number of rabbinic sources, including GenR 97, 98:6, 99:8 and Tan *Wayehi* 10. All these traditions include the idea that it was to David that the ability to defeat his enemies was given, because he was descended from Judah.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. MidrPss 18:32, which makes a similar connection using Gen 49:8 and Ps 18:41.

GenR 97 draws a link between the actions of Judah with respect to Tamar and future interaction with enemies. In particular, just as Judah ‘stiffened his neck’ and humiliated himself with Tamar, so will Judah, and his descendants, be able to slay enemies with a bow as a weapon that strikes the neck. Similarly, GenR 99:8 explicitly associates Gen 49:8 with David as Judah’s descendant, based on 2 Sam 22:41, which indicates the fulfilment of Judah’s blessing.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, interpretations of Gen 49:8 explain why Judah will be praised by his brothers. A variety of approaches can be found, but a frequently attested interpretation focuses on the past actions of Judah with regard to Joseph and Tamar. Another key approach looks to the future military victories of the descendants of Judah, and particularly Davidic victories, for which his descendants will receive praise.

#### *The Lion of Judah* (Genesis 49:9)

Rabbinic exegetes have explored in some detail as to what is meant by the metaphor of comparing Judah to a lion, and the understanding of the actions of the lion Judah in Gen 49:9. Gen 49:9 states:

גור אריה יהודה מטרף בני עלית כרע רבץ כאריה וכלביא מי יקימנו

*Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as a lioness; who shall rouse him up?*

A widely attested exegetical approach focuses on the historical fulfilment of this blessing on Judah, examining the strength that is represented by such imagery with regard to Judah the man, the tribe and subsequent descendants.

The first exegetical approach for consideration addresses the strength of Judah the man. This idea is found in a number of midrashic interpretations in Genesis Rabbah with varying details. For example, GenR 98:7 describes Judah as having the strength of a lion and boldness of a whelp without further comment. GenR 93:7 describes the anger of Judah, along with Dan who was also called a lion in Deut 33:22, to be like that of a lion in reaction to the seizing of Benjamin in the Joseph narrative (cf. Genesis 44). Thus, Judah’s strength as a lion comes to the fore in the defence of his younger brother. The focus on Judah the man takes a

<sup>16</sup> In a different context, BT Meg 16a describes how if Mordecai were of the tribe of Judah, it would not be possible to prevail over him, based on Gen 49:8. This is also applied to the tribes of Benjamin, Ephraim and Manasseh, based on Ps 80:3.

historical understanding of the blessing on Judah as relating to the person to whom it was given. The emphasis here is on the strength of Judah and his pre-eminent status.

Another exegetical approach interprets Gen 49:9 as predicting the strength of Judah the tribe, and with particular reference to political and military success. Thus, the notion of Judah as a strong individual is taken further to refer to his descendants. GenR 97 links Judah the lion with a number of biblical battles involving Judah's descendants, such as Daniel who fought the Babylonians.<sup>17</sup> A tribal military interpretation of Gen 49:9 is also found in CantR 2:14, which describes how all the tribes are wild beasts that can subdue the nations.<sup>18</sup> This concept of military strength often ties in with interpretations of Gen 49:8 and Davidic victories, as discussed above.

Targumic interpretations already link together motifs on Judah the man and the fate of his descendants in the understanding of Judah the lion's whelp, who will bring victory for the people. Tg Onqelos Gen 49:9 states that 'Rulership will come to pass in the beginning, and in the end a king will be raised from the house of Judah, because from the death sentence, my son, you removed yourself. He will rest and dwell with strength like a lion and like a lioness, and there is no kingdom that will move him'.<sup>19</sup> An emphasis is found here on the 'house' of Judah and the 'king' who will be raised at the end with the strength of a lion and the power to withstand any kingdom.<sup>20</sup> This future is possible because of the actions of Judah the man who withdrew himself from a 'death sentence' due to his actions regarding Joseph and Tamar.<sup>21</sup> Tg Neofiti Gen 49:9 also mentions these themes and additionally refers to the future undefeated military success of the tribe of Judah as a reward for the actions of the man Judah with respect to Joseph, whom he saved, and Tamar, regarding whom he was innocent.<sup>22</sup> This line of interpretation is also included in Tg PsJon Gen 49:9,

<sup>17</sup> Cf. GenR 99:2, NumR 13:4, ExodR 29:9.

<sup>18</sup> This idea is developed in the later ExodR 21:5, which states that the tribes are like wild beasts against the heathen who annul the commandments; cf. NumR 13:8.

<sup>19</sup> Tg Onqelos Gen 49:9 gives: יהודה מדבית מלכא יתרבא ובסופא ישירי וכליתא ולית מלכו דתועועיניה ארי מדין קטלא ברי נפשך סליקתא ינוח ישירי בתקוף כאריא וכליתא ולית מלכו דתועועיניה (ed. A. Sperber, *The Pentateuch according to Targum Onkelos*, vol. 1, 85). For commentary, see B. Grossfeld, *The Targum Onkelos to Genesis*, 158–163.

<sup>20</sup> For detailed commentary, see M. Aberbach – B. Grossfeld, *Targum Onkelos on Genesis 49 / Translation and Analytical Commentary*, Missoula 1976.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. GenR 97 and the interpretation of Gen 49:8 above, and the analysis of GenR 98:7 below.

<sup>22</sup> Tg Neofiti Gen 49:9 gives: מדמה אנא לך יהודה לגור בר אריוון מן קטלוי דיוסף ברי את זכיי ניח ושירי בגו קרבא היך אריה וכארייתא ולית הויית משיוב מן דינה דתמר ברי את הויי[ת] זכיי ניח ושירי בגו קרבא היך אריה וכארייתא ולית

which describes how Judah refrained from the murder of Joseph and avoided judgement in the matter of Tamar.<sup>23</sup>

In a similar approach, GenR 99:8, paralleled in Tan *Wayehi* 10, connects the actions of Judah with respect to Tamar and Joseph with the lion imagery. GenR 99:8 explains that the lion names attributed to Judah represent the number of lives that he saved. In this version of the tradition, Judah saved four lives: himself (from punishment for his actions), Tamar, and consequently her two children, Perez and Zerah.<sup>24</sup> Again, God responds in kind by saving four of Judah's descendants, namely Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The fact that Judah saved four lives is indicated by the fact that he was called by four names in Gen 49:9 and Num 24:9: 'lion', 'whelp', 'lion' and 'lioness'.<sup>25</sup>

As can be seen, a major exegetical approach in rabbinic traditions is to examine the strength and status that is represented by the lion imagery, focusing on Judah as the son of Jacob, the tribe and even the Davidic nation. It is, therefore, not surprising that interpretations about Davidic and national victories also led to a number of interpretations about the strength of the Messiah who would descend from David. This approach is exemplified by GenR 98:7:

גור אריה יהודה מלמד שנתן לו גבורה של ארי וחוצפה של גוריו: מטרף בני עלית מטרפו של יוסף עלית ונתעלית, מטרפה של תמר עלית נתעלית: כרע רבץ מפרץ עד דוד כרע שכב (במדבר כד ט), מדוד עד צדקיהו כרע רבץ, ויש אומרין מפרץ עד צדקיהו כרע רבץ, מצדקיהו עד מלך המשיח כרע שכב, בעולם הזה כרע שכב, לעתיד לבוא כרע רבץ, בשעה שאין לו שונאים כרע רבץ, עד כלות כל שונאיו [כרע שכב]:

(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 3, 1258)

*Judah is a lion's whelp* (Gen 49:9). This teaches that he gave to him the strength of a lion and the boldness of its whelps. *From the prey, my son, you have gone up* (Gen 49:9). You went up from the tearing of Joseph and

לקובלך (ed. A. Díez Macho, *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis*, 384); cf. M. McNamara, *Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis*, 219 for commentary.

<sup>23</sup> Tg PsJon Gen 49:9 reads: כרע רבץ מטרפו של יוסף עלית ונתעלית, מטרפה של תמר עלית נתעלית: כרע רבץ מפרץ עד דוד כרע שכב (במדבר כד ט), מדוד עד צדקיהו כרע רבץ, ויש אומרין מפרץ עד צדקיהו כרע רבץ, מצדקיהו עד מלך המשיח כרע שכב, בעולם הזה כרע שכב, לעתיד לבוא כרע רבץ, בשעה שאין לו שונאים כרע רבץ, עד כלות כל שונאיו [כרע שכב].

<sup>24</sup> GenR 99:8 (and Tan *Wayehi* 10) teach that one of the four lives that Judah saved was himself (in addition to Tamar, Perez and Zerah), rather than Joseph as is found in GenR 97.

<sup>25</sup> Gen 49:9 and Num 24:9 are connected based on the similar phrasing of the verses. Gen 49:9 states: 'He stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as a lioness; who shall rouse him up?' (כרע רבץ כרע רבץ וכלביא מי יקימנו), whereas Num 24:9 gives: 'He stooped down, he lay down like a lion and like a lioness; who shall rouse him up?' (כרע שכב כארי וכלביא מי יקימנו).

were exalted; you went up from the tearing of Tamar and were exalted. *He stooped down, he couched* (Gen 49:9). From Perez to David, *He stooped down, he lay down* (כרע שכב; Num 24:9); from David to Zedekiah, *He stooped down, he couched* (כרע רבץ; Gen 49:9). There are those who say: From Perez to Zedekiah, *He stooped down, he couched* (Gen 49:9); from Zedekiah to the King Messiah, *He stooped down, he lay down* (Num 24:9). In this world, *He stooped down, he lay down* (Num 24:9); but in the future to come, *He stooped down, he couched* (Gen 49:9); when he had no enemies, *He stooped down, he couched* (Gen 49:9); until all his enemies are no more, *He stooped down, he lay down* (Num 24:9).

The passage begins with an interpretation regarding Judah the man; Jacob blessed him with the strength of a lion and the courage of a lion's cubs, based on Gen 49:9. Thus, this tradition begins with an historical understanding of the blessing on Judah and the status of the person of Judah.

The interpretation in GenR 98:7 continues with exegesis regarding the actions of Judah the man, once again with respect to Tamar and Joseph. *'From the prey, my son, you have gone up'* is explained to mean that Judah refrained from the 'tearing' or destruction of Joseph and Tamar, and as a result he is exalted.<sup>26</sup> This interpretation is based on connecting טרף 'prey' (noun) in Gen 49:9 and טרף 'tearing' (infinitive absolute) in Gen 37:33, which contains Jacob's prediction that Joseph was torn to pieces.<sup>27</sup> The proof text for this is Gen 37:6, where Judah persuades his brothers that there is more profit in selling Joseph than killing him. As such, Judah stopped his brothers from killing Joseph and thus from committing murder. He also saved Tamar his daughter-in-law (cf. Genesis 38), as he rescinded his decree in Gen 38:24 that she should be burned for acting as a prostitute. In this way, Judah ensured the continuation of his line.

Then follows a series of interpretations in GenR 98:7 on the military activities of the descendants of Judah up to the time of the Messiah. Thus, the notion of Judah as a strong individual is taken further to refer to his descendants. First, an interpretation is offered that Judah's descendants, beginning with his son Perez, did not fight against their enemies until the time of David, as indicated by the fact that they 'lay down as a lion'. However, from David to Zedekiah, the last biblical king of Israel, they fought for the nation. Secondly, an alternative interpretation is given in that from the time of Perez to Zedekiah the descendants of Judah fought against

<sup>26</sup> Cf. GenR 97 and the interpretation of Gen 49:8 above, and the analysis of GenR 98:7 below.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. GenR 97, which only refers to Judah sparing Joseph, but uses the same argumentation and explicitly cites Gen 37:33.

their enemies, but from the time of Zedekiah to the Messiah they would be powerless. Thirdly, an alternative understanding is offered that the descendants of Judah may 'lay down' in this world, but in the future messianic era they would be ready to fight. When there are no enemies left, the descendants of Judah would be couched like a lion with pride, and they would only cease to fight and 'lay down' once no enemies remained. The alternative scenarios are contrasted using Gen 49:9 and Num 24:9, based on the linguistic connection with כרע and also the lion imagery found in both verses.<sup>28</sup> The understanding of Gen 49:9 as reflecting the military history of Israel up to the messianic era again builds on interpretations of Gen 49:8 and Davidic victories, as discussed above.

GenR 97 also discusses messianic expectation in exegesis of Gen 49:9, which builds on interpretation of Gen 49:8. As noted above, in exegesis of 49:8, the history of the tribe of Judah is outlined with emphasis on the fact that they are the ones chosen for everything significant within the history of the people. The history concludes with the royal Messiah descended from Judah. In exegesis of Gen 49:9, '*Judah is a lion's whelp*' is understood to refer to the Messiah ben David, who in this instance is descended from Judah on his father's side and Dan on his mother's side, as both tribes are referred to as a lion in Gen 49:9 and Deut 33:22 respectively.

Thus, a well attested exegetical approach in rabbinic exegesis of Gen 49:9 focuses on the strength of Judah, as illustrated by the lion imagery, which links the strength of Judah the man to the tribe, David and the Messiah. In this way, the political military victory predicted for Judah and his descendants is extended to the time of the Messiah and ultimate national vindication. Not unexpectedly, the interpretations discussed claim a Davidic descent for the Messiah, and stress the prominence and permanence of the political house of Judah.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> For the connection between Gen 49:9 and Num 24:9, see n.25 in this chapter. It has already been noted that Gen 49:8–12 represented an important series of messianic proof texts in rabbinic exegesis. Additionally, the use of Num 24:9 as a proof text may have brought to mind messianic associations, because of the passage on the star and the sceptre of Balaam's fourth oracle later in the narrative (Num 24:15–19, esp. 17).

<sup>29</sup> Mek *Beshallah* 3 is interesting because the tradition contains exegesis that does not conform to the widely transmitted interpretation of the military strength and leadership of Judah's descendants. Rather, Mek *Beshallah* 3 uses Gen 49:9 as a proof text for the power of prayer against enemies. The tradition contrasts Gen 49:9 with Deut 33:7: 'And likewise it says: *Judah is a lion's whelp*, etc. (Gen 49:9), but it also says: *And this for Judah, and he said: Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah* (Deut 33:7)'. The contrast drawn indicates that a person/

*The Messiah and the Nations* (Genesis 49:10)

Gen 49:10 is one of the most important proof texts for messianic teachings in rabbinic traditions. This is particularly linked to ideas on the Messiah ben David, who descends from Judah, and prophecies involving Judah are naturally seen in a messianic light. Gen 49:10 states:

לא יסור שבט מיהודה ומחקה מבין רגליו עד כי יבא שילה ולו יקהת עמים

*The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.*

*The Sceptre and Messiah*

Rabbinic exegesis on the meaning and significance of '*The sceptre shall not depart from Judah*' is extensive and complex. However, three key and yet interconnected approaches stand out from the variety of traditions. These exegetical approaches focus on the 'sceptre' as referring to the monarchy of Judah, the leadership of the Jewish people in Palestine and Babylonia during the rabbinic era, and, ultimately, messianic expectations.

The first approach addressed here is discussion of the kingship of those from Judah, which is often seen as a long term precursor to the advent of the Messiah. In the targumic sources, Targum Onqelos, Targum Neofiti and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan interpret '*The sceptre shall not depart from Judah*' to mean that kingship will never leave the Judahite tribe. There is a political aspect to the interpretation in these texts. Tg Onqelos Gen 49:10 states that 'The ruler will never depart from the house of Judah, nor the scribe from the sons of his sons forever' (לא יעדי עביר שולטן מדבית יהודה), whereas Tg Neofiti Gen 49:10 similarly translates 'Kings will not cease from the house of Judah and nor shall scribes teaching the Law from his sons' sons' (לא פסקין מלכין מין דבית יהודה ואף)

---

tribe may have great might, but their ultimate success will come from prayer. This may reflect a time in the early stages of the development of the rabbinic movement when it was considered unwise to advocate an active political agenda, especially following a series of unsuccessful revolts against Rome in the first few centuries CE. Other interpretations that do not focus on the Davidic or messianic theme include: CantR 4:7, which discusses the animals with which the tribes were compared; NumR 13:8, which addresses a practical exegetical question about why the animals in the blessings are mentioned twice; BT Sot 11b (cf. ExodR 1:16) explains that Israelites are practical like animals in that they can be born without help from a midwife; MidrPss 90:3 teaches that Judah is the lion to keep control of Simeon's ox, as indicated by Josh 19:9.

בנוי) (לא ספרין מלפי אוריה מבני בנוי).<sup>30</sup> Tg PsJon Gen 49:10 also follows this line of interpretation: 'Kings and rulers will not cease from the house of Judah, nor scribes teaching the Law from his seed' (לא פסקין מלכין ושלטיין מדבית) (יהודה וספרין מאלפי אורייתא מזרעיה). The emphasis on kingship within the tribe of Judah is evident, and also associated with an accompanying scribal class as the 'ruler's staff'.<sup>31</sup> Thus, both royalty and teachers are expected from the descendants of Judah, which is no doubt an allusion to the leadership of the Davidic dynasty and their descendants followed by the leadership of the 'scribes', that is, rabbis.<sup>32</sup> This presents an emphasis on the enduring nature of leadership within Judah.<sup>33</sup>

GenR 71:5 also contains references to the kingship that will be established within the nation. The tradition refers to items associated with kingship including a sceptre, crown and glory as an indication of royalty, thus alluding to Gen 49:10. The association between the 'sceptre' (שבט) of Gen 49:10 and kingship is made even more explicit in MidrProv 19, which

<sup>30</sup> A. Sperber (ed.), *The Pentateuch according to Targum Onkelos*, vol. 1, 85; A. Díez Macho (ed.), *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis*, 384. For commentary, see B. Grossfeld, *The Targum Onkelos to Genesis*, 158 and 163, and M. McNamara, *Targum Neofiti I: Genesis*, 219–220.

<sup>31</sup> A. Díez Macho (ed.), *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis*, 385. The Hebrew for 'ruler's staff' is a poal participle of חקק, which can be understood as a noun, hence the common translation 'ruler's staff'. However, there are instances elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible where מחקק refers to a person, and, in particular, a legislator (cf. Deut 33:21, Judg 5:14, Isa 33:22). As such, the word could easily have been interpreted by rabbinic exegetes as both 'ruler's staff' or 'lawgiver' as the word already had this dual sense. This is also the case in the Targumim. For example, Targum Neofiti and Pseudo-Jonathan translate מחקק with ספרין, which means 'scribes' or 'teachers' or 'scholars'. As M. Aberbach and B. Grossfeld note, 'The Targumim understood מחקק in the same sense as it is understood in Dt. 33:21, where all of them render this word by the term ספרא. Since מחקק is linguistically related to חק 'statute', 'law', they interpret it as 'Lawgiver' or 'instructor in the Law', i.e. 'teacher'. Indeed ספרא can mean both teacher and scribe' (*Targum Onkelos on Genesis 49*, 297); cf. R. Syrén, *The Blessings in the Targums: a Study of the Targumic Interpretations of Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33*, Åbo 1986, 53–56 and 130–131.

<sup>32</sup> O. Skarsaune argues that the emphasis on scribal descendants is in fact a response to the lack of kingship in Israel at the time of Targum Onkelos. He states: 'The problem is thus solved by transferring the idea of dominion from the Davidic dynasty to the spiritual leaders of Israel, the succession of rabbinical teachers' (*The Proof from Prophecy*, 262); cf. S.H. Levey, who states of the targumic tradition that the Messiah would become a 'king-educator' thus combining the two concepts of king and scribe (*The Messiah: An Aramaic Interpretation*, 149). Since there were no longer any Judean kings, the blessing on Judah was understood by rabbinic exegetes in terms of the existing leadership under the rabbis. Indeed, there is a tradition that Hillel was descended from David (e.g. PT Taan 4:2, 68a; GenR 98:8), and the patriarchate claimed that it was descended from David, which legitimated their rule. See the discussion of Shiloh in GenR 98:8 below, and M. Stern, 'Aspects of Jewish Society: The Priesthood and Other Classes', in: S. Safrai – M. Stern (eds), *The Jewish People in the First Century*, 617–618.

<sup>33</sup> M. Aberbach – B. Grossfeld, *Targum Onkelos on Genesis 49*; cf. BT Pes 53b where the blessing on Judah in Gen 49:10 is highlighted as a prayer.



teaches that God planted kingship (מלכות) in the tribe (שבט) of Judah until the Messiah shall come forth, based on Gen 49:10.<sup>34</sup>

Related to the previous exegetical approach, another understanding of the meaning of the 'sceptre' is that it refers to the rabbinic leaders of Palestine and Babylonia.<sup>35</sup> The earliest source in terms of date of redaction to allude to such an interpretation is the third century Sifre Deuteronomy. Sifre Deut 352<sup>36</sup> teaches that the line '*The sceptre shall not depart from Judah*' refers to a portion of the Temple found within the territory of Judah, namely the Hall of Hewn Stones where tradition has it that the Great Sanhedrin would meet to discuss the Law.<sup>37</sup> This idea is found in a greatly expanded form in GenR 98:8. This tradition understands the 'sceptre' (שבט) of Gen 49:10 to refer to the Sanhedrin, which handed out punishments, whereas the 'ruler' (מחקק) in the same verse refers to the two clerks of the judges who stand before the Sanhedrin. This line of interpretation is also found in GenR 97, which draws a contrast between the Babylonian and Palestinian leadership. The homily understands the 'sceptre' (שבט) to refer to the exilarchs in Babylon who chastise Israel with the staff, whereas the 'lawgiver' (מחקק) refers to the patriarchs of Israel. These interpretations in GenR 98:8 and GenR 97 may well reflect a conflict between the leaders of the Palestinian and Babylonian communities. Indeed, debate between the leadership of the two communities is drawn out at length in BT Sanh 5a (cf. BT Hor 11b), which states: '*The sceptre shall not depart from Judah: these are the Exilarchs in Babylon who rule over Israel with a sceptre; nor the ruler's staff from between his feet: these are the descendants of Hillel who teach Torah in public*'.<sup>38</sup> Regardless of any suggested rivalry between the two communities, this exegetical approach places the rabbinic leadership as the direct heirs of the blessing on Judah, which legitimates their authority.

<sup>34</sup> Royalty from Judah is also emphasized in MidrPss 119:73, which refers to the gift of kingship to Judah and his descendants by God, based on Gen 49:10. NumR 2:10 describes royalty from Judah using this verse, and NumR 3:12 associates royalty and scholarship in its interpretation that kings, scholars and those who do meritorious deeds and those of great learning come from Judah, based on Gen 49:10.

<sup>35</sup> The first exegetical approach discussed understands 'sceptre' to refer to kingship and the 'ruler's staff' to refer to the scribes or rabbis, whereas here the 'sceptre' is understood to be rabbinic leadership rather than kingship.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. discussion of Sifre Deut 352 in the chapter on 'Jacob's Ladder'.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. GenR 97 and BT Sanh 88b, which describe the process of making legal decisions with reference to the Great Sanhedrin in the Hall of Hewn Stones.

<sup>38</sup> As discussed by J. Neusner, *History of the Jews of Babylonia. vol. 1*, esp. 110, and J. Neusner, *Neusner on Judaism: Vol. 1. History*, Aldershot 2004, 474.

The final exegetical approach under discussion for this verse makes an explicit connection between messianism and the 'sceptre'. A messianic interpretation of Gen 49:10 is given in GenR 97,<sup>39</sup> which states:

ד"א לא יסור שבט מיהודה זה משיח בן דוד שעתיד לרדות את המלכות במקל  
 שנ' תרעם בשבט ברזל (תהלים ב ט)  
 (ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 3, 1219)

Another interpretation: *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah* (Gen 49:10). This refers to the Messiah ben David, who will chastise the kingdom with a staff, as it is said, *You shall break them with a staff of iron* (Ps 2:9).

In GenR 97, '*The sceptre shall not depart*' is understood to refer to the Messiah ben David, who will use a 'staff' (מקל) to rule over his kingdom with severity. This is proven by Ps 2:9, which teaches that a 'staff' (שבט) can be used as a means of punishment in describing the rule of the anointed one of the Lord. This tradition is followed by an interpretation of '*nor the ruler's staff*', which is understood to refer to those who gave legal rulings in the Sanhedrin in Judah, based on 1 Chron 2:55. The connection of these two interpretations gives the lawgivers an important leadership role alongside the Messiah, and ties together the two motifs of permanent and messianic kingship for Israel and the authority of rabbinic leadership.

GenR 99:8, paralleled in Tan *Wayehi* 10,<sup>40</sup> also gives the 'sceptre' a messianic interpretation:

לא יסור שבט מיהודה זה כסא מלכות, כסאך אלהים עולם ועד שבט מישור  
 [שבט מלכותך] (תהלים מה ז), אימתי ומחוקק מבין רגליו כשיבוא אותו שכתוב  
 בו ברגלים תרמסנה עטרת וגומ' (ישעיה כח ג)  
 (ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 3, 1280)

*The sceptre shall not depart from Judah* (Gen 49:10): this refers to the throne of the kingdom (מלכות): *Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of uprightness [is the sceptre of your kingdom]* (Ps 45:7). When will that be? *Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet* (Gen 49:10): when he comes, him of whom it is written, *The crown shall be trodden under foot*, etc. (Isa 28:3).

First, the 'sceptre' is understood to be the throne of kingship, based on Ps 45:7. The use of this proof text indicates the expected permanency of

<sup>39</sup> There are two alternative interpretations of Gen 49:10 in GenR 97 representing the different exegetical approaches to this verse. The first relates Gen 49:10 to the current leaders of the Jewish people, as discussed above. The second interpretation gives a messianic sense to Gen 49:10 in connection with the rabbinic leadership, as presented here.

<sup>40</sup> Tan *Wayehi* 10 closely parallels GenR 99:8, but is worth citing due to some small but significant differences: לא יסור שבט, זה כסא מלכות, שנאמר (תהלים מה) כסאך אלהים עולם ועד שבט מישור שבט מלכותך, ומחוקק מבין רגליו כשיבא אותו מלך שהמלכות שלו שכתוב בו (ישעיה כח). (ed. E. Zondel ben Joseph, *Midrash Tanhuma*, vol. 1, 59b)

kingship within the tribe of Judah; it is *'forever and ever'*.<sup>41</sup> The tradition asks when the permanence of the Judahite royalty will be finally established. The answer is found in the line *'nor the ruler's staff from between his feet'*, which is understood to refer to the time when the king will come, that is, the Messiah. He has the ruler's staff between his feet, which indicates his control of kingship. The proof text is Isa 28:3, which points to the political and military activities of the Messiah in establishing the permanent kingship.

Thus, in these various approaches, the 'sceptre' of Gen 49:10 is given a range of interpretations. A logical understanding of the royal motifs in the blessing on Judah is found in the emphasis on the kingship of Judah. The 'sceptre' as referring to the rabbinic leadership explains the means by which the blessing on Judah is fulfilled in the post-Herodian age, and, furthermore, provides justification and authority for their leadership. Finally, a messianic understanding is given to the 'sceptre' of Judah, which represents future hopes for the leadership and salvation of the nation.

### *Shiloh and Messiah*

The messianic theme is continued in interpretations of Gen 49:10b. In particular, messianic expectation is applied to the understanding of the name 'Shiloh' in Gen 49:10: *עַד כִּי יבֹא שִׁילֹה וְלוֹ יִקְהַת עַמִּים* 'until Shiloh comes; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples'.<sup>42</sup> The meaning of 'Shiloh' as the Messiah is a frequently attested motif in rabbinic traditions. It is found in targumic literature, so MT *עַד כִּי יבֹא שִׁילֹה* 'until Shiloh comes' is translated and expanded in Tg Onqelos Gen 49:10: *עַד דִּיִּתִי מְשִׁיחָא דְדִלִּיָּה* 'until the Messiah will come to whom the kingdom belongs'.<sup>43</sup> The understanding of Shiloh as a reference to either the Messiah or his name is also developed to refer to the ownership of the kingdom that the Messiah will enjoy. Thus, the ambiguous Hebrew *שִׁילֹה* 'Shiloh' is understood in Targum Onqelos to refer to both the Messiah (*מְשִׁיחָא*) and his

<sup>41</sup> This was an issue for rabbinic exegetes, who had not had a king since the Herodian dynasty, see S. Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish society, 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.*; cf. traditions discussed above that emphasize the continuation of Jewish leadership by means of the leaders of the Palestinian and Babylonian communities.

<sup>42</sup> The original Hebrew line *עַד כִּי יבֹא שִׁילֹה* 'until Shiloh comes' is ambiguous, as Shiloh could be understood as 'Shiloh' the town in Israel, or could be read as *שִׁלֹה* 'tribute for him', *שִׁלֹה* 'that which belongs to him' or perhaps a personal name; cf. C. Westermann, *Genesis 37–50*, 219, 230–231 for commentary and bibliography.

<sup>43</sup> A. Sperber (ed.), *The Pentateuch according to Targum Onkelos*, vol. 1, 85. For commentary, see B. Grossfeld, *The Targum Onkelos to Genesis*, 158 and 163–164. For Tg Neofiti and Pseudo-Jonathan Gen 49:10, see A. Díez Macho (ed.), *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensis Series IV*, vol. 1, *Genesis*, 384–385.

ownership of the kingdom (דדיליה היא מלכותא), the latter through understanding the Hebrew שילה 'Shiloh' as שלו 'which belongs to him', which is translated and expanded accordingly. Similarly, Targum Neofiti gives: עד זמן דייתי מלכא משיחא דדידיה היא מלכותא 'until the time that the king Messiah will come to whom the kingdom belongs', thus also reflecting the dual interpretation of שילה as the Messiah and שילה as שלו referring to ownership of the kingdom. Tg PsJon Gen 49:10 also identifies 'Shiloh' as the Messiah: עד זמן די ייתי מלכא משיחא 'until the time that the King Messiah will come'.

Such an interpretation is also found in midrashic traditions, and GenR 98:8 contains an explicit identification between Shiloh and the Messiah: 'Until Shiloh comes: this refers to the King Messiah'. GenR 98:8 describes a political or royal messianic expectation, with previous parts of Gen 49:10 related to figures from the history of the Jewish people or their ruling bodies, such as the Sanhedrin, as noted above. The identification between Shiloh and the Messiah is stated plainly with no further explanation required, which is a hint as to the popularity of this exegesis. The theme of ownership of the kingdom is also found in GenR 99:8, closely paralleled in Tan *Wayehi* 10, which teaches: 'Until Shiloh (שילה) comes (Gen 49:10): he to whom the kingdom belongs (מי שהמלכות שלו)'. In other words, the phrase 'until Shiloh comes' is a reference to the Messiah who has ownership of the kingdom. This is again based on the understanding of 'Shiloh' (שילה) in Gen 49:10 as referring to both the Messiah and also 'which belongs to him' (שלו).

There are also a number of traditions that identify Shiloh as a personal name or title for the Messiah. This is a relatively early idea as found in LamR 1:16, which offers a detailed exposition on the names of the Messiah based on a variety of biblical verses, including Lord (Jer 23:6), Shoot (Zech 6:12), Comforter (Lam 1:16), Shiloh (Gen 49:10), Haninah (Jer 16:13), Yinnon (Ps 52:17), Nehirah (Dan 2:22) and David (Ps 18:51).<sup>44</sup> This is paralleled in BT Sanh 98b, which contains a detailed discussion on the name and nature of the Messiah and when he will come.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Cf. A. Goldberg, 'Die Namen des Messias in der rabbinischen Traditionsliteratur', 1-93.

<sup>45</sup> In BT Sanh 98b, a question is posed as to the name of the Messiah, and various rabbis offer opinions on the name depending on the similarity to their own name. These include Shiloh, Yinnon, Haninah and Menahem, also found in the list in Lamentations Rabbah. R. Shila claims Shiloh as the name for the Messiah in this tradition, based on Gen 49:10. In another parallel interpretation, MidrProv 19 states that the Messiah has been given seven names, and these are: Yinnon, Our Righteousness, Shoot, Comforter, David, Shiloh and Elijah, all of which are given accompanying proof from scripture.

Finally, note should be made of two alternative interpretations regarding Shiloh, although they are still placed in a messianic context. GenR 98:8 offers an alternative to the straightforward messianic interpretation of Shiloh outlined above, namely that ‘*until Shiloh comes*’ refers to the genealogical descent of Hillel from David, an interpretation that puts Hillel in the line of kings and an ancestor of the future Messiah. This interpretation links to the understanding of the ‘sceptre’ as the Sanhedrin, as outlined above. Furthermore, it legitimates the rabbinic leadership as fulfilment of the blessing on Judah, and is a counterpart to the interpretation that Gen 49:10 refers to the royal Messiah. In another alternative interpretation, ‘*until Shiloh comes*’ in GenR 97 is understood to refer to the nations of the world, who will bring a gift to the Messiah ben David. This interpretation is based on wordplay with ‘*Shiloh comes*’ (יבא שילה) in Gen 49:10 and ‘*gift will be brought to the Lord*’ (יובל שי לה) in Isa 18:7, which describes how gifts will be brought to the Lord in a prophetic future.

Despite the variety of traditions, the most widely attested interpretation of Shiloh is to be found in connection with messianic expectation, as in the earliest targumic texts and throughout rabbinic traditions. Thus, as B. Grossfeld notes, ‘The Targumic identification of ‘Shiloh’ with the Messiah King would appear to have been universally accepted during the Talmudic age’.<sup>46</sup> The messianic understanding of Shiloh was also found in early Jewish interpretations of Gen 49:10, such as in the Dead Sea Scrolls. 4Q252, an eschatological midrash on Genesis, contains a messianic interpretation of Gen 49:10.<sup>47</sup> In this text, the phrase עד כי יבא שילה ‘*until Shiloh comes*’ is interpreted by עד בוא משיח הצדק ‘*until the coming of the Messiah of righteousness*’.<sup>48</sup> J.J. Collins argues that ‘this line of interpretation stands in continuity with the much later Talmudic view that Shiloh was the name

<sup>46</sup> *Targum Onqelos on Genesis 49*, 297.

<sup>47</sup> 4Q252 fr.6 emphasizes that royal power will belong forever to the descendants of David: [ל]ן יסור שליט משבט יהודה בהיות לישראל ממשל [לוא י] ברת יושב כסא לדויד כי המחוקק היא ברית המלכות [ואל]פי ישראל המה הדגלים [vacat] עד בוא משיח הצדק צמח דויד [כי לו ולזרעו נתנה ברית מלכות עמו עד דורות עולם of Judah (Gen 49:10). When Israel rules, *One who occupies the throne of David [will not be] cut off* (sim. Jer 33:17). For *the ruler's staff* (Gen 49:10) is the covenant of kingship, and the [trib]es of Israel are the divisions, [vacat] until the coming of the Messiah of righteousness, the shoot of David. For to him and his seed is given the covenant of the kingship of his people for everlasting generations’. See G. Brooke et al., *Qumran Cave 4 XVII, Parabiblical Texts, part 3, Discoveries in the Judean Desert XXII*, Oxford 1996, 185–207, esp. 205–207; cf. C. Niccum, ‘The Blessing of Judah in 4Q252’, in: P.W. Flint et al. (eds), *Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, and the Septuagint Presented to Eugene Ulrich*, Leiden 2006, 250–260.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. also 1QSB 5.20–29 where Gen 49:8–10 is associated with Num 24:17 and Isaiah 11, and 4Qbenedictions patriarchales 1.1.1–5.

of the Messiah'.<sup>49</sup> It is, therefore, likely that rabbinic exegesis on Shiloh as the Messiah is part of a long history of Jewish interpretation. In general, a key motivation in the rabbinic traditions discussed is to emphasize the future advent of a royal Messiah who would act for the salvation of the Jewish people in fulfilment of the blessing on Judah.

### *Subjection of the Nations*

Another key point of interest is found in exegesis of Gen 49:10b: *ולו יקרהת עמים* 'And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples'. Following from traditions with a strong messianic significance given to the 'sceptre' and 'Shiloh' in Gen 49:10, the theme of redemption and ultimate vindication of Israel with reference to the expectation of a messianic ruler over the non-Jewish nations is found.<sup>50</sup> This notion of submission by and expectation of victory over the nations at the messianic end of time is developed in a variety of rabbinic traditions with nuances in exegesis. However, this approach is closely based on the Hebrew biblical text, which refers to the 'obedience of the peoples' in regard to the leadership of Judah.

The targumic sources expand on Gen 49:10b in line with this approach. Tg Onqelos Gen 49:10 translates MT *ולו יקרהת עמים* with *וליה ישתמעון* 'and him nations will obey'.<sup>51</sup> Building on the Messiah's ownership of the kingdom, as outlined earlier in the verse, the Targum is now explicit on the extent of that kingdom. Similarly, Tg Neofiti Gen 49:10 translates *אשתעבדון כל מלכותא* 'to him all the kingdoms will be subjected'. This represents an emphasis on the power of the Messiah over all the peoples, which gives a political understanding to the verse in terms of leadership over nations. However, Tg PsJon Gen 49:10 offers a different method for the subjugation of the nations. This Targum refers to the time when the King Messiah will come and how because of him *עממיא יתימסון* 'the nations will melt away'. In other words, the peoples are not said to be obedient in the eschatological future, but rather the nations will no longer be a consideration due to the actions of the King Messiah; they will melt or waste away on account of him.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>49</sup> 'Messianism and Exegetical Tradition', 67.

<sup>50</sup> For expectation of a messianic ruler over the Gentiles in connection with Isa 11:1, see W. Horbury, *Jewish Messianism and the Cult of Christ*, 129.

<sup>51</sup> A. Sperber (ed.), *The Pentateuch according to Targum Onkelos*, vol. 1, 85; B. Grossfeld, *The Targum Onkelos to Genesis*, 158 and 163–164.

<sup>52</sup> A. Díez Macho (ed.), *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis*, 384–385. M. Maher notes 'Ps.-J. is alone in rendering *yqht*, 'the obedience' (RSV), as *ytymswn*, 'pine

A number of interpretations of Gen 49:10b are found in Genesis Rab-  
bah. GenR 98:8 describes the potential power of the Messiah, who will  
subdue the nations: *'And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples: For  
he [the Messiah] will come and make blunt the teeth of the peoples of  
the world'*. Although no proof text is offered, this interpretation is derived  
from a play on words; 'obedience' (יקהת) in Gen 49:10 is understood to  
allude to 'make blunt' (מקהה) the teeth of the peoples of the world, and  
so indicates that the Messiah will deal firmly with the nations.

GenR 97 describes the subjugation of the nations, also based on word-  
play of 'obedience' (יקהת) in Gen 49:10 and 'make blunt' (מקהה) with refer-  
ence to the teeth of the nations of the world. However, in this tradition,  
it is Jerusalem who will subdue the peoples of the world rather than the  
Messiah; the implication is that the power and greatness of Jerusalem will  
humble other nations. This is based on another wordplay between 'obe-  
dience' (יקהת) in Gen 49:10 and 'to smite' (להכות) as found in Zech 12:3,  
which verse teaches that Jerusalem will be a heavy stone, in the sense of  
immovable, for all the peoples.

This line of interpretation is also found in GenR 99:8, paralleled in Tan  
*Wayehi* 10, using Mic 7:16 as a proof text. GenR 99:8 describes how the  
nations will be deprived of power and unable to speak or hear: *'they shall  
lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf'* (Mic 7:16).<sup>53</sup> Such  
imagery could refer to the defeat of the nations in political victory, but  
perhaps may also refer to the defeat of their teachings, which are brought  
to an end when the Messiah breaks their 'teeth', or 'speech'. This under-  
standing could be implied from the use of the word מקהה, which can also  
mean 'break the power of' or 'refute'. Interestingly, there is no mention of  
'obedience' by the nations in this interpretation.

GenR 99:8, closely paralleled in Tan *Wayehi* 10, also offers an alternative  
interpretation to the subjugation of the nations: *'Another interpretation:  
And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples: The one to whom the peo-  
ples of the world will gather themselves (מתקהלין), as it is said, The root of  
Jesse, that stands for an ensign of the peoples, to him shall the nations seek  
(Isa 11:10)'*. Based on wordplay between 'obedience' (יקהת) and 'assemble'  
(מתקהלין), the interpretation is given that the peoples will gather to the

---

away,' lit., 'melt away.' The different renderings of this word in the Targums show that the  
*meturgemanim* did not understand it' (*Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 159); cf. R. Syrén,  
*The Blessings in the Targums*, 47.

<sup>53</sup> Both GenR 99:8 and Tan *Wayehi* 10 use Mic 7:16 as a proof text.

Messiah, as foretold in Isa 11:10.<sup>54</sup> This alternative interpretation focuses on the active ingathering of the nations at the time of the messianic era when many nations will seek out the 'ensign of the peoples' from Isaiah 11. Thus, two contrasting approaches are presented in GenR 99:8: the subjugation of the nations versus the gathering of the nations.

Overall, rabbinic exegetical approaches to this verse are closely based on the Hebrew text *ולו יקהת עמים* 'and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples'. As to be expected, there are a range of interpretations, but the majority of the traditions discussed refer to some form of subjugation of the nations, whether by the Messiah or Jerusalem or through political or moral victory.

### *The Donkey and the Vine* (Genesis 49:11)

Gen 49:11 on the donkey and the vine gives rise to a variety of rabbinic interpretations from understanding the 'ass's colt' of Gen 49:11 to refer to the Messiah, to treating 'the vine' and 'the choice vine' as motifs for the relationship between God and Israel. Gen 49:11 in the Hebrew Bible states:

אסרי לגפן עירה ולשרקה בני אתנו כבס ביין לבשו ובדם ענבים סותה

*Binding his foal to the vine and his ass's colt to the choice vine; he washes his garment in wine and his robe in the blood of grapes.*

GenR 98:9 sets out a series of interpretations of Gen 49:11a:

אוסרי לגפן עירה רבי יהודה ורבי נחמיה ורבנן, ר' יהודה אמר גפן שכוחה רע אוסרין לה לבדקוס אחד, ולשורקה בני אתונו [...] רבי נחמיה אמר אסרי לגפן עירה מאוסרי לגפן עירה העיר אשר בחרתי בה, ולשורקה בני אתונו בנים האתנים ראויים לעמוד ממנו, ורבנן אמרי אני נאסר לגפן ולשורקה, עירו והאתונו לכשיבא אותו שכתו' בו עני ורוכב על חמור [ועל עיר בן אתנות] [זכריה ט ט] (ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 3, 1259–1260)

*Binding his foal to the vine* (Gen 49:11). R. Yehudah, R. Nehemiah, and the Rabbis expounded it. R. Yehudah said: They bind one ass to a vine that has poor strength, but to a choice vine, 'the colts of his ass' [...]. R. Nehemiah said: *Binding his foal to the vine*: He binds to the vine 'his foal' which is the city that I have chosen. *And his ass's colt to the choice vine*: Mighty sons are predestined to rise from it. The Rabbis said: I am bound to the vine and to the choice vine. 'His foal and his ass' refer to when he will come of whom it is written, *Lowly, and riding upon an ass [and upon a foal, the colt of an ass]* (Zech 9:9).

<sup>54</sup> In GenR 97, Isa 11:10 is used as a proof text for the descent of the royal Messiah from the tribe of Judah.



The first approach to Gen 49:11a in GenR 98:9 is a literal interpretation in the name of R. Yehudah that an under-producing vine only needs one donkey to carry its fruit, whereas a choice vine needs two donkeys. This is based on understanding בני as a plural rather than singular 'colt'.<sup>55</sup>

The second interpretation, cited in the name of R. Nehemiah, focuses on the identification of 'his foal' (עירה), which is bound to the 'vine' (גפן). Allusions to Israel as a vine in the Hebrew Bible would have been brought to mind, for example, Isaiah 5 and Ps 80:9, 15.<sup>56</sup> In the interpretation of R. Nehemiah, God binds 'his foal' (עירה), that is, the chosen city Jerusalem, to the 'vine' (גפן), namely Israel. The identification of 'his foal' and Jerusalem is based on wordplay of 'his foal' (עירה) and 'city' (עיר). The interpretation goes on to say that mighty sons are predicted to arise from Israel. This motif is based on wordplay between 'his ass's colt' (בני אתנו) and 'strong sons' (בנים האתנים), and also the identification of the choice vine with Israel. The 'choice vine' (שרקה) would also have been understood as the people Israel based on biblical associations, such as in Jer 2:21.<sup>57</sup> In this interpretation, the close relationship 'binding' Israel and Jerusalem is in view, which is brought about by God.

In the third interpretation in GenR 98:9, cited in the name of the Rabbis, the identification between Israel and the vine is continued. The passage teaches that it is not Jerusalem but God who is bound to the 'vine' and the 'choice vine', namely Israel, in a reflection of the relationship between the two. The Rabbis of GenR 98:9 then go on to interpret Gen 49:11 in terms of messianic expectation.<sup>58</sup> The line '*binding his foal (. . .) and his colt*' is under-

<sup>55</sup> On the linguistic uncertainty of Gen 49:11, see C. Westermann, *Genesis 37–50*, 219 and 231.

<sup>56</sup> The identification between Israel and the vine is neatly summed up in MidrProv 19, which draws a comparison between the efforts required in gardening a vineyard to bring the resulting wine and the need for leadership in Israel to ensure they are on the right path. The link is further confirmed through use of Isa 5:7 as a proof text: '*For a vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel*'.

<sup>57</sup> This interpretation is paralleled in Tan *Wayehi* 10, but is developed through the inclusion of more proof texts. Interestingly, up to this point, Tan *Wayehi* 10 (edition of Warsaw 1875) has been closely paralleled in GenR 99:8 (MST), but on the interpretation of Gen 49:11a, the tradition in Tan *Wayehi* 10 is closer to GenR 98:9 (MS Vatican 30). In the parallel in Tan *Wayehi* 10, the vine is equated with Israel, based on Ps 80:9 as a proof text, which will be bound to the holy city, again based on wordplay of עירה and עיר. The choice vine is Israel, based on Jer 2:21 as a proof text. The tradition is also developed through the remainder of interpretation of Gen 49:11, which is understood in light of the relationship between Israel and Jerusalem. In particular, the reference to an 'ass's colt' is stated to mean that Judah will build a strong gate (שער האתון) for the city.

<sup>58</sup> See also BT Ber 57a (cf. MidrPss 128:4), which states: 'When in a dream a man sees a choice vine, he may expect the coming of the Messiah, for it is said *Binding his foal to the vine, and his ass's colt to the choice vine* (Gen 49:11)'.

stood to refer to the Messiah, whose coming will demonstrate how God is bound to Israel, and he is acting to bring the fulfilment of the promises to Judah. This is proved based on Zech 9:9, which is a popular proof text in the messianic descriptions under discussion. There is certainly a linguistic link between Zech 9:9 and Genesis 49, which rabbinic exegetes would have connected. The words 'he will come' (יבא) in Gen 49:10, and 'his foal' (עירה) and 'his ass's colt' (בני אתנו) in Gen 49:11, are similar to 'he will come' (יבוא) and 'a foal, the colt of an ass' (עיר בן אתנות) in Zech 9:9. Both verses are also concerned with the future age.<sup>59</sup>

A messianic interpretation is also found in GenR 99:8:

אוסרי לגפן עירה מי שיכניס כל ישראל שנקראו גפן שנאמ' גפן ממצרים תסיע (תהלים פ ט), ולשורקה בני אתונו זה שכתו' בו עני ורוכב על חמור [ועל עיר בן אתנות] (זכריה ט ט), דבר אחר ולשורקה בני אתונו מי שנוטע כל ישראל כשורק שנ' ואנכי נטעתיך שורק (ירמיה ב כא)

(ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 3, 1280)

*Binding his foal to the vine* (עירה לגפן) (Gen 49:11). This refers to the one who will gather all Israel who are called a vine, as it is said, *You plucked a vine* (גפן) *out of Egypt* (Ps 80:9). *And his ass's colt to the choice vine* (ולשורקה) (Gen 49:11). This refers to him of whom it is written, *Lowly, and riding upon an ass, [and upon a foal the colt of an ass]* (עיר בן אתנות) (Zech 9:9). Another interpretation: *And his ass's colt to the choice vine* (ולשורקה). This refers to the one who plants all Israel like a choice vine (שורק), as it is said, *And I have planted you as a choice vine* (שורק) (Jer 2:21).

A clear messianic understanding of Gen 49:11a is found in GenR 99:8, which describes the role and activities of the Messiah. In this tradition, Gen 49:11a is understood to refer to the 'one who will gather all Israel' together, namely, the Messiah. The ingathering of the dispersed of Israel by the Messiah is a major eschatological ideal. Israel is again identified with the 'vine' based on Ps 80:9, which the Messiah or 'the one who will gather' will 'bind' together. The 'ass's colt' is also taken to be a reference to the Messiah, as indicated by Zech 9:9.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Zechariah may represent one of the first interpretations of Genesis 49. As D. Krause notes 'Zechariah transforms the future sense of this ancient clan blessing, with its varied imagery, into a proclamation of Davidic dynastic prominence' ('The One who Comes Unbinding the Blessing of Judah: Mark 11.1–10 as a Midrash on Genesis 49.11, Zechariah 9.9, and Psalm 118.25–26', in: C.A. Evans – J.A. Sanders (eds), *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel*, Sheffield 1997, 149). See also n.129 in this chapter.

<sup>60</sup> The interpretation of Gen 49:11 as the ingathering of Israel by the Messiah is also reflected in Targum Onqelos, which states: יסחר ישראל לקרתיה 'He will lead Israel to his city' (ed. A. Sperber, *The Pentateuch according to Targum Onkelos*, vol. 1, 85). Thus, this refers to the Messiah who leads the dispersed to Jerusalem. This targumic translation is based on understanding a link between the Hebrew 'bind' (אסרי) and 'go round' (סחר) (סחר). Targum Onqelos also describes the rebuilding of the Temple, the presence of the righteous

In an alternative interpretation, GenR 99:8 states that *'his ass's colt to the choice vine'* alludes to him who plants all Israel like a choice vine, based on Jer 2:21. Although God is not explicitly identified, it is likely that he is the subject of the interpretation. Jer 2:21 describes how God 'planted' Israel with a sound and reliable basis, but they became corrupt. GenR 99:8 goes on to ask what God will do about the corruption of Israel, and the answer is in Ezek 36:25: Israel will be washed clean (with water) of their wrongdoing in the eschatological age, which represents fulfilment of the promise to Judah who was a 'choice', or uncorrupted, vine.

Thus, in many of the traditions on Gen 49:11a discussed, an identification of Israel with the vine is found, which emphasizes the unique relationship of Israel to God (GenR 98:9), Jerusalem (GenR 98:9, Tan *Wayehi* 10) and the Messiah (GenR 98:9, 99:8). They are bound together as a donkey is bound to a vine.

#### *Garments washed in Wine*

The next point of discussion focuses on the understanding of the 'wine' in Gen 49:11b: *כבס ביין לבשו ובדם ענבים סותה* 'He washes his garment in wine and his robe in the blood of grapes'. There are a number of exegetical approaches to the 'wine' of Gen 49:11b in rabbinic traditions.

One of the earliest interpretations of the 'wine' is that it is understood to refer to the abundance of wine that will be available for Israel in the messianic age.<sup>61</sup> There will be so much wine in the future age that it will even be used for washing clothes; perhaps not very practical, but a sign of prosperity. The symbol of wine or the vine for the prosperity of the future age is a biblical idea, and is also found in a wide number of rabbinic interpretations, including in halakhic midrashim; it is clearly an early and widely transmitted motif.<sup>62</sup> As an example from the long history of inter-

---

with the Messiah and his study of Torah in association with 'they that carry out the Law'. See B. Grossfeld, *The Targum Onqelos to Genesis*, 158 and 164, and M. Aberbach – B. Grossfeld, *Targum Onqelos on Genesis 49*. Targum Neofiti and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan do not mention the ingathering of Israel, but focus on the rise of the Messiah and his military activities. The targumim on this verse are discussed in the next section on Gen 49:11.

<sup>61</sup> As represented, for example, in GenR 99:8, BT Ket 11b, MidrProv 23 and Tan *Wayehi* 10.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Lev 26:5, Isa 25:6, Joel 2:19, 24, 3:18 and Amos 9:13. Amongst rabbinic traditions, see Sifre Deut 43, Mek *Shirata* 2, GenR 42:3, 51:8 and 70:6, LevR 11:7, 12:5, RuthR Proem 7, EsthR Proem 1, CantR 1:7, BT Ket 11b, MidrPss 73:4 and NumR 13:5. For the use of the vine metaphor in biblical and rabbinic literature, see A. Feldman, *The Parables and Similes of the Rabbis, Agricultural and Pastoral*, Cambridge 1924, 125–149.

pretation, a key rabbinic tradition on eschatological prosperity based on Gen 49:11 is found in BT Ket 111b. This tradition interprets Gen 49:11 to refer to the increase in the productivity of the vine, the properties of the vine and the fruitfulness of barren trees in the future age. It emphasizes the wealth of vines and wine promised to the descendants of Judah in the world-to-come, and the vine is also understood metaphorically to refer to an abundance of children. Thus, in BT Ket 111b, Gen 49:11 is understood in terms of eschatological prosperity, and this is a time that will be brought about by the Messiah.

The motif of 'wine' is also developed with reference to the Messiah, which is an early interpretation as indicated by the targumic literature. Tg Onqelos Gen 49:11 understands this entire verse in terms of the eschatological activities of the Messiah. In particular, the Messiah will lead Israel around Jerusalem, and, under his direction, the people will rebuild the Temple. Furthermore, he will be surrounded by the righteous and those responsible for the Law with whom he will study. The 'wine' of Gen 49:11b is understood to refer to the colour of the Messiah's 'robe'; his clothing is described as kingly and in the purple of royalty. This represents the portrayal of a royal Messiah who will not only take ownership of the city of Jerusalem, but also engage in more peaceful activities such as rebuilding the Temple and study of the Torah.<sup>63</sup>

In another exegetical approach, Tg Neofiti Gen 49:11, which is paralleled by Targum Pseudo-Jonathan,<sup>64</sup> gives a messianic understanding to the verse, but describes the Messiah as a warrior, emphasizing his Davidic ancestry:

מה יאי הוא מלכא משיחא דעתיד למיקם מן מדבית יהודה אסר חרציה ונפך לקרבא על שנאווי ומקטל מלכין עם שלטונין מסמק טורייא מדם קטיליהון ומחורין גלמתא מתרבי גובריהון לבושווי מעגעגין בדמא מדמי ל[ר]פוס ענבים  
(ed. A. Diez Macho, *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis*, 384)

How noble is the King Messiah who will rise up from the house of Judah. He binds his loins and goes out to wage war against those who hate him. He

<sup>63</sup> Tg Onqelos Gen 49:11 reads: סחור ישראל לקרתיה עמא יבנון היכליה יהון צדיקיא סחור וכסותיה מילא צבא זהורי סחור ליה ועבדי אוריתא באולפן עמיה יהי ארגון טב לבושיה וכסותיה מילא צבא זהורי וצבענין (ed. A. Sperber, *The Pentateuch according to Targum Onkelos*, vol. 1, 85). See B. Grossfeld, *The Targum Onkelos to Genesis*, 158 and 164.

<sup>64</sup> Tg PsJon Gen 49:11 also describes a warrior Messiah, who fights against his enemies and no one can defeat him. He is covered in the blood of the slain: מה יאי מלכא משיחא דעתיד למקום מדבית יהודה אסר חרציו ונחית ומסדר סדרי קרבא עם בעלי דבבו ומקטל מלכין עם שולטניהון ולית מליך ושולטן דיקום קדמוי מסמק טורייא מן אדם קטיליהון לבושווי מעגעגין בדמא מדמי לעצור דעינבין (ed. A. Diez Macho, *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia Series IV, vol. 1, Genesis*, 385).

kills kings with rulers, reddens mountains from the blood of their slain and whitens hills from the fat of their warriors. His garments are rolled in blood. He is like a treader of grapes.

In Tg Neofiti Gen 49:11, the 'wine' is understood to be the blood of the Messiah's enemies, which covers his 'garment'. He will kill the 'kings' and 'rulers' of the nations who are his and, therefore, Israel's enemies and the slaughter will be so great that mountains will look red with blood. The extent of the killing leads to the simile that the Messiah will look like a person who is red from treading grapes.<sup>65</sup> This imagery is similar to that found in Isa 63:1–3, and in Targum Neofiti the emphasis is on the ultimate political and military victory of Israel led by the Messiah, which is expressed with explicit reference to the defeat and slaughter of 'those who hate him'.<sup>66</sup>

The messianic approach to Gen 49:11 is also found in GenR 98:9, where 'washes garments in wine' is understood to refer to the Messiah, who will teach Torah and correct previous misunderstandings.<sup>67</sup> A dispute is introduced by R. Hanin, however, who declares that Israel will not require the teaching of the Messiah. Rather, it is his role to bring teaching to the nations, based on Isa 11:10, which describes the activities of the 'branch of Jesse'. Instead, R. Hanin claims that the purpose of the Messiah with respect to Israel is to assemble the exiles. The teaching of the Gentiles is further proven through Zech 11:12, which alludes to the 'thirty' precepts that the Gentiles will be taught.<sup>68</sup> This dispute may allude to the controversial topic of whether there will be a new Torah in the messianic age.<sup>69</sup> Thus, in GenR 98:9, there is a connection between the 'wine' of Gen 49:11 and the activities of the Messiah with respect to the Torah.

<sup>65</sup> M. Aberbach – B. Grossfeld, *Targum Onqelos on Genesis 49*, 299.

<sup>66</sup> R. Syrén, however, argues that the Torah teacher and builder of the Temple would have been the more sympathetic portrayal of the Messiah for rabbinic exegetes (*The Blessings in the Targums*). On Isa 63:1–3 in selected rabbinic traditions, see H. Spurling 'Biblical Symbols through Jewish Apocalyptic Imagery', 271–299.

<sup>67</sup> GenR 98:9 also contains a literal interpretation of this verse that Judah will wash his garments in wine, which is no doubt a further indication of prosperity.

<sup>68</sup> The dispute continues with an outline of the views of different rabbis on this issue.

<sup>69</sup> For discussion on a 'new' Torah in the future age, see W.D. Davies, *Torah in the Messianic Age and / or the Age to Come*, and P. Schäfer, 'Die Torah der messianischen Zeit', in: idem, *Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie des rabbinischen Judentums*, 198–213.

Another exegetical approach focuses on a connection between the Law and 'wine', as is found in GenR 99:8, which is closely paralleled in Tan *Wayehi* 10:<sup>70</sup>

כבס ביין לבושו שהיין הרבה בגבולו, ובדם ענבים סותה אין סותה אלא טעות כדכתיב כי יסיתך אחיך וגומ' (דברים יג ז), אם יטעו בהלכה, תהא מתכבסת בתחומו: (ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 3, 1280)

*He washes his garment in wine* (Gen 49:11). This means that wine will be plentiful within his border. *And his robe (סותה) in the blood of grapes* (Gen 49:11). The word 'his robe' (סותה) can only mean 'error', as it is written, *If your brother entices you (יסיתך)*, etc. (Deut 13:7). Thus, if they err with respect to the halakhah, it will be washed in his territory.

GenR 99:8 offers an understanding of the 'robe' of Judah washed in the blood of grapes as meaning error with respect to the Law. This is based on wordplay of 'his robe' (סותה) and 'he entices you' (יסיתך) in Deut 13:7, which describes the temptation of idolatry, thus specifying a particular transgression of the Law. Therefore, Gen 49:11 is understood to mean that when Judah errs with respect to the Law, it will be washed, or rectified, in his territory. This implies that authority with respect to the Law comes from the tribe of Judah.<sup>71</sup>

Thus, the different exegetical approaches to the 'wine' of Gen 49:11 primarily focus on an eschatological interpretation, whether of the bounty of the future age, the role of the Messiah with respect to Torah, or the military activities of the Messiah. These traditions present well known and distinctive rabbinic expectations of the activities of the Davidic Messiah and the age that he will bring.

#### *The 'Wine' and 'Milk'* (Genesis 49:12)

The final verse of the blessing on Judah again refers to 'wine' but also 'milk', which become two important motifs for interpretation in rabbinic exegesis of Gen 49:12:

חכלילי עינים מיין ולבן שנים מחלב

*His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.*

<sup>70</sup> Cf. BT Hul 92a on the various symbolic uses of vine imagery, including as a reference to the world, Jerusalem, Torah and Israel.

<sup>71</sup> H. Freedman states that the agent of the 'washing' is the Great Sanhedrin in Jerusalem (*Midrash Rabbah: Genesis*, 983); cf. traditions on the Davidic and thus Judahite descent of the rabbinic leadership examined above.

The targumic interpretations of Gen 49:12 describe how wine will be abundant in the territory of Judah, and expand at length on the prosperity of the Messiah in the world-to-come.<sup>72</sup> In particular, Tg Onqelos Gen 49:12 describes the abundance of wine in the future age and how valleys shall be white with grain and flocks of sheep. Tg Neofiti Gen 49:12, closely paralleled in Tg PsJon Gen 49:12, relates the wine and milk to features of the Messiah; his red eyes and white teeth are a symbol of his moral purity and he shuns adultery, murder and robbery.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, the mountains will be red from the abundance of wine, and the hills will be white from all the grain and sheep in the messianic era.

Another exegetical approach to this verse understands the 'wine' and 'milk' of Gen 49:12 in connection with the Torah. This approach is exemplified by GenR 98:10, which interprets 'eyes red with wine' and 'teeth white with milk' to refer to the teachings of the Sanhedrin:

חכלילי עינים [מיין וגו'] רבי עזריה ורבי יונתן בן חגי ורבי יצחק ב"ר מריון ואמרין לה בשם רבי יוסי בר חנינה רובן של סנהדרין משל יהודה היו, ומה טעמיה חכלילי עינים מיין וגו' שהן יושבים וסודרים דברי תורה בשינים עד שהן מוציאים אותן נקיים כחלב, ד"א חכלילי עינים מיין אלו בני דרום שעניניהם כחולות וכחם יפה לתלמוד תורה (ed. J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, vol. 3, 1261)

*His eyes shall be red* [with wine, etc.] (Gen 49:12). R. 'Azariah, R. Yonatan b. Haggai, and R. Isaac b. R. Merion discussed it. Others say it in the name of R. Yose b. Haninah: The majority of the Sanhedrin were from Judah. What is the proof? *His eyes shall be red with wine*, etc. Because they sit and systematize words of Torah with (their) teeth until they bring them out pure as milk. Another interpretation: *His eyes shall be red with wine*. These are the sons of the south, whose eyes are painted and their strength for study of Torah is strong.

In this tradition, the Sanhedrin is proven to be descended from Judah based on Gen 49:12.<sup>74</sup> This ancestry is confirmed because they discuss the words of Torah until they come out as pure milk, or correct and free from impurity. This implies that the Sanhedrin represents the fulfilment of the

<sup>72</sup> Eschatological prosperity is also found in BT Ket 111b; cf. MidrProv 23. See the discussion on Gen 49:11 above.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. PR 33:13, which teaches that Israel will be comforted with praise of the teeth, based on Gen 49:12.

<sup>74</sup> H. Freedman notes that 'eyes' is understood to allude metaphorically to the Sanhedrin, who are the eyes of the community (cf. CantR 11:5), and 'wine' to the Torah. He thus interprets the exegesis: From the descendants of Judah shall be composed the Sanhedrin, whose members will be filled with learning ('red with wine') which they will debate so much that it becomes as clear (free from impurity and doubt) as milk (*Midrash Rabbah: Genesis*, 958).

blessing on Judah, as shown through their exposition of Torah, which is reflected in the line ‘teeth white with milk’.<sup>75</sup> In an alternative interpretation, but with continued reference to the Torah, GenR 98:10 states that ‘red with wine’ refers to Judeans who have a great insight into the Torah. Thus, in both interpretations a link is made between Gen 49:12 and the Torah, and the descendants of Judah who are proficient in interpreting it. This further legitimates the authority of the Sanhedrin, or rabbinic leadership, to provide teachings to the Jewish people.

GenR 99:8, paralleled in Tan *Wayehi* 10, also connects ‘milk’ with Torah, and builds on the association of wine and Torah in Gen 49:11. GenR 99:8 begins with the interpretation of ‘eyes red with wine’, and teaches that wine will be abundant in the territory of Judah. GenR 99:8 continues with interpretation of ‘teeth white with milk’ to refer to the Torah: ולבן שנים ילבינו ‘*And teeth white* (מחלב בזכות התורה, אם יהיו הטאיכם כשנים כשלג ילבינו) *with milk* (Gen 49:12): for the sake of the Torah, *Should your sins be as scarlet, they shall become white* (ילבינו) *as snow* (Isa 1:18)’. The proof text is Isa 1:18, which, through wordplay, connects the white (לבן) teeth of Gen 49:12 with scarlet sins made white (ילבינו) as snow on account of study of the Torah. Thus, the interpretation emphasizes the salvific power of Torah study for redemption from sin.<sup>76</sup>

In the traditions discussed here, rabbinic exegetes have used the motifs of ‘wine’ and ‘milk’ to argue for a variety of exegetical positions. The wine and milk are seen as symbols of the prosperity of the messianic age (Tg Onqelos and Neofiti Gen 49:12). Furthermore, these motifs are used to establish views on the role of the Law. The continuing importance of the Torah and study of it by the people is emphasized (GenR 99:8), with the Sanhedrin as the way to secure a proper understanding of that Law (GenR 98:10). These traditions are frequently found in connection with a messianic and eschatological interpretation of Gen 49:8–12, as described above, which highlights the importance of Torah study and rabbinic authority during the messianic era.

<sup>75</sup> The connection between milk and Torah is found in rabbinic traditions such as RuthR 2:2 and SEZ 195.

<sup>76</sup> J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck (ed.), *Midrash Bereshit Rabbah*, vol. 3, 1281. Although clearly parallel traditions, the version in Tan *Wayehi* 10 has small differences from GenR 99:8. Tan *Wayehi* 10 equates wine with the Torah, based on Cant 1:2 and 2:4, and further claims that Judah devoted himself to the study of Torah. The interpretation of Gen 49:12 as referring to the Torah and its teachings is continued in exegesis of the remainder of the verse. In Tan *Wayehi* 10, ‘his teeth white with milk’ is understood to mean that sins will be made white as snow through Torah study.



*The Christian Tradition*

Undoubtedly, chapter 49 of the book of Genesis presents one of the most popular and influential episodes in Christian exegetical literature.<sup>77</sup> Significantly, Hippolytus of Rome, as early as the late second century, penned an entire book dedicated to this particular biblical chapter.<sup>78</sup> The Church Fathers saw in Genesis 49 not a 'blessing', as the text of Scripture declared, but a prophecy. Jacob is envisaged as gifted with prophetic insight when he announced the fate of each of his twelve sons (see Origen, Ep. to Africanus 10, John Chrysostom. Hom.Gen. 67.4–5). The prophetic understanding of this chapter is crucial for the christological interpretation of the passage. Genesis 49, and especially Jacob's blessing on Judah, became one of the prominent *testimonia* texts in the Old Testament for Christian writers, and its significance for the Christian understanding and interpretation of Scripture has been enormous. The general patristic approach is summarized by John Chrysostom in a paradigmatic way as follows: 'The blessing conferred on Judah is somewhat mystical, foretelling to us the whole story of Christ (...) under the prior understanding of the Holy Spirit he predicts through the words spoken to Judah the Lord's descent to humankind but also the mystery, the cross, the burial, the resurrection and the whole reality in general' (Hom.Gen. 67.8).

*Gen 49:8: 'Judah your brothers will praise you'*

LXX Gen 49:8: Ἰουδα, σὲ αἰνέσαισαν οἱ ἀδελφοί σου· αἱ χεῖρές σου ἐπὶ νότου τῶν ἐχθρῶν σου· προσκυνήσουσίν σοι οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ πατρὸς σου.

*Ioudas, may your brothers praise you; your hands be on the back of your enemies; your father's sons shall do obeisance for you [NETS].*

The opening verses of the blessing refer to Judah's relationship to his brothers and to his 'enemies'. The LXX stresses that his brothers will praise Judah. The rendering that Judah's hands will be 'on the back of his enemies' conveys an image of victory over fleeing enemies. Finally, the sons of his father will prostrate themselves in front of him, thus recognizing his superiority.

<sup>77</sup> See M. Tabet, 'L'Esegesi Greca nei Commenti dei primi scrittori di lingua latina alla benedizione di Giacobbe à Giuda (Gen 49,8–12)', in: *L'Esegesi dei Patri Latini*, Roma 2000; M. Simonetti, 'Jalons pour l'interprétation patristique du chapitre 49 de la Genèse', *SChr* 140 (1968), 11–24.

<sup>78</sup> Moreover, Hippolytus presented his exposition on Judah's blessing in an abridged form in his work, *De Christo et Antichristo*.

In a strongly christological frame of reference, Hippolytus of Rome in the late second century understands the 'praising brothers' as the apostles, who Jesus called 'his brothers' (Matt 12:50; John 20:17; Rom 8:17). Furthermore, the phrase 'your hands are on the back of your enemies' symbolizes Jesus stretching out his hands on the cross, while fighting against his enemies according to the flesh and finally overcoming them triumphantly (Bened. XVI).

Following the same line of interpretation, Eusebius of Caesarea explains that this verse means that 'He has received the trophies of victory over his enemies'. Similarly, the phrase 'your father's sons shall do obeisance for you' refers to all the angels of heaven and the ministering spirits and the divine powers, as well as the apostles and the evangelists, who worship Jesus Christ as God the Word (Dem.Ev. VIII.377).

The interpretation of this verse as Jesus' victory over his adversaries is widespread in patristic exegesis (cf. Cyril of Alexandria, *Glaphyra* VII; PG 69:372). The christological approach to this verse uses a series of quotations from the Psalms and the Prophets to demonstrate that Gen 49:8 refers to Jesus. Accordingly, verses such as LXX Ps 17:38–39, LXX Ps 109:1 or Isa 1:2 are used to describe the perturbing relationship between Jesus and his persecutors or his unfaithful 'brothers' (i.e. the Jews), as manifested in Jacob's prophecy. The prophesied victory reveals the ultimate endorsement of Jesus by all people (see Cat. Petit 2152[anon.]).

Following an alternative line of interpretation, Cyril of Alexandria understands the 'sons of your father' as a reference to Jesus' half-brothers from Joseph's first marriage (*Glaphyra*, PG 69:349). A further stream of thought suggests that the verse should be understood literally. For example, Genadius of Constantinople simply relates the verse to Judah, who will rule over relatives and foreigners and will be praised by all people (*Fragments*, PG 85:1659). In a similarly literal exegetical context, Eusebius of Caesarea suggests that Judah was singled out by Jacob in his blessings, because he had a better character compared to his brothers. However, later in the same text, Eusebius challenges the biblical statement that Judah's brothers praised him, posing the rhetorical question: 'for what great deed of his could they have done so?' (Dem.Ev. VIII.369). Here Eusebius possibly confronts exegetical approaches which claimed that Judah deserved praise on account of certain good deeds that he had accomplished.<sup>79</sup>

---

<sup>79</sup> Exegetical approaches such as those of Ephraem the Syrian, which are discussed below, could be in view here. However, it is difficult to prove that Eusebius addresses specific exegetical traditions, because he does not provide any further information.

Jerome links the praise of Judah to the etymology of his name, which, as he explains, means ‘praise’ or ‘hymn’ (Hebr. Quest. 49:8–9). This etymological explanation is closely paralleled by Cyril of Alexandria, who translates the name into Greek as ‘αἶνον, ὕμνησιν ἢ ὑμνοῦμενον’ (Glaphyra PG 69:349).<sup>80</sup> Jerome also reports the tradition that ‘kings out of Judah should be begotten through David’s stock and that all tribes should pay homage to him’ (Hebr. Quest. 49:8–9). Accordingly, the praise is connected to the royal future of Judah’s tribe (cf. Eusebius, Dem. Ev. VIII.37off.).

In the context of a literal historical interpretation, one of the major exegetes of the Antiochene School maintains that the first verse of the blessing refers to Judah’s tribe. Accordingly, it was a prophecy about the prominent position of this tribe, which was predestined to rule over the tribes of the ‘brothers’ in the future (see Diodore of Tarsus, Cat. Csl 299). Similarly, Theodoret of Cyrhus elucidates that the verse does not address Judah himself, but Judah’s tribe, which was a royal, most powerful and most numerous tribe (Quaest. CXII cf. 2Sam 24:1f.; 2Sam 24:9).

The Peshitta text is slightly different to the text of the LXX. The Syriac text mentions that Judah’s hand will be on the ‘neck’ instead of the ‘back’ of the enemies, which emphasizes an image of the subordination of those enemies:

ܘܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܝܘܕܐ ܐܝܘܒ ܕܝܘܕܐ ܘܕܟܢܝܢܐ ܕܝܘܕܐ ܘܕܠܝܘܒܐ ܕܝܘܕܐ  
ܘܕܠܝܘܒܐ ܕܝܘܕܐ

*Judah your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father’s sons shall bow down before you.*

Ephraem the Syrian first understands this verse in light of Judah’s own actions in biblical history. Secondly, he expands upon the historical meaning of this verse, and relates it to the victorious career of Judah’s royal tribe through the person of King David (Comm. Gen. XLII.5). According to Ephraem, Judah will be praised by his brothers because he saved Joseph’s life (Gen 37:26–27). Judah thus ensured the survival of all the tribes, that is, the tribes that would descend from Joseph’s own sons as well as the tribes of his brothers, who took refuge with Joseph in Egypt and were

<sup>80</sup> Cyril of Alexandria occasionally uses references to the Hebrew language in his writings. However, he did not have any knowledge of Hebrew, so he must have derived his information from other sources, even hearsay. However, there is evidence that he was familiar with and consulted Jerome’s works, most likely in Greek translation; see H. Kerrigan, *St. Cyril of Alexandria. Interpreter of the Old Testament*, Rome 1952, 254–267; cf. R.L. Wilken, *Judaism and the Early Christian Mind*. The same etymological approach is attested in Procopius, Comm. Gen. (PG 87:497f.); cf. Cat. Petit 2150.

saved from famine (Gen 41:53ff.; cf. Ishodad of Merv, Comm.Gen. ad Gen 49:8).

Furthermore, according to Ephraem, the phrase 'your hands shall be on the neck of your enemies' refers to David's victorious kingdom, which extended to all nations from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates, and which was descended from Judah. The military subordination of enemies reflects Ephraem's scriptural basis. Accordingly, the blessing is transferred to a royal descendant of Judah. Notably, both in the Syriac and the Antiochene exegetical traditions, this verse is primarily understood in relation to Judah and his tribe. However, the importance of the Davidic lineage for the christological interpretation looms behind Ephraem's exegetical approach to Gen 49:8.

Summarizing, the striking christological interpretation of this first verse of Jacob's blessing on Judah is found in parallel to a literal understanding. There is a general agreement that this verse explains the future of Judah's tribe, or, alternatively, Jesus' future relationship with 'brothers' and 'enemies'. Indeed, a prominent stream of patristic exegesis interprets the verse in the context of Jesus' victory over his enemies.

#### *Gen 49:9: 'Judah is a Lion's Whelp'*

LXX Gen 49:9 σκύμνος λέοντος Ιουδα· ἐκ βλαστοῦ, υἱέ μου, ἀνέβης· ἀναπεσῶν ἐκοιμήθης ὡς λέων καὶ ὡς σκύμνος· τίς ἐγερεῖ αὐτόν

*A lion's whelp you are, Ioudas; from a shoot, my son, you went up. When you reclined, you slept like a lion and like a whelp. Who will rouse him?* [NETS]

The LXX translation of Gen 49:9 calls Judah 'a lion's whelp', which rose from a tender shoot (or a sprout; βλαστός).<sup>81</sup> As a lion and a whelp, he falls asleep. The text then asks: 'who will wake him up'.

The enigmatic formulation of this verse stimulated various exegetical approaches. According to Hippolytus, this verse applies to Jesus, who is compared to a lion due to his Davidic ancestry. Thus, Jesus was regarded

<sup>81</sup> See R. Sollamo: 'The Greek *blastos* renders the Hebrew *tereph*, which depending on the vocalization can mean either 'prey' or a 'fresh shot'. The latter meaning occurs in Gen 8,11 (LXX: *fyllon*) and so the translators interpretation is not very surprising' ('Messianism and the 'Branch of David', in: M.A. Knibb (ed.), *The Septuagint and Messianism*, Louvain 2006, 370, n.39). As M. Harl notes, 'the word 'blastos' in Greek reminds of 'rabbos' which will derive from Jesse's root (Is. 11,1) and provide the Christian writers with a messianic promise' (*La Genèse*, 308). See also P. Pringent, 'Quelques testimonia messianiques: leur histoire littéraire d Qoumran aux Pères de l'Église', *ThZ* 15 (1959), 419–430.

as a member of the tribe of Judah, whose symbol was the lion.<sup>82</sup> Hippolytus elucidates that Jesus is the 'lion's whelp', because he sprang from Judah and David, according to the flesh. However, he was conceived by the Holy Ghost and came forth from the 'holy shoot of earth', thus fulfilling the prophecy of Isa 11:1 (De Christo 7–14). The prophecy of Isaiah predicts the advent of a righteous Messiah, who will come forth out of the 'root of Jesse' (ῥάβδος ἐκ τῆς ρίζης Ἰεσσαί).<sup>83</sup>

A major stream of patristic tradition maintains that the rod coming forth out of Jesse was Mary, the mother of Jesus. Mary is associated with the 'root of Jesse' due to her ancestry from the 'house of David'.<sup>84</sup> The Church Fathers argue that Mary is Judah's 'tender shoot' on account of the undefiled nature of the Virgin Mary. This view is supported by prophetic writings, such as LXX Isa 7:14 (cf. Isa 53:2), in which the birth of the Messiah is foretold, who will be borne by a virgin.<sup>85</sup> Consequently, the 'blossom from this root' was Jesus, whose immaculate conception was implied in Jacob's blessing on Judah.<sup>86</sup>

The 'lion's whelp' refers to Jesus' generation, not only according to the flesh, but also according to the spirit. Hippolytus of Rome suggests that the reference to 'lion' and 'lion's whelp' indicates the two persons of the

<sup>82</sup> The lion was a popular symbol for Judah's king David and the Messiah at the time, which is based on Gen 49:9; cf. Rev 5:5; 4 Ezra 11:37; 12:31.

<sup>83</sup> Isaiah's prophecy was a common and important proof text in Christian literature, see Jerome, Comm.Is. 4.11–13; Ephraem, Hymn.Nat. 3.17; Eusebius of Caesarea Dem II.70; VII.90–91. As M. Albl remarks, Isa 11:1, along with Gen 49:9–12, Num 24:17 and 2 Sam 7:10–14 as 'royal messianic texts were applied to Jesus by his earliest followers and were key in the earliest Christological beliefs' (*And Scripture Cannot Be Broken*, 58); cf. D. Juel, *Messianic Exegesis: Christological Interpretation of the Old Testament in Early Christianity*, Philadelphia 1987. Furthermore, they were often quoted together in a conflated form. Significantly, the book of Revelation uses these proof texts as titles for Jesus without further elucidation, as in Rev 5:5: 'see the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David'. On the Davidic ancestry of Jesus, see further Eusebius, Dem VIII.112.145; Cat. Petit 2153.

<sup>84</sup> Jesus' descent from the tribe of Judah was established in the NT (Matt 1:2–3; Luke 3:33; Heb 7:14; 2 Tim 2:8) and referred to the messianic title 'Son of David'; cf. PsSol 17:21–23; Isa 11:10 (sprout of Jesse); Jer 23:5; 33:15; Zech 3:8; 6:15; see G. Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. VIII, 485ff.; cf. L. Novaković, *Messiah: The Healer of the Sick: a Study of Jesus as the Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew*, Tübingen 2003, 11ff. The tradition that Jesus derives his human existence from Jesse and David through his mother, Mary, was very widespread in patristic literature; see Jerome, Comm.Is. 4.11.1–3; Ephraem, Hymn.Nat. 3.17; Comm.Tatian's Diatessaron 26; Aphrahat, Dem. IV.6.

<sup>85</sup> John Chrysostom, Against Marcionites 2–3; cf. Cyril of Alexandria, Glaphyra, PG 69:353; Cat. Petit 1260.

<sup>86</sup> In this exegetical context, the interpretation that Jesus was like a vineyard is encountered, as he was born without semen; see Cat. Petit 2157; cf. Severus of Antioch, Hom.cath. LXIII, PO VIII, 297.

Trinity, namely, the Father (as the lion) and the Son (as the lion's whelp; Bened. XVI). In addition, Hippolytus stresses that the symbolism of the lion related to Jesus' kingly nature as God's son (cf. Theodoret, *Quaest. CXII.2*).

The association of the word 'βλαστός' (shoot) with the word 'ῥάβδος' (rod/staff) implied further messianic connotations for the patristic tradition. The christological exegetical approach linked the word 'shoot' (βλαστός) in Gen 49:9 to various other scriptural references to a 'rod' or a 'sceptre' (ῥάβδος), such as the 'rod of power, the one out of Sion' (LXX Ps 109:2), the 'sceptre of kingdom and righteousness' (LXX Ps 44:7), the 'comforting rod and staff' (LXX Ps 22:4) and finally, the 'blossoming rod of Aaron, the place of which is in the Holy Tent and in the Holy of Holies' (LXX Num 17:23,25). Patristic exegesis maintains that Jacob used this particular word in order to manifest the final salvation economy.<sup>87</sup>

Jacob's further reference to the 'stooping and sleeping of the lion and whelp' is associated with Jesus, who 'slept' during the three days of his burial. Furthermore, it is a symbol of his resurrection. The exegetical approach that understood the image of the sleeping lion as a metaphor for Jesus' death and resurrection was prominent in patristic literature.<sup>88</sup> Against this exegetical background, Hippolytus of Rome links Gen 49:9 to Isa 1:21 (which describes righteousness as 'couching in Zion') and Ps 3:5 (LXX Ps 3:6, which proclaims: 'I laid down and slept; I awaked for the Lord will help me'). In another approach, the question of 'who shall rouse him up' indicates that Jesus will rise from the dead, as in Gal 1:1, because it is only God the Father who can wake the Son from the dead. In addition, the question 'who will raise him' refers to Jesus' ineffable power, for he raised himself in fulfilment of his own prophecy (cf. John 2:19; Theodoret, *Quaest. CXIII.2*).

Origen regards the lion's cub that rises from sleep to be a title of Christ the Saviour (*Comm. Rom. VII, PG 14:1156 B*). Eusebius of Caesarea suggests that the reference to the sleep of the lion points to Christ's death, since Scripture often calls 'death' a 'sleep'.<sup>89</sup> Eusebius emphasizes that it was necessary for the mysteries of Jesus' birth and death to be mentioned

<sup>87</sup> See Cyril of Alex., *Glaphyra* PG 69:353; cf. *Cat. Petit* 2156.

<sup>88</sup> Hippolytus, *Bened. 16* and *De Christo*; *Cat. Petit* 2158; cf. Severus of Antioch, *Hom. Cath. XCI, PO XXII, 260*; John Chrysostom, *Against Marcionites 3*; Cyril of Alexandria, *Glaphyra* (PG 69:353).

<sup>89</sup> The same exegetical approach can be found in Cyril of Alexandria, who adds that it was more like sleep, and not death as the ones who crucified him thought (*Glaphyra, PG 69:353*).

in this particular prophecy, which describes Jesus' advent. Moreover, he argues that the versions of the text, as rendered by Aquila and Symmachus respectively, demonstrate even more clearly Jesus' violent death and resurrection (Dem VIII.378). Aquila translates: 'Judah is a lion's cub from destruction, my son, hast thou ascended, bending thou hast laid down'. While Symmachus reads: 'Judah is a lion's whelp, from capture, my son, hast thou ascended, having knelt down thou hast been established' (trans. Field, 70).<sup>90</sup>

The lion was also viewed as a metaphor for the royal line and kingly nature of Jesus. Christ is a lion, according to Cyril of Jerusalem, due to his 'kingly, strong and resolute nature'. This is even more the case because Christ as 'the mighty lion from the tribe of Judah' trampled upon the adversary, who is the lion who 'roars and devours those who have been deceived' (Cat.Hom. 10.3). The lion metaphor applies to Jesus also on account of the awesome appearance and fearsome nature of the animal, which is paralleled to that of Christ on the Cross, mainly on account of the formidable miracles that took place at the time of his death (Cat.Petit 2165 [anon.]; cf. Matt 27:51; 27:19).<sup>91</sup>

Following an alternative textual basis, Jerome quotes the Hebrew version of the passage, which he translates as follows: 'from the captivity, my son, you have gone up'. Jerome suggests that the interpretation of the verse is: 'He is to lead the people captive and (in accordance with a more holy understanding) that he has gone up on high and has led captivity captive' (cf. Ps 68:19). Apparently, Jerome has in view an exegetical tradition that alludes to the Babylonian captivity of the Jewish people. However, he accentuates the christological meaning of the verse against the background of Ps 68:19 (LXX Ps 67:19), which was already established as a proof text in Eph 4:8 with regard to Jesus' resurrection and ascension.<sup>92</sup> Concluding, Jerome stresses that his preferred interpretation is that the captivity refers to the Passion, and the rise to the Resurrection (Hebr. Quest. Gen 49:8–9).<sup>93</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Aquila: 'σκύλαξ λέοντος Ἰούδα, ἀπὸ ἀλώσεως, υἱέ μου, ἀνέβη: κάμψας κατεκλίθη'. Symmachus: 'σκούμνος λέοντος Ἰούδα, ἐκ θηριαλώσεως, υἱέ μου, ἀνέβη: ὀκλάσας ἠδράσθη'; see Field, Hexapla, 70.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Cat.Petit 2166 anon.; Cat.Petit 2167 anon.; Cyril of Jerusalem, Cat.Hom. 21.17.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Jerome, Epistle to the Ephesians 2.4.8 (PL 26. 498 [612]); cf. also Origen, Comm. John VI.56 [292] and the discussion below; cf. M. Albl, *And Scripture Cannot Be Broken*, 33.

<sup>93</sup> C.T.R. Hayward remarks that Jerome, like Aquila, understands the Hebrew word קָרַח in the sense of 'a taking', which enabled him to connect Gen 49:9 with Ps 68:19 (*Hebrew Questions*, 238); cf. F. Field, who notes certain LXX mss have: ἀπὸ ἀρπαγῆς (from seizure;





the kings were to stand up'.<sup>94</sup> Loyally following the Antiochene exegetical approach, Eusebius maintains that this verse applies solely to the history of the Judahite royal tribe, and dismisses the Syriac translation as misleading. Moreover, Eusebius implies that a christological presupposition may have influenced—if not manipulated—this particular Syriac rendering.

Nevertheless, Eusebius' remarks summarize the main Christian exegetical approaches to this verse, which were defined either by a literal or by a christological frame of reference. Accordingly, Gen 49:9 was viewed on the one side as an illustration of the fate and history of Judah personally, or of his tribe, and on the other side as a clear prophecy about Jesus, 'the lion's whelp', a descendant of David, his death and his resurrection.

*Gen 49:10: 'A ruler will not fail'*

LXX Gen 49:10 οὐκ ἐκλείψει ἄρχων ἐξ Ἰουδα καὶ ἡγούμενος ἐκ τῶν μηρῶν αὐτοῦ, ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ τὰ ἀποκείμενα αὐτῷ, καὶ αὐτὸς προσδοκία ἐθνῶν.

*A ruler shall not be wanting from Ioudas and a leader from his thighs until the things stored up for him come, and he is the expectation of the nations [NETS]*

The LXX translation of Gen 49:10 differs substantially from the MT. The LXX refers to a ruler and a leader from Judah, whereas the MT has a 'sceptre' and a 'ruler's staff' respectively. Accordingly, the LXX explicitly personifies the symbols of power found in the MT. Most notably, the LXX translated the enigmatic Hebrew שִׁלֹה 'Shiloh' as a construction, שְׁלוֹ 'shelo' (to/of him). However, the verse remained polysemantic. In addition, it was transmitted in numerous variants in Greek *testimonia* collections. The LXX translation possibly reflected contemporary exegesis of this verse.<sup>95</sup> A final textual variation is to be found in the third part of the verse, in which the MT's 'obedience of the nations' is rendered as the 'expectation of the nations'.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Ed. Hovhannessian, 92, 242–250; trans. B. ter Haar Romeny, *A Syrian in Greek Dress*, 437.

<sup>95</sup> M. Rösel notes that: 'Die griechische Version bezeugt demnach die Erwartung, dass die Herrschaft eines Führers aus der Nachkommenschaft Judas dann beendet sein wird, wenn ein Ereignis eintritt, das für einen solchen Herrscher aufbewahrt ist, zu ihm gehört' ('Die Interpretation von Genesis 49 in der Septuaginta', 63); cf. Z. Frankel, *Über den Einfluß*, 48f. However, R. Sollamo argues that the LXX is based on a different Hebrew Vorlage to MT Gen 49:10, and, consequently, the variant reading should not be attributed to the translator(s) ('Messianism and the 'Branch of David'', 369).

<sup>96</sup> Significantly, the LXX understands the root of the word יקרה to be קוה, which means 'wait for' or 'hope'. Aquila interprets the Hebrew word יקרה as 'σύστημα', following an alternative meaning of the root with the significance of 'gathering' (of people).

Gen 49:10 was an early proof text that foretold the emergence of the Christian Church as a Church of the Gentiles. Christian exegetes argued that this verse, along with the following verses of the same passage, verified Christian faith as a faith that would address all nations, but which, at the same time, bore the divine blessing bestowed on the biblical patriarchs. Accordingly, Gen 49:10 was a clear prophecy about Jesus.

A detailed illustration of this exegetical approach can already be found in early Christian writings. At the beginning of the second century CE, Ignatius of Antioch, in his Epistle to the Philadelphians IX, states that Gen 49:10 was fulfilled in the message of the Gospels, namely, in the mission to the Gentiles (Matt 28:19).<sup>97</sup> Thus, already in the early second century, Gen 49:10 is interpreted as a fully developed christological prophecy.

Justin Martyr, in the mid-second century CE, develops his argumentation in the context of a strong anti-Jewish sentiment. He accuses the Jewish people of distorting Scripture, and specifically Gen 49:10, in order to deny Jesus and to refute the obvious fulfilment of the biblical prophecy. The proof of the veracity of his christological argument appears to have been particularly urgent for Justin in this context. Justin Martyr argues against his Jewish interlocutor, Trypho, and emphasizes that the promises about the future blessing of 'their seed' were spoken exclusively to Isaac and to his son, Jacob, with a very specific meaning and purpose. As Justin claims, the relevant biblical passages foretell Jesus' Davidic descent through the Virgin Mary. As Justin further explains:

For the prophecy referred to the coming of Christ: '*Until he comes for whom is laid up; and he shall be the expectation of the Gentiles*'. Jesus came, therefore, as I have shown in detail, and he is expected to come again upon the clouds. You yourselves have defiled his name, and you strive to have his name profaned throughout the world. Now gentlemen, I continued, I could have argued with you about the passage which you claim should be written, *Until the things laid up for him come*. For the Seventy did not translate as

---

R. Sollamo notes that the closest parallels to the usage of the 'προσδοκία' (expectation) in Gen 49:10c are to be found in Isa 66:9 and LXX Ps 118:116 (op. cit., 369); cf. J. Wevers, *Notes on the Greek text of Genesis*, Atlanta GA 1993, 826, who stresses the positive hope for the future in this verse.

<sup>97</sup> The authenticity and dating of the works attributed to Ignatius of Antioch remain a controversial issue in scholarship. However, there is a scholarly consensus that the epistles were written at the beginning of the second century, see W. Schoedel – H. Koester, *Ignatius of Antioch. A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch*, Philadelphia 1985, 3–7; M.P. Brown, *The Authentic Writings of Ignatius. A Study of Linguistic Criteria*, Durham NC 1963; R.M. Hübner, 'Thesen zur Echtheit und Datierung der sieben Briefe des Ignatius', *ZAC* 1 (1997), 44–72.

you do, *Until he come for whom it is laid up*. But since the rest of the passage (*and he shall be the expectation of the Gentiles*) clearly refers to Christ, I will not dispute with you the exact wording of the passage, just as I refrained from basing my arguments about Christ upon Scriptures which you do not recognize as authentic. (Dial. CXX)

According to Justin, Gen 49:10 belongs to a series of biblical prophetic verses that clearly foretold Jesus' advent in spite of Jewish objections about the accuracy of the interpretation of those passages. Although Justin here accuses the Jews of forging Scripture in order to deny Jesus, both readings are also attested amongst Christian writers, even in Justin's works, as well as in the manuscripts of the LXX.<sup>98</sup> As O. Skarsaune notes with regard to Justin's favoured reading: 'There are can be no doubt that the reading  $\phi$  ἀπόκειται makes Gen 49:10 more suitable as a Christological testimony'. This alternative text probably derived from *testimonia* collections.<sup>99</sup>

Indeed, this verse is attested in patristic literature in several variants that render a number of nuances to the meaning of the verse as a messianic prophecy. At the same time, however, they attest to the enormous popularity and importance of this particular verse as a proof text for the Early Church. It should be noted that the grammatical differences between the textual variants have not significantly influenced patristic exegesis, as the christological focus remained unchanged throughout.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>98</sup> J.J. Collins thinks that 'In this case, the accent is shifted to the expectation of an individual, presumably a ruler. (The antecedent is unclear). Justin Martyr argued that this was the correct reading, but he obviously preferred it because it lent itself to a messianic interpretation, whereas the majority reading accepted by the Jews did not' ('Messianism and Exegetical Tradition', 138). A. Marx suggests, however, that the messianic interpretation has its root in the Hebrew Bible ('Jusqu' à ce que vienne Shiloh. Pour une interprétation messianique de Genèse 49,8–12', in: R. Kuntzmann (ed.), *Ce Dieu qui vient*, Paris 1995, 98).

<sup>99</sup> See O. Skarsaune, *Proof from Prophecy*, 27. Furthermore, Skarsaune assumes that this alternative version was 'probably introduced by a Christian familiar with the Targumic tradition, and making the Greek text more appropriate as a Christological testimony. This reading became so authoritative within the Church that Christian scribes later ventured to introduce it into some of the LXX mss' (op. cit., 29); cf. M. Albl, who notes that 'Justin's non LXX text of Gen 49:10 was a popular *testimonium* among later Christian authors' (*And Scripture Cannot Be Broken*, 215).

<sup>100</sup> See, for example, Ps.-Clem. Hom. III. 49: ἕως ἄν ἔλθῃ οὗ ἔστιν (until he comes whose it is); Eusebius, Dem. Ev. VIII.99: τῶ Ἰούδα ἀποκείμενα ἦν τὰ προφητευόμενα ταῦτα μὲν οὖν πάντα προαπέκειτο τῷ Χριστῷ (all these things were the things 'laid up for him', that is to say, the ancient prophecies); Basil of Caesarea, Ep. to Amphiloichium: ἕως οὗ ἦλθεν  $\phi$  ἀπέκειτο (until there came, he for whom it was reserved); Epiphanius of Salamis testifies to both variants as existing in different copies in textual tradition, that is, biblical manuscripts (Pan. 20.1.1). Interestingly, the emperor Julian in his refutation of the Christians, as recorded by Cyril of Alexandria, accuses the Christians of distorting Scripture in this

The emphasis on Jesus as the 'expectation of the nations' permeates patristic literature.<sup>101</sup> Origen affirms that Jesus fulfilled all the prophecies regarding the conversion of the Gentiles 'from all nations', as in Gen 49:10, but also in Isa 42:4 (Isa 49:8–9; Comm. John I.23). In the 'Dialogue between an Orthodox and a Heretic (an Erred) I', Theodoret of Cyrrhus stresses the fact that Jacob's blessing was given only to Judah, and that its real meaning was a prophecy regarding Jesus as the 'expectation of the Gentiles'. Even the Heretic agrees with the Orthodox One that this is a prediction concerning Jesus, and as such he is 'a Christian', and, at the same time, he states that 'Jews give erroneous interpretations of prophecies of this kind'.<sup>102</sup>

In addition, the expectation of Jesus' second coming on the basis of Jacob's prophecy was a widespread exegetical tradition among Church Fathers. As Hippolytus declares, 'Christ is our expectation. 'For we expect Him, (and) by faith we behold Him as He comes from heaven with power'' (De Christo 9). Similarly, Justin explains that this is a prophecy about 'those out of all nations who are pious and righteous through the faith of Christ and look for His future appearance' (Dial. CXX).<sup>103</sup>

Early Christian writers placed this verse in the context of a *parousia* expectation. However, later Christian tradition connected this verse with Jesus' incarnation and first advent.<sup>104</sup> An interesting exegetical approach

---

particular place. As he writes: 'Surely is the right reading: ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ τὰ ἀποκείμενα αὐτῷ' but you changed it to what suits you better: ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ ᾧ ἀπόκειται'. Cyril dismisses the reproach and accepts both readings as correct and even as complementary to each other: ἕως ἔλθῃ ᾧ ἀπόκειται ἤγουν τὰ ἀποκείμενα αὐτῷ. Moreover, he mentions an additional variant: ἀπέκειτο γὰρ τοῦτο αὐτῷ (Contra Julianum, Lib. VIII. (PG 76:85). For a survey of the different variants of the text in the patristic tradition, see A. Posnanski, *Schiloh, ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Messiaslehre*, Leipzig 1904, 20ff.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Theodoret of Cyrrhus, Ep. CVIII; Pseudo-Clementine Homilies III.49; Apost. Const. III.11; Gennadius of Constantinople, Fragments, PG 85:1660.

<sup>102</sup> {OPΘ.} Ἰκανὰ μὲν καὶ ταῦτα πᾶσαν τὴν περὶ τούτου κινουμένην ἀμφισβήτησιν λύσαι. Ἐγὼ δὲ ὅμως καὶ ἐτέρας σε προρρήσεως ἀναμνήσω. Ἰακώβ ὁ πατριάρχης τήνδε τὴν εὐλογίαν τὴν αὐτῷ τε καὶ τῷ πατρὶ καὶ τῷ πάππῳ δοθείσαν Ἰούδα τῷ παιδί δέδωκε μόνῳ. Ἐφη δὲ οὕτως: "Οὐκ ἐκλείπει ἀρχὼν ἐξ Ἰουδα, καὶ ἡγούμενος ἐκ τῶν μνηρῶν αὐτοῦ, ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ ᾧ ἀπόκειται, καὶ αὐτὸς προσδοκία ἐθνῶν." Ἡ οὐδέχῃ τήνδε τὴν πρόρρησιν ὡς περὶ τοῦ σωτῆρος εἰρημένην Χριστοῦ; {EPAN.} Ἰουδαῖοι τὰς τοιαύτας παρερμηνεύουσι προφητείας: ἐγὼ δὲ Χριστιανός εἰμι τοῖς θεοῖς πιστεύων λόγοις, καὶ τὰς περὶ τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν προφητείας ἀνενδοιάστως δεχόμενος (PG 83:43).

<sup>103</sup> Interestingly, Justin in his 'Apology' mentions the same biblical passage as being exploited by the pagans for their own mythology, and that they understand it as applying to their own mythical heroes and semi-gods, such as Dionysus and Perseus (Apol. I.32).

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Eusebius of Caesarea, Dem. Ev. VIII.374; see J. Smit Sibinga, *The Old Testament Text of Justin Martyr 1: The Pentateuch*, Leiden 1963, 36.

that links the messianic significance of this verse with the actual lifetime of Jesus, as narrated in the New Testament, is provided by Eusebius of Caesarea. As Eusebius argues:

It is clear that the only way to preserve the sense of this passage is to explain it figuratively. Thus it means 'by the water of Siloam that goes softly', the Gospel teaching of the word of salvation. For Siloam means 'sent.' And this was God the Word, sent by the Father, of Whom Moses also says, 'A ruler shall not fail from Judah, nor a prince from his loins, until he comes for whom it is stored up, and he is the expectation of nations'. For instead for 'whom it is stored up', the Hebrew has 'Siloam,' the word of prophecy using the same word Siloam there and here, which means 'the one that is sent'. (Dem.Ev. VII.332–333)

Eusebius understands the Hebrew word in the context of Jesus' miracle in the pool of Siloam in John 9:7: καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Ὑπαγε νίψαι εἰς τὴν κολυμβήθραν τοῦ Σιλωάμ, ὃ ἐρμηνεύεται ἀπεσταλμένος (And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, which is by interpretation, Sent [the Sent One]). It is possible that John the Evangelist applies this interpretation because he was misled by an obvious misunderstanding of the etymology of the word 'Siloam'. John seems to have associated 'siloam' with the similar word 'shiloh', as in Isa 8:6, which is probably related to a popular etymology of שִׁלּוֹחַ (sent). Nonetheless, this etymological misinterpretation added a messianic nuance to the Johannine passage.<sup>105</sup> Interestingly, Eusebius links the latent messianic sense of John 9:7 with Gen 49:10—by then a well-established messianic proof text—on the basis of this faulty etymology. However, this etymological connection, albeit unsound, must

<sup>105</sup> According to A.T. Hanson, John 9:7 was certainly inspired by Gen 49:10 (*The Prophetic Gospel. A Study on John and the Old Testament*, London – N.Y. 1991, 59); cf. B. Grisby, 'Washing in the Pool of Siloam—a thematic anticipation of the Johannine Cross', in: D.E. Orton, *The Composition of John's Gospel. Selected Studies from the Old Testament*, Leiden 1999, 251–260, esp. 235f. K. Müller suggests 'that this particular interpretation was part of John's Sendungstheologie, since Jewish tradition does not connect shiloh (Shiloh) in Gen 49.10 with the idea of being sent. Eusebius, who linked John 9:6 with Is 8:6 and Gen 49:10 was similarly influenced by the Isaiah text' ('Joh 9,7 und das jüdische Verständnis des Siloh-Spruches', *BZ* 13 (1969), 251–256). The connection of the Johannine verse with Jesus was common in patristic literature, see John Chrysostom, Hom.John 84: 'he added 'which is sent' that you may learn that it was Christ who healed him'; Origen, fr. 63 on John 9:6; Siloam, the sent water (Σιλωάμ: τὸ ἀπεσταλμένον ὕδωρ), (ed. A.E. Brooke, *The Commentary of Origen on John's Gospel*, 1, Cambridge 2010). Here, Origen reflects the Johannine traditions on Jesus as the living water; cf. John 4:1–14; 7:37–39, etc.

have derived from a certain familiarity with the Hebrew text on the part of Eusebius.<sup>106</sup>

Significantly, this etymological connection is reflected in the Vulgate, which translates Gen 49:10 as follows: 'The sceptre shall not be taken away from Judah, nor a ruler from his thigh, *till he comes that is to be sent*, and he shall be the expectation of nations' (non auferetur sceptrum de Iuda et dux de femoribus eius donec veniat qui mittendus est et ipse erit expectatio gentium). In the rendering of the Vulgate, the root שלח seems to be presupposed and alludes to a messianic understanding.

The christological interpretation is also prominent in the Syriac exegetical tradition. The Peshitta text reads:

ܠܗ ܒܢܘ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܗܘ ܕܡܡܢ ܩܝܡܘܬܐ ܕܗܘ ܕܡܡܢ ܩܝܡܘܬܐ ܕܗܘ ܕܡܡܢ ܩܝܡܘܬܐ  
ܕܗܘ ܕܡܡܢ ܩܝܡܘܬܐ ܕܗܘ ܕܡܡܢ ܩܝܡܘܬܐ ܕܗܘ ܕܡܡܢ ܩܝܡܘܬܐ

*The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until the coming of the One to whom the sceptre belongs, to whom the Gentiles shall look forward.*

Aphrahat asserts that Jesus' coming has already been prophesied in the Bible, as in Gen 49:10. The early Syriac tradition, as attested by Aphrahat and Ephraem, specifies that the one who is expected to come is the one to 'whom the kingdom belongs' (Aphrahat, Dem. XVI.10; Ephraem, Comm.Gen.XLII.5; cf. XLIII.4).<sup>107</sup> This particular reading is not attested in the Peshitta, but remained popular in the Syriac literature as late as

<sup>106</sup> Eusebius perhaps knew some Hebrew or he consulted Jewish teachers on certain scriptural passages, see J. Ulrich, *Euseb von Caesarea und die Juden. Studien zur Rolle der Juden in der Theologie des Eusebius von Caesarea*, Berlin – N.Y. 1999, 200, who does not dismiss the possibility that Eusebius could have known some Hebrew; cf. M.J. Hollerich, 'Eusebius as a Polemical Interpreter of Scripture', in: H.W. Attridge – G. Hata (eds), *Eusebius, Christianity and Judaism*, Leiden 1992, 585–618, see esp. 605, which suggests the contrary, namely that 'since Eusebius himself had practically no knowledge of Hebrew, the only source (...) must have been Jewish exegetes in Caesarea, whom elsewhere in the Commentary (on Isaiah) he admits he consulted'. A. Kofsky notes that 'Eusebius makes several references to conversations with Jewish teachers and other Jews. (...) In his late Commentary on Isaiah, he at times invokes a Jewish exegesis for certain verses that he claims to have learnt from a Jewish rabbi really (Comm. Is 23:15; 39:3)' (*Eusebius of Caesarea against Paganism*, Leiden 2000, 94). Kofsky concludes that Eusebius 'had at least a moderate lexical knowledge of the language (...) but insufficient for an independent study of Hebrew sources' (ibid., n.80). For a similar view, see J. Stevenson, *Studies in Eusebius*, Cambridge 1929, 26.

<sup>107</sup> See R. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 47. Murray further argues that Aphrahat (Dem V.232.3–4) understands the kingdom as both secular sovereignty and the eschatological reign of Jesus. Christians are already 'sons of the kingdom', but they have yet to realize their inheritance; the Church is not yet the kingdom (ibid., 243).

the Middle Ages.<sup>108</sup> T. Jansma remarks that ‘The reading seems to be an interpretation of v.10c which, by adding the word ‘kingdom’, obviously aims at expressing explicitly the meaning supposedly underlying the literal translation’.<sup>109</sup>

Significantly, the addition ‘to whom the kingdom belongs’ is not solely preserved in the works of Syriac Church Fathers of the fourth century. This textual variant is already evidenced in the Greek patristic literature of the mid and late second century, and notably in Justin (Apol. 1.32) and Origen (De Princ. IV.3). Jerome is also familiar with this tradition (On Hosea I.3.45).<sup>110</sup> Thus, it constitutes an early Christian tradition, which determined what was ‘reserved’ for Jesus.

A major stream of thought in patristic tradition argues that Jacob’s prophecy concerning Judah is fulfilled in the history of the Jewish people. According to Justin’s line of argumentation, it is historically proven that neither prophet nor ruler in the Jewish nation (‘your nation’) ever failed until the time when Jesus arrived. Justin maintains that, even during the Babylonian exile, a ruler and a prophet were always in the midst of ‘their nation’. Additionally, ‘But since the coming and death of our Jesus Christ in your midst, you have not had a prophet, nor do you possess one now. Furthermore, you no longer live under your own king, and, in addition, *your land has been waste, and abandoned as a lodge in a garden* (Is 1:8)’ (Justin, Dial. LII). Evidently, Justin here refers to the Jewish war and the destruction of Jerusalem as historical events that prove the prophetic fulfilment of Jesus’ advent. Justin stresses not only the loss of political and, more specifically, royal power, but also the end of prophecy and the cessation of the succession of the high priests. Justin’s main argument is reiterated in various versions by the subsequent patristic exegetical tradition.

<sup>108</sup> However, there are Peshitta mss that preserve this addition, see R. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 282; A. Vööbus, *Peshitta und Targumim*, 25; cf. T. Jansma, who lists both West and East Syrian sources: Babai’s *liber de unione*, in the *Synodicon Orientale* (year 680), in the *Apology for Christianity* by Timothy I, in the *Gannath Bussame*, and, amongst Jacobite authors, in the *Commentary on the Gospels* by Dionysius bar Salibi (‘Ephraem on Genesis XLIX.10’, *Parole de l’Orient* 4 (1973), 248).

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*; cf. R. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 47.

<sup>110</sup> Justin, Apol. 1.32: ἕως ἄν ἔλθῃ ᾧ ἀπόκειται τὸ βασίλειον; Origen, De Princ. IV.1.3: Τί δὲ δεῖ λέγειν καὶ ὅτι προεφητεύθη [ὁ Χριστός] τότε «ἐκλείψειν τοὺς ἐξ Ἰούδα ἄρχοντες» εἰρημένους «καὶ ἡγουμένους» ἐκ τῶν μηρῶν αὐτοῦ, ὅταν ἔλθῃ ᾧ ἀπόκειται» δηλονότι ἡ βασιλεία, «καὶ ἐπιδημήσῃ ἡ τῶν ἐθνῶν προσδοκία»; Jerome, On Hosea I.3.4.5: ‘Ergo postquam defecit princeps ex Iuda, et dux de femoribus ejus, et Herodes alienigena et proselytes suscepit imperium, intelligimus venisse qui regnum repositum est, et ipse erat expectatio gentium’ (PL 25:845).

For example, Origen argues that it is a fact that from the time of Jesus there were no kings among the Jews (De Princ. IV.1.3). All the objects of Jewish pride were destroyed, fulfilling the prophecy (cf. Hos 3:4). Thus, he emphasizes the abolition of the sacrificial cult liturgies in the Temple, and the destruction of related hieratical symbols, such as 'the robes of the high-priest'. According to Origen, the historical events testify against those who claim that 'there still remains a prince in the race of Judah'. Origen further stresses that '(...) the man who reads this prophecy with an open mind would be amazed at the way in which, after saying that the rulers and leaders of the people would come from the tribe of Judah, he also fixes the time when the rule itself is to come to an end' (Contr. Cels. I.53).

More specifically, Origen argues 'that the authority of those who had rule among the people, which included the power to kill those whom they thought worthy of death, existed until John; and when the last of the prophets was unlawfully killed by Herod, the king of the Jews was deprived of the power of putting to death; for, if Herod had not been deprived of it, Pilate would not have condemned Jesus to death'. According to Christian tradition, the last of the prophets was John the Baptist, who foretold the coming of Jesus and recognized Christ in the person of Jesus.<sup>111</sup> Furthermore, Origen states that the loss of the rule of the Jewish people was planned by God's providence so that they would not have the power to hinder the spread of the teaching of Jesus and persecute believers (Comm.Matth. 10.23). Epiphanius also explained the end of royalty and priesthood among the Jewish people, arguing that Jesus was both king and high priest (Pan. 29.3.7). As such, Christian authors address the loss of the political and religious power of the Jews as a sign of the advent of the Messiah.

Furthermore, the patristic tradition mentions various details with regard to events that took place at the same time as the birth of Jesus, as evidenced in the Gospels, in order to corroborate the credibility of their historical exposition of Gen 49:10. Accordingly, Jacob foretold the exact time of Jesus' advent, because, at the time when he was born, the Jews were ruled by foreign kings.<sup>112</sup> John Chrysostom argues, more precisely,

---

<sup>111</sup> On John the Baptist as the last prophet before the Messiah in the Gospels, see esp. Luke 8:28; Matt 11:13; 17:9-13; Mark 9:9-13; Luke 1:17; Elijah redivivus; cf. Origen, Comm. Matth. 10.21 (in association with Gen 49:10); John Chrysostom, Hom.Matth. X; Irenaeus, Adv.Haer. III.11.4; see O. Skarsaune, *Proof from Prophecy*, 195ff.

<sup>112</sup> Theodoret, Quaest. CXII.3; cf. John Chrysostom, Comm.Gen. 67.9; Theodore of Mopsuestia, fr. 6, in: *Matthaeus-Kommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*, ed. J. Reuss,



that Jesus was born when the Romans ruled over the Jewish people and ordered them to undergo the census.<sup>113</sup>

Similarly, Eusebius of Caesarea emphasizes that the exact historical circumstances alluded to in Judah's blessing were already reported by Luke and Matthew in the Gospels. Notably, the wise men of the East ask for the 'born king of the Jews'. Indeed, 'for foreigners ruled over the Jews, and foreigners coming from the East recognised and worshipped the Christ of God, who had been prophesied of old'. Thus, the prophecy of Jacob corresponds perfectly to Jesus, who was the only legitimate heir to Judah's kingdom (Dem.Ev. VIII.374; cf. H.E. I.6).<sup>114</sup>

In the same exegetical context, Eusebius of Caesarea calls Jesus the 'lawgiver of the Gentiles', who would arise according to the prophecy of Gen 49:10. Accordingly, Moses was aware that it was necessary for another prophet to come, who would be the lawgiver of the nations. Eusebius continues: 'And this was He, of Whom his prophecy proclaimed the good news that one should arise from the tribe of Judah and rule all nations' (Dem.Ev. I.22).<sup>115</sup>

As Eusebius stresses, Jacob mentions that he is going to predict the last days, by which he means 'the end of the national existence of the Jews'.<sup>116</sup> Furthermore, this biblical passage teaches that one of his descendants 'will cause all nations and tribes to be admitted to the blessings of Abraham'. Moreover, Eusebius argues that the end of the national sovereignty of the Jews, along with the abolition of active worship in the Temple, were signs to announce the coming of the Lord. Eusebius maintains that the last legitimate high priest was Hyrcanus (H.E. I.VI.7). He further suggests that an additional sign of the advent of the Messiah was the fact that 'the order of the high priesthood, which from ancient times had proceeded

---

Berlin 1957; Ephraem, Hymn.Nat. I.7; Jerome, Comm.Rom. LXX; Jerome, On Hosea I.4; Cyril of Jerusalem, Cat.Hom. 12.17.

<sup>113</sup> Contra Judaeos et Gentiles, PG 48:817; cf. Epiphanius, Pan. 51.22.21.

<sup>114</sup> For another detailed account of the historical background of Herod's rule and ancestry, see Eusebius, H.E. I.6; cf. Cyril of Alexandria, Glaphyra (PG 69:356).

<sup>115</sup> Dem.Ev. I.22: Εικότως δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Μωσῆς τούτων αὐτῶν ἔνεκεν ἕτερον παρ'ἑαυτὸν ἀναστήσεσθαι ἔφη προφήτην, καὶ τοῦτον νομοθέτην ἔσεσθαι τῶν ἐθνῶν ἀπάντων εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, τὸν Χριστὸν αἰνιττόμενος. (...) ὅτι δὴ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰουδαίας ὁ θεσπιζόμενος τῶν ἐθνῶν νομοθέτης Χριστὸν προελεύσεται, καὶ κατὰ ποίους χρόνους, ὅτι μετὰ τὴν ἐκλείψιν τῶν ἐκ προγόνων διαδοχῆς τοῦ Ἰουδαίων ἔθνους ἀρξάντων. On Jesus as 'lawgiver' in Early Christianity, see Justin, Dial. XII.2; XIV.3; Clement Alex., I.26; John Chrysostom, Hom.John 76.4; cf. G.N. Stanton, *Jesus and Gospel*, Cambridge 2004, 110ff. For Jesus as 'lawgiver' in Eusebius, see A. Kofsky, 'Eusebius of Caesarea and the Christian-Jewish Polemics', in: O. Limor – G. Stroumsa, *Contra Judaeos*, 159–184, esp. 79f.

<sup>116</sup> ἐπ'ἔσχάτου τῆς συστάσεως τοῦ Ἰουδαίων ἔθνους (361).

regularly in closest succession from generation to generation, was immediately thrown into confusion'. Eusebius emphasized that, according to Josephus' testimony (cf. Ant. XX.8), 'when Herod was made King by the Romans he no longer appointed the high priests from the ancient line, but gave the honour to certain obscure persons (...). The same writer shows (cf. Josephus, Ant. XV.11.4) that Herod was the first that locked up the sacred garment of the high priest under his own seal and refused to permit the high priests to keep it for themselves' (trans. ANPF I, 90).

As Eusebius maintains, these events took place in fulfilment of the prophecy of Daniel, who expressly mentioned a number of weeks until the coming of Jesus: 'This has been necessarily premised by us as a proof of the correctness of the time' (H.E. I.VI.7). Eusebius explains more precisely:

And in this very place, Christ, whom the Scripture of Daniel prophesies, received his end. For until Herod, christs (anointed ones), i.e. the high priests were the kings of Jews, who begun to rule from the 65th Olympiad and the restoration of the temple under Darius until Hyrcanus around 433 years passed, which is what Daniel also signifies saying: 'And may you know and understand that from the beginning of the world of returning and rebuilding Jerusalem, until the leadership of Christ, 7 weeks and 62 weeks. (Eusebius, Chronikon II. (Jerome edition). Gen 49:10, cf. Eclogae Propheticae III.45)<sup>117</sup>

Dan 9:26 prophesies the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem after sixty-two weeks. Moreover, Dan 9:25 foretells that the time that will pass between the building of Jerusalem and the coming of an anointed ruler (*χριστοῦ ἡγουμένου*) will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. Against the background of Daniel 9:26, Eusebius connects Herod's dissolution of the 'anointed priests' with Jacob's prophecy to Judah in Gen 49:10.<sup>118</sup> This exegetical approach was obviously linked to the use of the word 'ruler' (*ἡγούμενος*) in LXX Gen 49:10. Interestingly, a variation of this exegetical approach is also evidenced in the Syriac tradition and, more specifically,

---

<sup>117</sup> The association of the Danielic prophecy with the time of Jesus' birth was an early popular Christian tradition, see Clement of Alex., Strom. I.21: 'And thus Christ became King of the Jews, reigning in Jerusalem in the fulfilment of the seven weeks'; cf. Cyril of Jerusalem, Cat.Hom. 12.19; see O. Irshai: 'Early Church historiographers, such as Julius Africanus and later, Eusebius of Caesarea followed still by others, used the 'Seventy Weeks' timetable to demonstrate its applicability to the events surrounding the Incarnation of Christ during the Herodian period. In their understanding Jesus' epiphany was at the age about which Jacob the patriarch prophesied (Gen 49:10)' ('Dating the Eschaton: Apocalyptic Calculations in Late Antiquity', in: A.I. Baumgarten (ed.), *Apocalyptic Time*, Leiden 2000, 122).

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Epiphanius, Pan. 29.3.3; W. Adler, 'The Apocalyptic Survey of History adapted by Christians: Daniel's prophecy of 70 weeks', in: idem – J. VanderKam, *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity*, 236.

in Aphrahat. Aphrahat connected Dan 9:24 with Gen 49:10, and stated that when the seventy weeks of Daniel were fulfilled (Dan 9:24) the Messiah came as predicted in Gen 49:10, and, at that same time, there were no sacrifices nor an altar in Jerusalem (Dem. XIX.11).

In addition, Eusebius also links the reign of Herod the Great (reigned 37–4 BCE) with the fulfilment of Jacob's oracle and the fulfilment of the Danielic prophecy. Accordingly, the 'coming prince' who would be responsible for the dissolution of the anointed rulers was Herod.<sup>119</sup>

The identification of Herod with the last ruler prophesied by Jacob in Gen 49:10 was a popular tradition among Christian writers. Justin Martyr is perhaps the earliest source that associates Herod, as a foreign ruler from Ashkelon, with Gen 49:10. He attributes, however, the information about Herod and his foreign origin to 'Jewish claims' (Dial. LII).<sup>120</sup> A fully developed history of Herod's ancestry can be found in the late second century in the writings of Julius Africanus, as preserved by Eusebius (H.E. 1.7.11).<sup>121</sup> Africanus (and by extension, Eusebius) stresses that Herod was the son of Antipater, a pagan temple-servant, who was later sold as a slave.<sup>122</sup> Accordingly, a stream of thought in Christian literature saw in Herod's reign the fulfilment of Gen 49:10. Interestingly, Origen explains that some interpreters of Dan 9:26 identified the coming prince with Jesus. Origen dismisses this idea and argues that this figure was either Herod or Agrippa, and in any case a foreign ruler (Commentary on Matthew; ser. 40 [81.9–11]; see also ser. 41 [82.13–15]).<sup>123</sup>

<sup>119</sup> See W. Adler, who remarks that Eusebius follows a minority tradition, which 'continued to preserve the older sacerdotal interpretation of Dan 9:25' and identifies Herod the Great with the coming prince ('The Apocalyptic Survey', 237). However, from the late second century, 'the majority of Christian interpreters (. . .) identified the *χριστὸς ἡγούμενος* with Christ' (ibid., 236).

<sup>120</sup> Cf. Eusebius, H.E. 1.6.1: 'when Herod became king, the prophecy of Moses received fulfilment'; in the patristic literature, the widespread tradition is found that Herod was from Ashkelon (see also the discussion later in the text). This tradition, preserved in Eusebius, H.E. 1.7.11 (cf. H.E. 1.6.2–3), is attributed to Julius Africanus, *Epistula ad Aristidem*, see A. Schalit, 'Die frühchristliche Überlieferung über die Herkunft der Familie des Herodes', *ASTI* 1 (1962), 109–160; cf. A. Schalit, *König Herodes: Der Mann und sein Werk*, Berlin 2001.

<sup>121</sup> On Julius Africanus and the historicity of this tradition, see H. Gelzer, *Sextus Julius Africanus*, 1. 258–265; on Julius Africanus and the dating of his work, see M. Wallraff, *Julius Africanus, Chronographiae*, xiiiff. Africanus' source is commonly believed to be a Jewish-Christian work dating from the late first or early second century, see W. Adler, 'The Apocalyptic Survey', 234.

<sup>122</sup> See also the survey of the various hypotheses on Herod's origin in: W. Horbury 'Herod's Temple and 'Herod's Days'', in: idem, *Messianism among Jews and Christians*, 97f. and esp. n.18; see also H.W. Hoehner, *Herod Antipas: A Contemporary of Jesus Christ*, Cambridge 1980, 5f., n.2.

<sup>123</sup> See W. Adler, 'The Apocalyptic Survey', 235.

Finally, Epiphanius (310–403 CE) reports of a weird and probably fictitious Jewish sect, the Herodians, who believed that Herod himself was Christ since he was the first Gentile ruler of the Jews, thus fulfilling Jacob's prophecy (Pan. 20.1). Epiphanius disputes the claims of this sect and argues that the rest of the prophecy does not apply to Herod but to 'our Lord Jesus Christ', who sprinkled his body with his own blood, as the blessing of Judah reveals in its further details (Pan. 20.2.2–3).<sup>124</sup> Although Epiphanius reports that this was a Jewish sect, it is tempting to think that he actually referred to an inner-Christian controversy on the identification of the 'coming prince'.

The Christian debate seems to have focused on the exegesis of Gen 49:10 and Dan 9:26 against the background of a varied understanding of Jesus' messianic role. Accordingly, it appears that a stream in Christian exegesis identified Christ as a royal figure and, perhaps saw in him the 'coming prince'. However, another stream dismissed any such connection and looked to the actual political history of Israel for the realization of Jacob's prophecy.

Christian authors strived for 'historical' accuracy in their exegetical approach to Gen 49:10. They argued that the end of the rule of Judah's tribe was already documented in the biblical account of the history of the Judahite tribe. Authors such as Jerome connected Gen 49:10 with the end of the Davidic dynasty under king Zedekiah (c.586 BCE), during whose reign the kingdom of Judah became subject to the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar (In Ezech. II.21 on Ezek 21:30–32; PL 25:207).<sup>125</sup>

Basil of Caesarea accepts the 'historical' interpretation, according to which the royal tribe did not fail until the coming of Jesus. However, he additionally offers an eschatological interpretation of Jesus' dominion, which extends up to the heavenly realms (Ep. to Amphilochius 236.3, dated 376). As Basil elucidates:

On the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, the kingdom had been destroyed, and there was no longer a hereditary succession of reigns as before. Nevertheless, at that time, the deposed descendants of David were

<sup>124</sup> On the Herodians, see Jerome, *Contra Luciferanos* 23 (PL 23:1978); *Comm. Matth* 26.16 (PL 26:162).

<sup>125</sup> Similarly, the emperor Julian argues that the prophecy refers to Zedekiah (Cyril of Alexandria, *Contra Julianum*, Lib. VIII. (PG 76:85); cf. Gennadius of Constantinople (d. 496), who stresses that although the Jewish people were previously subordinated by other rulers, it was only after the birth of the Saviour when they became 'prisoners of the Romans' and lost absolutely everything [ἀχρις οὐ μετὰ τὴν τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἐπιδημίαν ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίων αἰχμάλωτοι γενόμενοι, τῆς γῆς εἰς τὸ παντελὲς ἐκπεπτῶκασι] (PG 85:1660).

living in captivity. On the return of Salathiel and Zerubbabel the supreme government rested to a greater degree with the people, and the sovereignty was afterwards transferred to the priesthood, on account of the intermingling of the priestly and royal tribes; whence the Lord, in things pertaining to God, is both King and High Priest. Moreover, the royal tribe did not fail until the coming of the Christ; nevertheless, the seed of Jeconias sat no longer upon the throne of David. Plainly it is the royal dignity which is described by the term 'throne.' However, Christ did not sit upon the material throne, because *'The kingdom of Judæa was transferred to Herod, the son of Antipater the Ascalonite, and his sons (...)* It is the indestructible kingdom which he calls the throne of David on which the Lord sat. He is the expectation of the Gentiles not of the smallest division of the world (...) and thus God remained a priest although He did not receive the sceptre of Judah, and King of all the earth; so the blessing of Jacob was fulfilled, and in Him (Gen 22:18) 'shall all the nations of the earth be blessed,' and all the nations shall call the Christ blessed. (trans. NPNF VIII, 277)

Finally, Cyril of Jerusalem reports that contemporary Jews claimed for themselves the Davidic ancestry and the title of 'patriarch'. As he writes: 'He gave, therefore, as a sign of Christ's advent the cessation of the Jewish rule. If they are not now under the Romans, the Christ is not yet come: if they still have a prince of the race of Judah and of David, he is not yet come that was expected. For I am ashamed to tell of their recent doings concerning those who are now called Patriarchs (cf. Epiphanius, Pan 33:3) among them, and what their descent is, and who their mother: but I leave it to those who know. But He that cometh as *the expectation of the Gentiles*, what further sign then hath He?' (Cat.Hom. XII.17).

The 'historical' explanation was particularly popular in the patristic literature and can be found in almost all major works that deal with this episode.<sup>126</sup> Unsurprisingly, the 'historical' approach was particularly appealing to the exegetes of the Antiochene School. In spite of their strict literal exegesis, which they faithfully followed in the interpretation of Gen 49:8–9, the Antiochenes placed their historical approach into a christological frame of reference for the exegesis of Gen 49:10.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>126</sup> See Irenaeus of Lyons, Dem 57; Athanasius of Alexandria, On the Incarnation of the Word 40; see J. Pelikan, who stresses that LXX Gen 49:10 'became a proof-text, summarizing all three points of schematization, namely the historic mission of Israel, the end of that mission with the coming of Jesus, and the place of Jesus as the divine answer to the aspirations of all the nations'. Subsequently, it defined the Christian interpretation of history (*The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine: 1. The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100–600)*, Chicago 1971, 56).

<sup>127</sup> See L. van Rompay, 'Antiochene Biblical Interpretation'; B. ter Haar Romeny, *A Syrian in Greek Dress*, 440.

Diodore of Tarsus (d. c. 390) briefly recounts Israelite history after Zerubbabel in order to support the veracity of the christological prophecy (Cat. Csl 298). For Christian authors, such as Diodore, the destruction of the Jewish Temple and the loss of political sovereignty for the Jewish people were associated with the reluctance of the Jews to accept Jesus as the Messiah (cf. Eusebius, Dem.Ev. VIII.399).

A 'historical' analysis was also common in the early Syriac tradition, and is attested as early as the works of Aphrahat.<sup>128</sup> Moreover, against the background of biblical history, Ephraem the Syrian argues that the veracity of Jacob's prophecy is proven because there was no king before David. Furthermore, it was by David and by the sons of David that the kingdom was handed down and preserved for the Lord, who is the Lord of the kingdom. In Ephraem's view, the biblical verse 'And for him the nations shall wait' clearly signifies the emergence of the Church of the Gentiles.

Ephraem argues that when Jesus, the Lord of the Kingdom, comes then both kingship and prophecy will cease 'in the house of Judah' (Comm. Gen. XLII.5). These two offices are represented by the two symbols of power mentioned in the verse, namely the sceptre and the staff. Ephraem understands a reference to a dual power, political and spiritual, in the biblical verse. Furthermore, he considers Jesus to be the legitimate heir of the house of Judah, since he is a physical descendant of David.

A similar exegetical approach is encountered in Ishodad of Merv, who expands upon the image of the 'sceptre between the feet'. Ishodad explains that it refers to the physical succession that applies to the royal office (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 49:10).

Summarizing, two main streams of exegetical tradition can be detected with regard to Gen 49:10. According to one stream, the prophecy had a clear political perspective and referred to the literal cessation of Jewish political rule, as marked by Herod, who was thought to be a foreigner. Another stream of thought saw the fulfilment of the prophecy in the person of Jesus and his role as eschatological king, whose birth took place at a time when the Jewish people were under foreign, that is Roman, rule. Furthermore, confronted with a biblical history that recorded several instances of loss of Jewish sovereignty, the patristic tradition stressed that the prophecy did not solely relate to political rule but also to spiritual and religious leadership. Accordingly, the cessation of the succession for the office of high priest and the destruction of the Temple delivered an

---

<sup>128</sup> Cf. Aphrahat Dem. XIX.11.

additional argument regarding the Christian concept of Jesus as the Messiah, who was anticipated and even prophesied in biblical history.

*Gen 49:11a: 'He who binds his Foal to a Vine'*

LXX Gen 49:11a δεσμεύων πρὸς ἄμπελον τὸν πῶλον αὐτοῦ καὶ τῇ ἔλικι τὸν πῶλον τῆς ὄνου αὐτοῦ·

*Binding his foal to a vine and his donkey's foal to the tendril* [NETS]

In the patristic literature, a prominent exegetical approach to Gen 49:11a refers to the messianic entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem, as evidenced in the Gospels and in connection with Zech 9:9.<sup>129</sup> Accordingly, Methodius of Olympus (d. c.311) writes: 'Today also the patriarch Jacob keeps feast in Spirit, seeing his prophecy brought to fulfilment and with the faithful adores the Father, seeing Him who bound his foal to the vine, mounted upon an ass's colt' (Oration on Palms 2 [Oratio in Ramos Palmarum; PG 18:385f.], trans. ANF VI, 395).

Patristic exegesis saw in Gen 49:11 a clear prophecy regarding the call of the Gentiles as the 'untamed foal', which was bound to the Word by Christ and by his apostles. The call of the Gentiles was symbolically pre-figured when Jesus asked his disciples to bring a donkey, along with its foal, before he entered Jerusalem (Dial. LIII).<sup>130</sup> The detailed exposition of Justin Martyr on this verse demonstrates its compelling importance for Christian writers:

<sup>129</sup> Zech 9:9 envisaged a righteous king 'riding on a donkey, on a colt'. M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, NY 1985, 501–502, maintains that the author of Zech 9:9–10 is recasting the blessing of Jacob (Gen 49:10) into a royal-messianic oracle; cf. M.J. Boda et al. (eds), *Bringing out the Treasure: The Use of Earlier Biblical Material in Zechariah 9–14*, London 2003, 88. The use of Zech 9:9 is explicitly quoted in Matt 21:5 and John 12:15, and implicit in Mark 11:1–10 and Luke 19:28–40; see B. Kinman, *Jesus' entry into Jerusalem*, 108; D. Krause, 'The One who Comes Unbinding the Blessing of Judah', 141–153; E. Lohse, 'Hosianna', *NovT* 5 (1963), 113–119. The connection between Gen 49:10f. and Zech 9:9 was common in the interpretation of the entry into Jerusalem among the Church Fathers; see Justin, *Apol.* 1.32; Dial. XLIII; Ps.-Clem. Hom. III.49; Rec I. 49–50; Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* IV.10.2; Origen, *Comm. John* 10.155; 10.179; Didymus Alex., *Commentary on Zechariah* 9:9; Eusebius, *Dem. Ev.* VIII.144; Gennadius of Constantinople, *Fragments* PG 85:1660; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. Hom.* 12.

<sup>130</sup> See J.S. Boccabello, 'Why would a pagan read Zechariah? Apologetics and Exegesis in the second-century Greek Apologists', in: C. Tucket (ed.), *The Book of Zechariah and its Influence*, Aldershot – Burlington 1988, 135–144, esp. 139ff. The double occurrence of donkeys in both passages form the basis of an allegorical interpretation for Justin: the nations are the 'unharnessed foal'. By contrast, Jewish converts to Christianity are represented by the harnessed donkey, because they already possess the Law.

And the passage, *Tying his foal to the vine, and the foal's ass to the tendril of the vine*, was a prophecy both of the deeds he would perform at his first coming and of the Gentiles' belief in him. For the Gentiles were like a foal, who has never been harnessed or felt a yoke upon his neck, until this Christ of ours arrived and sent his disciples to convert them. They have borne the yoke of his word, and have bent their backs to endure all things, because they look forward to the many priceless rewards which he promised them. 2. Indeed, our Lord Jesus Christ, *when he was about to enter Jerusalem, ordered his disciples to get him the ass with its foal, which was tied at the gate of the village of Bethpage, and he rode upon it as he entered Jerusalem* (Mt 21:1–2.7.10). Since it had been explicitly foretold that the Christ would do precisely this, when he had done it in the sight of all he furnished clear proof that he was the Christ. And yet, even after all these things have happened and are proved from the Scriptures, you persist in your stubbornness. 3. Zechariah, one of the twelve prophets, predicted this very event when he said, *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout your joy, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, your king will come to you, the just and savior; meek and lowly, riding upon an ass, and upon the foal of an ass* (Zech. 9:9). 4. Now that the prophetic Spirit, as well as the patriarch Jacob, mentioned the ass, an animal accustomed to the yoke, and its foals, which were in his possession, and that he bade his disciples, as I have said before, to lead the beasts to him, constituted a prediction that both you coming from the synagogue and those who would come from the Gentiles would believe in him. And the unharnessed foal was a figure of the former Gentiles, so the ass, accustomed to the yoke was a symbol of those coming from among your people. For you have the Law laid upon you by the prophets as a yoke. (Dial. LIII)

A common idea among the Church Fathers was that the foal represents the Gentiles who were deprived of the law, whereas the Jews, as the 'donkeys', carried the burden of the law, albeit failing in this task.<sup>131</sup> The patristic tradition introduced this analogy in order to demonstrate that Jews and Gentiles were called to one faith. Indeed, this exegetical approach criticized the existing Jewish Law. According to Hippolytus, the Gentiles were bound to the Lord (the vine), while those of the circumcision were bound to the 'oldness of the law' (De Christo 10). Similarly, Clement of Alexandria explains that the appellation of the colt as 'young' signified youth, that is, the regeneration of humanity in Jesus. The young colt

---

<sup>131</sup> Cf. Hippolytus, fr. ad Gen 49:11 (PG 10:589); Origen, Gen.Hom. XVII.7; see also the idea of the ass that prefigures the Gentiles' salvation in John Chrysostom, Hom. John. 66.1; Hom.Gen. 69.9; the colt as representing the new people in Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on Luke, Hom. 130; the donkey as the synagogue and the foal as the Gentiles in Jerome, In Zach. 2.9.9–10; In Matt. 21.4–5; Cyril of Alexandria: Comm.John 8. (LF 48:142); He calls the donkey a colt because the people of the Gentiles had been untrained in the piety that faith produces.



represents the people reared by Jesus, the divine colt-tamer. These simple and young people are tied to the vine, which is the Word (Paed. I.5). Accordingly, the images of the foal and the donkey served as metaphors for the 'new Church' and the 'old law' respectively.

Moreover, the ass was regarded as an 'unclean' animal and, consequently, presented a plausible symbol for the 'uncleanness' of the Gentiles.<sup>132</sup> Other characteristics attributed to the animal portrayed its nature as responsive and gentle when ready to be 'bound to the vine' (John Chrysostom, Hom.Gen. 67.9).<sup>133</sup> In the same line of interpretation, an anonymous Catena fragment adds that the nations are the 'dumb animals' (cf. Ps 48:13, 21), which the Lord also calls 'dogs' (cf. Matt 7:6; Mark 7:27). The Lord tied the nations to the vineyard of the Lord Sabaoth (cf. Isa 5:7), thus uniting Jews and Gentiles and destroying the barrier and dividing wall between them (cf. Eph 2:14). Furthermore, he bound Israel with the binding of love, and tamed those who used to be wild (Cat. Petit 2175; cf. (ps.-) Diodore of Tarsus, Cat.Csl 300; Procopius, Comm.Gen., PG 87:499f.).

The Church Fathers associated Gen 49:11a with a number of biblical metaphors in order to corroborate the prophetic character of this verse. In Early Christianity, the vine was a common and popular metaphor for Jesus, following John 15:1. Similarly, against the background of John 15:1, Eusebius of Caesarea explains that the vine symbolizes Jesus' power, while the 'foal' is a symbol for the apostles: 'And the branch of the said vine is the teaching of the Word of God, by which He bound the foal of the ass—that is to say, the new people of the Gentiles, the offspring of the Apostles' (Dem.Ev. VIII.378).

An alternative stream of thought in patristic tradition understood the vine as a symbol of Israel. Furthermore, the vine was a symbol for

---

<sup>132</sup> The metaphorical understanding of the Gentiles as 'animals' even 'unclean animals' and their implicit identification with an 'ass' is biblical; cf. Ps 32:9; Ezek 23:20 (referring to Egyptians). It was also common in rabbinic literature (see PT Shab 51; BT Ber 25b; BT Nid 45a) to associate the Gentiles with donkeys or mules (S. Stern, *Jewish Identity in Early Rabbinic Writings*, 37–39). This idea became common in the Christian tradition; see John Chrysostom, Comm. John 12.9–24 (Hom. 66.1); Comm. Matth. 21:15 (Hom. 66. 2,3); Origen, Job Cat. 35,11; Gen.Hom. V.4.39–46; Lev.Hom XVI. 6.41–45. Jesus refers to the Gentiles as 'dogs'; see Matt 15:25–28; cf. Rev 22:15; cf. Jerome, Comm. Matt. 15:25: 'Now pagans are called dogs on account of their idolatry'.

<sup>133</sup> The NT contains numerous vineyard and wine parables, which connect the image of the vine with Israel or part of it; see Mark 12:1–9; Matt 21:33–41; Luke 20: 9–16; Matt; 21:28–32; cf. Luke 13:6–9. The Synoptics here refer to a common biblical image of Israel as a vine; see Ps 80:18–19; Isa 27:2–6; see R. Borig, *Der wahre Weinstock. Untersuchungen zu Jo 15,1–10*, München 1967.

the apostles of Jesus, who were formerly Jews. As Theodoret of Cyrillus argues, 'Next he revealed that there would be a people formed from both the Gentiles and the Jews (the foal and the ass's colt); the vine in this verse refers, however, to Israel, according to the prophets and the lawgiver (Is 5:1; Jer 2:21; Deut 32:32). The foal signifies the Gentiles on account of their untamed nature, which was then tied by the apostles to the vine, that is themselves, since the apostles were Jews by birth' (Quaest. CXII.3).

A similar exegetical approach is found in the writings of Jerome (Hebr. Quest. 49:11). Jerome uses the Hebrew word שֵׁרָקָה, which means the 'choice vine' and remarks that the choice vine is the Church gathered out of the nations.<sup>134</sup> Interestingly, Jerome expounds the original Hebrew word of the verse as showing that this word revealed the prefiguration of the Church of the Gentiles. In addition, Jerome mentions that it is possible to read 'his city' rather than 'foal' in Hebrew, but his understanding of 'his city' is that it refers to the Church, based on references to a city in Matt 5:14 (a city on a hill that cannot be hidden, that is, the believers in the Sermon on the Mount) and Ps 46:4 (city of God). Based on an idiosyncratic understanding of the Hebrew text, Jerome translates: 'Tying his colt to the vine, and his ass, my son, to the sorec', and presents Jacob addressing Judah as 'my son', which enabled Jerome to establish a strong christological exegesis of this verse by suggesting that it refers to the person of the Son in the Holy Trinity.

Ephraem the Syrian explains that 'the vine' is the synagogue, as attested by David (Ps 80:8,14).<sup>135</sup> Ephraem further suggests that the verse refers to His kingdom that is bound up with and handed down through the synagogue, according to the previous verse: 'until he comes to whom the kingdom belongs'. Furthermore, Ephraem emphasizes that 'when our Lord came, He also bound his foal to the true vine. Just as all symbols are fulfilled by Him, He would fulfill in truth even this that was handed down to them in likeness. Either there was a vine in Jerusalem outside of the sanctuary to which He bound his foals when He entered the temple, or in that city from which the foal came it had been bound to a vine' (cf. Luke 19:31; Comm.Gen. XLII.6).

<sup>134</sup> et ad Sorec, id est, electam vitem, alligaverit asinam, cui supersedit, Ecclesiam ex nationibus congregatam (PL 23:1006).

<sup>135</sup> Allusions to Israel as the vine in the Bible would also have been brought to mind, for example, Isaiah 5 and Ps 80:8, 14 and the choice vine in Jer 2:21; on the vine imagery in Christian literature, see J. Danielou, 'The Vine and the Tree of Life', in: idem, *Primitive Christian Symbols*, London 1964, 25–41, esp. 99f; more specifically, in the Syriac Fathers and in Syriac terminology, see R. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 95ff., 103.

Finally, Ishodad of Merv explains that the rendering 'he will bind to the vine' means that Christ, through his painful Passion, will bind his Church together (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 49:11–12). Moreover, he will appease those who rebel like an ass's colt, and, since he is the word of truth, he will also tame them. Accordingly, Ishodad explains that the first prophecy of appeasement was fulfilled during the time of the Lord, when he entered Jerusalem, while the latter prophecy of taming was accomplished through his apostles.

Gen 49:11a was the proof text par excellence that revealed the messianic advent of Jesus, and even describes his actions and the subsequent foundation of the Church of the Gentiles precisely. Interestingly, however, the Church Fathers emphasized the Jewish background of the Church of the Gentiles in this context, as well as the importance of the Law and of Israel's history for both Jewish and non-Jewish believers in Jesus.

*Gen 49:11b: 'He who washes his Garment in Wine'*

LXX Gen 49:11b πλυνεῖ ἐν οἴνῳ τὴν στολὴν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν αἵματι σταφυλῆς τὴν περιβολὴν αὐτοῦ

*He shall wash his robe in wine and his garments in the blood of a bunch of grapes* [NETS]

In the context of a christological approach, this verse is widely understood as the cleansing of believers in Christ's purifying blood of the Passion. Thus, the garment signifies believers in Jesus. In the words of Justin Martyr: 'For the Holy Spirit called those whose sins were remitted through Christ, *his robe*, among whom he is always present in power, but will be manifestly present at his second coming' (Dial. LIV).<sup>136</sup> Moreover, the 'blood of the grape' indicates that Christ derived blood from the power of God and thus refers to Christ's immaculate conception: 'For as God, and not man, has made the blood of the grape, so it has been foretold that the blood of Christ would not be from human seed, but from divine power' (ibid.).

Hippolytus of Rome understands this phrase as signifying Jesus' baptism in the Jordan. He argues that the 'washing of the garment in wine' signifies the cleansing of the flesh (that is, the garment) through the Holy Spirit. Moreover, the 'washing in the blood of the grape' refers to the blood and

<sup>136</sup> A similar approach can be found in Irenaeus, Dem. 57; cf. Clement of Alex. Paed. I.6; Eusebius, Dem VIII.114; Ishodad of Merv, ad Gen. 49:11–12.

the flesh of the Lord, which he carries like a robe around him, and that cleanses 'the whole calling of the Gentiles' (De Christo 11). Furthermore, according to Hippolytus, this verse alludes in a graphic way to Christ's Passion, because when Jesus was hanging from the cross he was like 'a bunch of ripe grapes', and, when his side was pierced, he emitted blood (Bened. XVIII).

Gennadius of Constantinople (458–471 CE) draws a parallel between wine and death. Thus, the wine referred to in Gen 49:11b does not commonly clean garments but soils them. Similarly, death does not exalt dead people but corrupts them. Accordingly, this verse indicates the paradox that took place after the three days of Christ's death, namely when he received an immortal body and was exalted through the resurrection (PG 85:1660).

The symbolism of the wine as Christ's purifying blood and of the garment as His body is common in patristic literature.<sup>137</sup> Theodore of Mopsuestia (350–428 CE) stresses that wine is a symbol in Scripture for punishment and death (cf. Ps 74:9). The words 'blood of the grape' were added so that Christ's Passion was emphasized. Finally, the 'garment' is a reference to human nature (Cat. Csl 304).

The blood of the Passion thus purifies believers in Jesus. It is further understood as a cleansing for Christ's human body.<sup>138</sup> This interpretation was also common in the Syriac exegetical tradition. Ephraem argues that 'the washing of the garment' refers to bathing in the blood of Christ's own body, which is the 'vesture of his divinity' (Comm.Gen. XLII.6). Ishodad explains that the biblical verse 'he shall *wash in the wine*' means the Lord's Passion. More specifically, his *garment* signifies his humanity. The *blood of the grapes* refers to the Lord's death, which cleansed his humanity according to the verse 'he will *wash his coat*' (Comm.Gen. ad Gen 49:11–12).<sup>139</sup>

Origen places Gen 49:11 in the exegetical context of Isa 63:1–3, which presents a clearly eschatological background. He describes how Jesus, as

<sup>137</sup> Theodoret, Quaest. CXII.4; cf. Theodore of Mospuestia, Fragments in Gen. Vv.11ff, in: Devreese StT vol. 141, 25.

<sup>138</sup> On the idea of Jesus' purifying Passion, see Origen, Hom. Lev. 8.5 on Lev 16:26. Jesus washed his robe in wine, that is, he was made clean through his own blood.

<sup>139</sup> J.-M. Vosté remarks that there are certain allusions from Nestorian theology in the idea of the garment as the body or the human nature of Christ. Ishodad follows the School of Antioch in his exegesis, and this interpretation of the 'garment' was traditional for this School. It was also close to the teachings of Nestorianism, which teaches that the Word has put on human nature ('La benediction d'après Mar Isodad de Merw', *Biblica* 29 (1948), 28); cf. Theodoret of Cyrrihus, who follows the same line of interpretation on the same question (Quaest. CXII.4); cf. also John Chrysostom, Hom. Gen. 67.10.

the king of glory, ascends to the heavens after his resurrection. When he comes into view, the powers ask: 'who is this coming from Edom, from Bosra, with his garments stained crimson?', and again: 'why are your garments red and your clothes like as if from a trodden winepress?' And to this He answers: 'I have crushed them'. For this reason He had need to wash 'His robe in wine, and His garment in the blood of the grape' (Gen 49:11). Origen continues: 'For after he took our infirmities and bore our diseases, and he took away the sin of the whole world, and benefited so many, perhaps then he received the baptism which is greater than any which could be imagined by men, concerning which I think he said: 'And I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am until it be accomplished' (cf. Luke 12:50)' (Comm. John. VI. 56. [291]). Origen explains Jesus' appearance in heaven through his Passion, as prophesied in Gen 49:11, which he associates with a cleansing baptism.<sup>140</sup> A similar image of a Messiah clad in blood-stained garments is reflected in Rev 19:13–15, which is clearly inspired by Isa 63:1–3. Isaiah envisioned a warrior king, stained with the blood of his enemies. It is uncertain if John adopts the same war-like notion for the Messiah in Revelation. However, the messianic imagery applied by John possibly presupposed the use of Gen 49:11 as a messianic proof text.<sup>141</sup> Origen explicitly connects both messianic proof texts (Gen 49:11 and Isa 63:1–3), and specifies that the garments were not stained but washed with the blood of Christ's Passion. As he further explains, 'having

---

<sup>140</sup> The eschatological frame of reference is probably supported by the etymological relationship between the word 'βάπτω' (dip/dye) and 'βαπτίζω' (dip in/plunge/baptize). The same exegetical approach can be found in Cyril of Alexandria, *Glaphyra*, PG 69:356. Origen here follows a popular early Christian interpretation of Isa 63:1–3. As R.L. Wilken notes, 'In the early Church this passage was understood to refer to Christ's ascension. The words 'who is this that comes from Edom?' were spoken by the angels who received Christ in heaven after his ascension, and 'crimsoned garments' was thought to refer to his garments stained by the blood of his passion' (*Isaiah: Interpreted by Early Christian and Medieval Commentators*, Grand Rapids MI 2007, XVI); cf. Cyril Alex., *Comm. Isaiah 63* (PG 70: 1381); Jerome: 'Who is he that comes up from the earth, comes up from blood? According to the prophecy of Jacob, he has bound his foal to the vine and has trodden the winepress alone, and his garments are red and shining, because he is beautiful in form (...)' (*Against John of Jerusalem 34* [NPNF 26:441]); cf. *Hom. Psalms 7* (on Psalm 68).

<sup>141</sup> As J. Fekkes notes, 'The shared language and image of Gen 49 and Is 63 consisting of a figure whose garments are soaked in 'blood', offers a ready basis for comparison' (*Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions in the Book of Revelation*, Sheffield 1994, 199; cf. P. Grelot, 'L' exégèse messianique d'Isaïe LXIII.1–6', *RB* 70 (1963), 371–80).

washed there and after the ascent to the height, when he led captivity captive, he might descend bearing various gifts' (Comm.John VI. 56 [292]).<sup>142</sup>

As can be seen, in spite of the exegetical nuances, there was a general agreement in patristic literature that this verse revealed various aspects of Christ's Passion, which was a purifying act for humanity.

*Gen 49:12: 'Wine and Milk'*

LXX Gen 49:12 χαροποι οί ὀφθαλμοί αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ οἴνου, καὶ λευκοὶ οἱ ὀδόντες αὐτοῦ ἢ γάλα.

*His eyes are gladdening from wine and his teeth are more white than milk.*  
[NETS]

The Church Fathers consistently maintain that the last verse of this passage is another point where Scripture reveals the mystery of Jesus. Christian exegesis interprets this verse as a prefiguration of Jesus' death and resurrection, the Eucharistic sacrament and finally Jesus' teaching. Clement of Alexandria argues that 'all these various ways and figures of speech speak of the Word: solid food, flesh, nourishment, bread, blood and milk' (Paed. I.6.47).

According to Hippolytus, the 'eyes red with wine' symbolizes the blessed prophets (De Christo 12), who foretold Christ's redemptive Passion and who rejoiced in seeing him (De Christo 13). Similarly, Irenaeus of Lyons thinks that believers who receive the Spirit dwell in 'everlasting gladness' (Dem 57). Cyril of Alexandria suggests that the 'gladdening of the eyes' signifies the happy and pleasant nature of Jesus' divinity (εὐθυμον καὶ ἰλαρόν; Glaphyra, PG 69:356). Certain Church Fathers associate the verse with the joys of the world in light of Christ's Passion (Theodoret of Cyrhus, Quaest. CXII.4).

According to another stream of thought, the verse prefigures the gladness of the resurrection (Gennadius, PG 85:1661). Theodore of Mopsuestia compares the teeth that are hidden in the mouth with Jesus' greatness, which was hidden during the period of his death. However, this greatness became openly visible to everyone at the resurrection. Furthermore, the colour white indicates the renewal of the resurrection (Cat.Csl 304).

In the context of the sacramental use of wine by Jesus at the Last Supper, another Christian exegetical approach understands this verse as a

<sup>142</sup> Cf. LXX Ps 67:19; Eph 4:8; Irenaeus, Adv.haer. II.20.3; cf. Jerome's exegetical approach above.

symbol for the Eucharist. Eusebius stresses that ‘His eyes are cheerful from wine’ refers to the sacramental wine, which Jesus gave to his disciples when he said ‘drink; this is my blood that is shed for you’.<sup>143</sup> Furthermore, the phrase ‘his teeth are white as milk’ refers to the brightness and purity of the sacramental food in contrast to the bloody sacrifices ordained by Moses. These sacrifices were abolished by Jesus and he gave the disciples bread to use as a symbol of his body instead (Dem.Ev. VIII.380; cf. Ishodad of Merv, Comm.Gen. ad Gen 49:11–12).

A Eucharistic interpretation can also be found in the writings of Ishodad of Merv, who follows the Syriac text of this verse (ibid.). The Peshitta Gen 49:12 reads:

ܘܥܝܢܐܐܝܗܘܢ ܕܘܨܘܘܬܐ ܕܘܨܘܘܬܐ ܕܘܨܘܘܬܐ ܕܘܨܘܘܬܐ ܕܘܨܘܘܬܐ ܕܘܨܘܘܬܐ

*His eyes shall be radiant with wine, and his teeth white with milk.*

Ishodad relates the wine to the blood of the Passion and, furthermore, to the wine of the Eucharist. Similarly, following the Syriac text, Ephraem the Syrian comments on this verse that ‘the truth of his thought is clearer than pure wine’ (Comm.Gen. XLII.6.2).

The second part of the verse is understood as a reference to the Lord’s commandments, which are pure as milk and provide nourishment for believers. Hippolytus teaches that the phrase ‘Teeth whiter than milk’ refers either to the apostles, who were sanctified by the Word, or to the Lord’s commandments, which are like milk, that is, nourishment for believers (Bened. XIX; De Christo 13). Theodoret of Cyrrhus understands this verse as indicating the clarity of the teaching received by believers (Quaest. CXII.4). Similarly, Diodore interprets the ‘teeth’ as a reference to Scripture and the ‘milk’ as the lucidity of Jesus’ teaching (cf. LXX Ps 56:5; Cat. Csl 302). This exegetical approach was also common in the Syriac exegetical tradition.<sup>144</sup>

The last verse of Jacob’s blessing on Judah confirms what has already been observed in the analysis of the previous verses of this passage, namely, that patristic exegesis of this passage is determined by a prominent, albeit multifaceted, christological interpretation.

<sup>143</sup> Cf. Mark 14:24; Matt 26:28; Luke 22:20.

<sup>144</sup> Cf. Ephraem the Syrian, Comm.Gen. XLII.6; Ishodad of Merv, ad Gen 49:11–12.

*The Exegetical Encounter*

In rabbinic exegetical traditions, the blessing on Judah in Gen 49:8–12 was interpreted in the context of the history of Israel, and, in particular, in terms of the rise of the Davidic monarchy from Judah. Furthermore, this passage was also understood to refer to the future of the Jewish people and was a popular series of messianic proof texts. Accordingly, messianic speculation with regard to Judah and his descendants is widely attested in rabbinic literature. Similarly, Gen 49:8–12 was one of the prominent testimonia texts in Christian literature. Jacob's blessing on Judah was widely understood by Christian authors as a prophecy about the advent of Jesus. Thus, messianism was a central issue in the exegesis of this passage for both rabbinic and Christian commentators.

Gen 49:8, the opening verse of Jacob's blessing on Judah, refers to praise of Judah by his brothers and his relationship to his enemies. One approach in rabbinic exegesis relates the opening verse of the passage to Judah's previous actions with regard to Tamar and Joseph. Accordingly, Judah was praised and exalted because he saved the lives of Tamar and Joseph (e.g. Tg Onqelos Gen 49:8; GenR 97; GenR 99:8, Tan *Wayehi* 10; Tg PsJon Gen 49:8). In particular, GenR 97 maintains that Judah saved his brothers by saving Joseph. Furthermore, according to rabbinic sources such as GenR 97, 98:6, 99:8 and Tan *Wayehi* 10, the second part of the verse, which emphasizes that Judah's hands will be on 'the neck of enemies', refers to the victories won by Judah's descendants, and, in particular, Davidic victories within the history of Israel in the Hebrew Bible.

A similar exegetical approach to Gen 49:8 is encountered in Ephraem the Syrian's Commentary on Genesis 42.5. First, Ephraem the Syrian understands that Judah will be praised by his brothers because he saved Joseph's life and ensured the survival of all the tribes. Ephraem strictly understands Gen 49:8 with regard to Judah's positive actions towards his brothers. Thus, Joseph's fate is emphasized in the context of this exegetical approach. Secondly, Ephraem argues that Judah was praised because of the victorious military expeditions of his royal descendants and, most importantly, David (Comm.Gen. 42.5). The exegetical affinity between Ephraem and rabbinic traditions is evident. Significantly, there is no direct suggestion of the identified exegetical motifs in the biblical text, which enhances the possibility of an exegetical encounter. Furthermore, the likelihood of an encounter is strengthened by the fact that this belongs to a *cluster of motifs* that are found in the interpretations of both Christian and rabbinic writers on Gen 49:8.



Interpretations of Jacob's blessing with regard to the history of Judah and his tribe are also found in rabbinic exegesis of Gen 49:9. Accordingly, this verse refers to Judah's strength and expands upon the history and power of Judah's tribe and subsequent descendants (e.g. GenR 98:7). The military and political successes of the Judahite tribe are emphasized (eg. GenR 98:7; GenR 97). In Christian tradition, a historical exegetical approach is represented by the Antiochene School of exegesis. Exegetes, such as Diodore of Tarsus (Cat. Csl 299) and Eusebius of Emesa (op. cit.), understand Gen 49:9 in the context of the volatile political history of the Judahite tribe, and especially with respect to the tribe's inheritance and rule of the promised land. The Antiochene exegetical approach appears to be very close to the rabbinic interpretations outlined above. However, the similarities can be explained by a literal understanding of the biblical text, and also against the background of a shared knowledge of biblical history.

Rabbinic traditions, such as transmitted in Tg Onqelos Gen 49:9 and GenR 98:7, further connect Gen 49:9 to Judah's life-saving intervention with respect to Tamar (Genesis 38) and Joseph (Gen 37:6). Notably, the Hebrew text of Gen 49:9 reads: *'from the prey you have gone up'*. Ephraem suggests that the verse refers to Judah's decisive intervention to save Joseph and Tamar 'from murder' (Comm.Gen. XLII.5), thus quite closely reflecting rabbinic exegetical traditions. Indeed, Judah's action with regard to Joseph and Tamar is not mentioned in the biblical text of Gen 49:9. However, Ephraem understands this verse in terms of Judah's guiltlessness with regard to Joseph and Tamar on the basis of the Syriac wording of Gen 49:9: *'from murder/killing, my son, you are gone up'*. Both the MT and the Syriac versions of Gen 49:9 imply a violent imagery. Thus, the exegetical affinity was probably facilitated by the underlying Syriac and Hebrew biblical texts. Significantly, the rabbinic traditions discussed connect Judah's actions with regard to Joseph and Tamar to exegesis of both Gen 49:8 and Gen 49:9. In contrast, Ephraem specifically links *only* Gen 49:9 to Judah's intervention with regard to saving Joseph and Tamar's lives from 'murder/killing' (ܩܘܠܠܐ). Ephraem's meticulous and nuanced approach closely follows the Syriac biblical text of Gen 49:9, which refers to 'killing'. Accordingly, although Ephraem's use of this motif may suggest a familiarity with rabbinic exegetical traditions, it does not demonstrate a direct exegetical encounter.

Interestingly, Ishodad of Merv (ad loc.) links both Gen 49:8 *and* Gen 49:9 with the fate of Judah's tribe *and* with Judah's life-saving actions regarding Tamar and Joseph in agreement with the rabbinic traditions

discussed above. Accordingly, he adopts an exegetical understanding that reflects the rabbinic traditions very closely, and may demonstrate a case of a direct exegetical encounter.

The next point of discussion is the understanding of the 'lion' in Gen 49:9 and its symbolism. A messianic interpretation is explicitly highlighted in rabbinic and Christian exegesis of Gen 49:9. Both traditions exploit the symbol of the lion, which represented the tribe of Judah, for their own theological purposes. In rabbinic literature, as evidenced in GenR 98:7, the strength of a lion applies to Judah the man, the tribe and even the Davidic nation. Furthermore, GenR 98:7 understands the verse in terms of the military history of Israel up to the messianic era, whereas, in GenR 97, history concludes with the royal Messiah, who is a descendant of Judah. Thus, according to this exegetical approach, Gen 49:9 refers to the Messiah ben David. In patristic exegetical tradition Jesus is understood to be the 'lion' from Judah due to his physical Davidic ancestry on the side of his mother, Mary (Hippolytus, *De Christo* 7–14). For the Church Fathers and rabbinic exegetes, the messianism in view begins with Davidic ancestry, but is developed in different directions when it comes to the nature of that messianism. The use of Judah the lion as a messianic symbol is also attested in early Jewish and Christian apocalyptic literature (4 Ezra 11:37 and 12:31;<sup>145</sup> and Rev 5:5).

The lion of Judah provides an example of shared imagery in the writings of rabbinic exegetes and Christians, albeit with a diverging theological context. Both traditions embrace the idea that the phrase 'Judah is a lion's whelp' refers to the Messiah of Judahite ancestry, who was associated with a lion.<sup>146</sup> The wide use of this symbol in rabbinic and earlier Jewish literature illustrates that it maintained its messianic meaning and validity for Jewish tradition, alongside its parallel use regarding Jesus in Christian circles.

In the context of exegesis of Gen 49:8–10, and especially Gen 49:10, a variety of rabbinic traditions emphasize the expected permanency of the Judahite royalty until the advent of the Messiah. In exegesis of Gen 49:10 in particular, the concept of Judahite kingship is expanded upon in terms of the historical kings of Judah (e.g. targumic traditions on Gen 49:10;

---

<sup>145</sup> See M.E. Stone, *Selected Studies in Pseudepigrapha and Apocrypha With Special Reference to the Armenian Tradition*, Leiden 1991, 312.

<sup>146</sup> Cf. LXX Deut 32:22; see W. Horbury, *Messianism among Jews and Christians*, 132f.

GenR 71:5), the rabbinic leadership (e.g. Sifre Deut 352; GenR 97) and the future Messiah (e.g. GenR 97; GenR 99:8).

The earliest targumic sources maintain that kingship will never leave the Judahite tribe, which is accompanied by a scribe (or a scribal class) that also will not vanish (Tg Onqelos Gen 49:10; Tg Neofiti Gen 49:10). Accordingly, royalty and scholarship are found within the descendants of Judah, no doubt an allusion to the leadership of the Davidic dynasty followed by the leadership of the 'scribes'. The earliest attested midrashic tradition, according to date of redaction, to refer to the 'sceptre' as the rabbinic leaders is found in Sifre Deut 352 from the third century. This exegetical approach places the rabbinic leadership as the direct heirs of the blessing on Judah, which legitimates their authority.

The focus on the scribes derives from the MT, which in Gen 49:10 refers to a *מַחֲקֵק*, a word that is commonly translated as 'sceptre' or 'ruler's staff'. However, there are instances elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible where this word refers to a person, and in particular a legislator (cf. Deut 33:21; Judg 5:14; Isa 33:22).<sup>147</sup> As such, the word could easily have been interpreted by rabbinic exegetes in both ways, as the word already had this dual sense. The Targumim certainly do this, so, for example, Tg Neofiti Gen 49:10 translates *מַחֲקֵק* with *סִפְרֵינִי*, which means 'scribes' or 'teachers' or 'scholars'.<sup>148</sup> As G. Vermes emphasizes, 'Palestinian exegetical tradition relates *מַחֲקֵק* to the teaching of the Torah. The teacher is either God, who gave the Law; or Moses (...); or the scribes in general. (...) Where, therefore, the Septuagint sees a *ruler*, Palestinian tradition as recorded in the Targums and midrashic literature, recognizes a *Law-Giver* or *Interpreter*. Finally, in the Qumran writing both these interpretations, the Hellenistic and the targumic are represented'.<sup>149</sup> As Vermes notes, in the Damascus document (DD vi.2–11), the author 'understands *מַחֲקֵק* to mean interpreter of the Torah. (...) He is to be followed at the end of the eschatological era

<sup>147</sup> As G. Vermes remarks about the LXX translation of Gen 49:10: 'Both symbols—*sceptre* and *commander's staff* are interpreted as persons, viz. a prince and a ruler' (*Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies*, Leiden 1983, 50). Obviously, the word was understood quite early in Jewish tradition as reference to a person. Furthermore, according to M. Rösel: 'Während der MT nur davor redet, dass ein Herrscherstab zwischen den Füßen Judas stehen wird, bezeugt die LXX-Version eine eher dynastische Vorstellung: Ein Führer aus der Nachkommenschaft Judas wird nicht vergehen' ('Die Interpretation von Genesis 49 in der Septuaginta', *BN* 79 (1995), 63).

<sup>148</sup> As B. Grossfeld notes, 'The Targum understood the Hebrew *mēhoqēq* ('ruler's staff') to be linguistically related to *hōq* ('law') and thus renders it as 'lawgiver' or 'instructor of the law' (*The Targum Onqelos to Genesis*, 163).

<sup>149</sup> *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism*, 52.

by a final Teacher of Righteousness or Interpreter of the law, i.e. the Priest Messiah'.<sup>150</sup>

Notably, according to Eusebius of Caesarea, Jesus is the 'Lawgiver of the Gentiles' (Dem.Ev. I. 22). Specifically, he claims that Moses prophesied about Jesus (in Gen 49:10), because Moses knew that his own prophecy would be proven insufficient for the nations in the future. Although the understanding of Jesus as the 'Lawgiver of the Gentiles' was not uncommon in early patristic literature, the use of this motif by Eusebius in the context of exegesis of Gen 49:10 is striking. It is possible that Eusebius knew of the 'scribal' interpretation in rabbinic literature, such as evidenced in Tg Onqelos Gen 49:10 and Tg Neofiti Gen 49:10, which he seems to challenge here, albeit implicitly, by attributing the role of 'lawgiver' to Jesus.

R. Murray suggests that the scribal interpretation was 'present already in the Palestinian targums but no doubt adopted officially by the Tannaite Rabbis against the Christian messianic interpretation'.<sup>151</sup> O. Skarsaune also argues that the emphasis on scribal descendants is in fact a response to the lack of kingship in Israel at the time of Targum Onqelos. He states: 'The problem is thus solved by transferring the idea of dominion from the Davidic dynasty to the spiritual leaders of Israel, the succession of rabbinical teachers. One of the factors which helped to create this exegesis, may have been Christian exegesis of this text along Justin's lines'. Importantly, Skarsaune goes on to say, 'As we shall see, however, this way of 'saving' the continuity of kingship is anticipated in the Qumran scrolls—it therefore cannot be explained solely as an apologetic concept in the debate with Christians'.<sup>152</sup> Indeed, it seems that, although the rabbinic emphasis on the permanency of the scribes as leaders of the Jewish people reflects longstanding rabbinic concerns with regard to the loss of royal Jewish leadership, the possibility cannot be ruled out that this specific exegetical approach could have also addressed Christian allegations about the abolition of Jewish political, spiritual and prophetic power.<sup>153</sup>

<sup>150</sup> *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism*, 54.

<sup>151</sup> *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 282.

<sup>152</sup> *Proof from Prophecy*, 262. The 4Q252 fragment in question is discussed below.

<sup>153</sup> This point is also raised by B. Grossfeld, who argues that 'the permanent nature of Judah's pre-eminence may have been designed to counter Christian polemics against the Jews which repeatedly stressed that the Law had been superseded, and that the Jews had been deprived of their exalted status as the chosen people' (*The Targum Onqelos to Genesis*, 163). Similarly, this point is raised again in collaboration with Aberbach on the Targumim where the emphasis on the (final) enduring nature of the kingship of Judah as a potential response to Christian claims is highlighted (*Targum Onqelos on Genesis 49*, 13). Obviously, although the tradition of the Judahite leadership presents a long internal

Messianic interpretations of Gen 49:10 are pre-rabbinic and quite clearly attested in Jewish literature prior to the Christian era and particularly at Qumran. A clear messianic interpretation of this verse is attested in 4Q252, fr. 6, which describes how 'For *the ruler's staff* (Gen 49:10) is the covenant of kingship, and the [trib]es of Israel are the divisions, [vacat] until the coming of the Messiah of righteousness, the shoot of David'.<sup>154</sup> G. Vermes argues that the interpretation of this text envisaged a royal covenant granted by God to David, which remained valid despite the disappearance of the Davidic kingship in the sixth century BCE.<sup>155</sup> As Vermes further notes, this approach follows the LXX tradition. More specifically, 'the Messiah of righteousness' is explicitly identified in this fragment. Thus, certain Qumran texts bear witness to messianic exegetical interpretations that are also found in rabbinic and Christian literatures.<sup>156</sup>

Similar early messianic interpretations of Gen 49:10 can be found in the Testament of Judah. The Testament of Judah 22 predicts the coming of foreign rule until the time of the salvation of Israel. Moreover, T Judah 24 envisages the advent of a meek Messiah for the nations in connection with Gen 49:10 and Isa 11:1. However, this part of the text is clearly a Christian interpolation.<sup>157</sup> Early Jewish interpretations of Gen 49:10, as manifested

---

discussion in rabbinic sources, this does diminish the possibility that the tradition was reused in other contexts, as Grossfeld also argues.

<sup>154</sup> This text is dated on the basis of palaeography to the second half of the first century BCE; see G.J. Brooke, 'Commentary on Genesis A+B', in: *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* 22, Oxford 1996, 185–207; cf. G.S. Oegema, 'Tradition-Historical Studies on 4Q252', in: J. Charlesworth et al. (eds), *Qumran-Messianism*, Tübingen 1998, 154–174.

<sup>155</sup> *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism*, 54; cf. R.D. Schwartz, 'The Messianic Departure from Judah (4Q Patriarchal Blessings)', *ThZ* 37 (1981), 257–66; F. García Martínez, 'Messianic Hopes in Qumran Writings', in: idem – J. Trebolla Barrera (eds), *The People of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Their Writings, Beliefs and Practices*, Leiden 1995, 159–190, esp. 182f; cf. R.T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament*, London 1971, 175.

<sup>156</sup> On relations between messianic expectations at Qumran and in Christianity, see J. Trebolla Barrera, 'The Qumran Texts and the NT', in: F. García Martínez – J. Trebolla Barrera, *The People of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 203–215; see also the discussion in G. Brooke, '4Q252 et le Nouveau Testament', in: D. Marguérat (ed.), *Le déchiement, Juifs et Chrétiens au premier siècle*, Genève 1996, 235–36; cf. W. Horbury, 'Old Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha', in: idem, *Messianism among Jews and Christians*, 48; see also J. VanderKam, 'Messianism and the Scrolls', in: E.C. Ulrich – idem, *The Community of the Renewed Covenant*, Notre Dame 1994, 211–234, esp. 215–218. Recent scholarship on Qumran and Early Christianity includes: R.A. Clements – D.R. Schwartz (eds), *Text, Thought and Practice in Qumran and Early Christianity*, Leiden 2009; F. García Martínez (ed.), *Echoes from the Caves: Qumran and the New Testament*, Leiden 2009; G.J. Brooke, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament*, Minneapolis 2005; J.A. Fitzmyer, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Christian Origins*, Grand Rapids MA 2000, esp. 73ff.

<sup>157</sup> On the messianic expectations in this text, see R.A. Kugler, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, Sheffield 2001; cf. G.W. Nickelsburg – M.E. Stone, *Faith and Piety in Early*

in the Qumran texts and in the Testament of Judah, appear to have influenced both rabbinic and Christian messianic exegesis of this verse.<sup>158</sup>

The MT of Gen 49:10 envisions the coming of the enigmatic *Shiloh*, which, in a widely transmitted rabbinic exegetical approach, acquires a messianic significance (e.g. GenR 98:8; LamR 1:16). However, the messianic interpretation of the word 'Shiloh' was not self-evident and reflects a long exegetical history. Indeed, the targumic traditions of Gen 49:10 interpret 'Shiloh' as an explicit reference to the Messiah (e.g. Tg Onqelos: 'until the Messiah will come'; and Tg Neofiti: 'until the time that the King Messiah will come'). Furthermore, in certain rabbinic traditions, Shiloh is mentioned as a name or a title for the Messiah (e.g. LamR 1:16; BT Sanh 98b).

Significantly, Eusebius of Caesarea in the fourth century CE demonstrates knowledge of the Hebrew text of the verse, which he interprets in an explicitly christological way in the context of the Gospel of John (Dem. Ev. VIII.332–333). Eusebius reports that the *Hebrew* text of Gen 49:10 reads 'Siloam', which means 'the one that is sent'. Eusebius must have had a distorted 'Shiloh' in mind, which he understands as a reference to the 'Sent One', that is the Messiah, as in John 9:7. According to Eusebius' idiosyncratic etymology, 'Siloam' derives from the Hebrew verb 'send' (שלח). Knowledge of the Hebrew text of Gen 49:10 and, most importantly, of 'Shiloh' is not commonly attested in Eastern Christian exegetical literature. A similar messianic approach based on an interpretation of Shiloh as deriving from שלח can be found in the Vulgate Gen 49:10. This approach reveals a certain—even if philologically unsound—familiarity among Christians with the enigmatic 'Shiloh' of the original Hebrew text in a specific messianic interpretative context.

Justin Martyr suggests that the wording and interpretation of Gen 49:10 were the subject of Christian-Jewish controversy, arguing that the Jews distorted the text in order to dismiss any christological prophecies derived

---

*Judaism*, Leiden 1983, 170–171; J.J. Collins, *The Sceptre and the Star: the Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Ancient Literature*, N.Y. 1995, 91–92; on the Christian character of this passage, see M. de Jonge, *The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, Assen 1953, 89–90 and J.J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, Grand Rapids MI 1998, 141.

<sup>158</sup> See W. Horbury, 'Jewish Messianism and Early Christology', in: R.N. Longenecker (ed.), *Contours of Christology in the New Testament*, Grand Rapids MI 2005, 13; cf. M. de Jonge, 'The Two Messiahs in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs', in: idem, *Jewish Eschatology and Early Christian Christology and the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, Leiden 1991, 191–203. For a survey of the secondary literature on Jewish and Christian messianism, see S.E. Porter (ed.), *The Messiah in Old and New Testaments*, Cambridge 2004, esp. 1–4.

from it (Dial. LII). As R. Murray remarks, ‘The charge is evidently false (. . .) for the LXX interpretation of the verse remains very strongly messianic, the Jewish tradition has never wavered in the same exegesis’.<sup>159</sup> The overall acceptance of the christological message of this verse is attested by the majority of Christian writers. Theodoret of Cyrrihus even suggests that all Christians, even the heretics among them, would recognize in this verse a clear prophecy about Jesus, and that it was only the Jews who refused to accept it (Dial Err.). This remark by Theodoret might indicate that there was an ongoing controversy on the ‘correct’ interpretation of this particular verse between Jews and Christian at the time.

Interestingly, a rabbinic tradition is found in GenR 98:8 (cf. BT Sanh 98b) where the enigmatic Shiloh may also refer to the genealogical descent of Hillel from David, and so puts Hillel in the line of kings and an ancestor of the future Messiah. Accordingly, the rabbinic leadership is in view as the fulfilment of the blessing on Judah. Significantly, Cyril of Jerusalem attacks Jews from his time who appropriated the Davidic succession for their own patriarchs (Cat.Hom 13.17).<sup>160</sup> A. Posnanski specifically argues that Cyril attacked the patriarchal house of the Hillelides on this point, who claimed for themselves biological Davidic ancestry.<sup>161</sup> Cyril’s argumentation is slightly vague, as he does not explicitly name the Hillelides or other rabbinic schools. Nonetheless, it is evident that he refutes ‘false’ claims of Davidic ancestry and Jewish leadership among rabbis. Cyril clearly challenges the legitimacy of the genealogical declarations made by (in his words) those ‘so-called patriarchs’ (περι τῶν καλουμένων παρ’αὐτοῖς νῦν πατριάρχων). His accusation strongly reminds of the above mentioned rabbinic tradition on Hillel. Thus, Posnanski’s assumption appears correct. Cyril’s angry harangue reveals a Jewish-Christian controversy that involved exegetical issues with enormous political and theological weight. Furthermore, Cyril presents us with a strong case of an exegetical encounter, since his accusations refer to Jewish traditions that are attested in rabbinic sources.

According to another exegetical approach in rabbinic literature, the word ‘Shiloh’ is a reference to the Messiah’s ownership of the kingdom.

<sup>159</sup> *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 282.

<sup>160</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem was born c.313 CE in Palestine, perhaps in Caesarea. On his life and works, see E. Yarnold, *Cyril of Jerusalem*, London 2000, esp. 3ff.; on the contacts between Jews and Christians in Palestine at the time of Cyril’s episcopate, see J.W. Drijvers, *Cyril of Jerusalem*, 10; G. Stemmerger, *Jews and Christians in the Holy Land*, 78.

<sup>161</sup> *Schiloh*, 59.

The earliest attestation of this rabbinic interpretation of the biblical text is in the targumic traditions (e.g. Tg Onqelos and Neofiti Gen 49:10; cf. GenR 99:8). As discussed above, שילה could be understood in the Hebrew as a name of a person, place or as *she-lo* referring to ownership. This ambiguity is used in the Targumim and Midrashim to refer to both the Messiah and his ownership of the kingdom. For MT 'עד כי יבא שילה' 'until Shiloh comes', Targum Neofiti gives: 'עד זמן דייתי מלכא משיחא דדידיה' (until the time that the King Messiah will come to whom the kingdom belongs). Similarly Targum Onqelos gives: 'עד דייתי משיחא' (until the Messiah will come to whom the kingdom belongs).

Notably, this alternative rendering with the addition of 'the kingdom' was current among early Church Fathers. As discussed above, this reading is attested in early Greek patristic literature, namely in Justin (Apol I.32) and in Origen (De Princ. IV.3.1; cf. Jerome, Hos. I.3.4–5). Furthermore, this understanding is also evidenced in the Syriac literature. Both Aphrahat (Dem. XVI.10) and Ephraem (Comm.Gen. XLII.5) know of this reading, and quote the verse as: 'till he comes to whom the kingdom belongs'. This interpretation presupposes an understanding of the Hebrew *Shiloh* as *she-lo* ('that belongs to him' or 'that which belongs to him'). As R. Murray rightly observes, 'This, as the pronoun introducing a relative clause needed a subject, so *malkuta* was supplied. This explanation seems to be reflected by the Greek. Side-by-side with the usual  $\xi\omega\varsigma\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\ \epsilon\lambda\theta\eta\ \hat{\omega}\ \acute{\alpha}\pi\acute{o}\kappa\rho\iota\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha\iota$ , which again looks for a subject; Justin supplies this once as to  $\beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\iota\omicron\nu$ '.<sup>162</sup>

R. Murray argues that this rendering betrays the closeness of the early Syriac Church Fathers to 'their Judaeo-Christian roots'.<sup>163</sup> More specifically, A. Vööbus suggests that it shows targumic influence on the Syriac literature, and further argues that this targumic tradition was also known to Justin.<sup>164</sup> In a similar line of interpretation, T. Jansma emphasizes the fact that the use of the additional word 'the kingdom' is to be found in authors such as Justin, Aphrahat and Ephraem, who 'are engaged in a controversy against the Jews'.<sup>165</sup> Accordingly, targumic traditions, as attested in Targum Neofiti and Targum Onqelos, could have independently influenced

<sup>162</sup> *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 282.

<sup>163</sup> *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 239.

<sup>164</sup> *Peshitta und Targumim des Pentateuchs. Neues Licht zur Frage der Herkunft der Peshitta aus dem palästinischen Targum*, Stockholm 1958, 26.

<sup>165</sup> 'Ephraem on Genesis XLIX.10, An Enquiry into the Syriac Text Forms as Presented in his Commentary on Genesis', *Parole de l'Orient* 4 (1973), 258; cf. A. Levene, 'The Blessings of Jacob in Syriac and Rabbinic Exegesis', *Studia Patristica* 7 (1966), 524–530.



both Greek and Syriac writers, who possibly had firsthand knowledge of Jewish traditions. The inclusion of the addition of 'kingdom', which was not in the biblical text but also found in targumic and midrashic sources, strengthens the possibility of a direct exegetical encounter.

Building on the historical interpretation of Gen 49:9, the Church Fathers also understood Gen 49:10 in a historical context. Accordingly, they understood the verse to refer to actual events in the history of the Jewish people that took place at the time of the advent of the Messiah. The loss of Jewish sovereignty under Roman rule at the time of Jesus' birth was a certain sign of the fulfilment of Jacob's prophecy (see John Chrysostom, *Contr. Jud.*, PG 48:817). As S.J.D. Cohen observes, in the context of Justin's argumentation with regard to Gen 49:10: 'Justin and indeed virtually all subsequent Christian exegetes, argued that these obscure words meant that the Messiah would be the last king of Judah. (...) Justin is aware of a possible Jewish objection: we lost our kingship even before the birth and Passion of Jesus. (...) Justin responds that nevertheless the prophecy is fulfilled by the fact that Jews had priests and prophets until the arrival of Jesus, after which they were lost in the destruction of the temple in 70 C.E.'<sup>166</sup> Indeed, Christian traditions extended their interpretation of loss of political power to include the cessation of the sacrificial offerings at the Temple, as well as of the priestly office (Justin, *Dial CXX*; Origen, *De Princ IV.1.3*; et al.). Furthermore, Christian writers saw Jesus' advent as an historical event connected to the Danielic prophecy on the demolition of the Temple and the destruction of Jerusalem (Eusebius, *Dem.Ev. VIII.96*; Aphrahat, *Dem.XIX.11*).

A major stream of thought among the Church Fathers considered the rule of Herod the Great to be the ultimate fulfilment of Jacob's prophecy, as he was thought to be the first non-Jewish king of the Jews.<sup>167</sup> Indeed,

---

<sup>166</sup> *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*, Berkeley L.A. – London 2000, 19.

<sup>167</sup> See S.J.D. Cohen, who dedicates a chapter in his book to the question of 'Was Herod Jewish?', which he answers at the end affirmatively (*The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 13ff.). He suggests that 'Perhaps the fact that the Herodian family had connections with 'the neighboring Arabs and Gazeans and Ascalonites' as Josephus said, gave rise to the polemic that Herod was an Ascalonite himself. (BJ 1.123)' (*ibid.*, 20). Josephus reports that Herod was of Idumaeen ancestry. His mother, a woman named Cypros (Kypros or Kypris) was an Arab (probably Nabatean) noblewoman 'of an industrious Arab family' (AJ 14.121; BJ 1.181); Cohen further suggests: 'According to rabbinic law, Herod will have been a Gentile because he was the son of a non-Jewish woman, who is not reported to have converted; neither Antipater, nor Herod nor Josephus knew this, of course, because the matrilinear principle did not yet exist in the first century B.C.E. or first century C.E.' (*ibid.*, 19).

Justin Martyr mentions somewhat between the lines of his exposition of Gen 49:10 that Herod was a foreigner, an 'Askelonite', but this is according to *Jewish* claims (Dial. LII). Justin's seemingly passing reference may indicate that Herod's origin was a well known tradition, and so he did not deem it necessary to corroborate this information with further details. Justin, writing in the mid-second century, could have been familiar with the tradition already reported by Josephus in the first century. According to Josephus, Herod was originally an Idumaeen (Ant. XIV.1.3 and 7.3). In addition, Josephus reports that friends and flatterers of Herod had invented a Jewish genealogy for him (Ant. XVI.11). Evidently, Josephus' report could have provided for Justin sufficient evidence of Herod's non full-blooded Jewish ancestry. Technically, Herod was not the descendant of any Jewish tribe, let alone of the royal tribe of Judah. The Church Fathers commonly call Herod a 'foreigner'.<sup>168</sup> Patristic tradition quite logically emphasized Herod's foreign—that is non-Jewish, non-Judahite—origin in order to prove their christological point. As they argued, Jesus came when the Jewish Judahite leadership had ended, according to the prophecy in LXX Gen 49:10, which explicitly mentions the cessation of rulership from Judah's loins. Herod's oblique past and Josephus' information on Herod's commissioned fake Jewish genealogy must have fuelled rumours on his 'Gentile' origin among Jews at the time, which were readily adopted—and also reformulated—by Christians.<sup>169</sup> However, while Herod's ancestry and rule are discussed polemically by the Church Fathers in the context of the exegesis of Gen 49:10, rabbinic traditions do not consider Herod's rule in the same exegetical context of Gen 49:10.

Interestingly, a narrative tradition is found in Slavonic Josephus (de bello Jud. 6.310–311) about a secret debate among Jewish priests, discussing whether Herod was the coming prince about whom it was prophesied in Gen 49:10 and Dan 9:24–27. After thorough deliberation, they deny that

---

Still, the matrilineal law would have applied from the second century onwards, and Christian authors may have been familiar with this law.

<sup>168</sup> See Epiphanius, Pan. 29.3.5: 'But then finally, a gentile, King Herod, was crowned, and not David's descendant any more' τότε δὲ λοιπὸν ἀλλόφυλος βασιλεὺς Ἡρώδης καὶ οὐκέτι οἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ Δαυὶδ διάδημα ἐπέθεντο; cf. Eusebius, Dem. Ev. VIII.102.

<sup>169</sup> A. Schalit, 'Die frühchristliche Überlieferung' maintains that this tradition was a piece of Jewish polemic against Herod. As W. Adler notes, 'It is not unreasonable to suppose that the reports of both Africanus and Justin, both of whom were of Palestinian origin, reflect a Jewish or Jewish/Christian tradition dating to the 1st century' ('The Apocalyptic Survey', 234).

this cruel king could ever have been the anointed one.<sup>170</sup> The discussion in Slavonic Josephus recalls Christian speculations on the identification of the messianic figure prophesied in Gen 49:10 and Dan 9:26. Slavonic Josephus is a late text with Christian interpolations,<sup>171</sup> and, as such, the authenticity of this passage is uncertain.<sup>172</sup> However, it attests to the longevity of the exegetical understanding of Herod in the context of Gen 49:10 and Dan 9:24–27, according to ‘Jewish’ concerns.

The next point of discussion is exegesis of Gen 49:11a. The vine as a metaphor for Israel was common in the Bible (cf. Isaiah 5 and Ps 80:9,15) and was utilized by rabbinic exegetes. For example, the ‘choice vine’ is understood to be the sons of Israel, based on Jer 2:21 (e.g. GenR 98:9; Tan *Wayehi* 10). According to GenR 99:8, Gen 49:11a teaches that Israel is a vine, based on Ps 80:9, and it is God who is bound to the ‘vine’ and the ‘choice vine’, namely Israel. These rabbinic traditions specifically understand the ‘vine’ and the ‘choice vine’ as symbols for the relationship between God and Israel. The symbolism of Israel as the ‘vine’ was also known to and adopted by the patristic tradition. Furthermore, according to patristic interpretations, the vine was a symbol for Israel and the Jews or the synagogue (Ephraem, *Comm.Gen.* XIII.4; Theodoret of

---

<sup>170</sup> The figure of Herod as an insolent evil king is also known in the Jewish apocalyptic text ‘The Assumption of Moses’; this tradition is preserved in a single sixth century Latin ms, which goes back to a first century Greek original, probably also translated from Hebrew or Aramaic. The dating is mainly established on account of its exact historical reference to Herod the Great; see J. Tromp, *The Assumption of Moses*, 116f. It is probable that legends on Herod’s non-Jewish descent would have been welcome among Jewish people for whom his kingship was not particularly popular.

<sup>171</sup> See text in H. Leeming – K. Leeming (with L. Osinka), *Josephus’ Jewish War and Its Slavonic Version. A Synoptic Comparison*, Leiden 2003, 172f. The text is a late translation of Josephus, probably from the tenth century; see Josephus, *The Jewish War*, trans. G.A. Williamson and rev. trans. E.M. Smallwood, London 1981, 470ff.; on issues of authenticity, provenance and character of the work, see J.M. Creed, ‘The Slavonic Version of Josephus. History of the Jewish War’, *HTR* 25 (1932), 277–319; R. Eisler, *The Messiah Jesus and John the Baptist*, London – N.Y. 1931; S. Zeitlin, *Josephus on Jesus with particular reference to the Slavonic Josephus and the Hebrew Josippon*, Philadelphia 1931; J. Spencer Kennard Jr., ‘Slavonic Josephus: A Retraction’, *JQR* 39 (1948/49), 281–283.

<sup>172</sup> S.J.D. Cohen argues that the story in Slavonic Josephus, which he considers to be a Christian interpolation into the genuine writings of Josephus, combines motifs from Justin and the Talmud and is certainly of Jewish origin. Indeed, BT BB 3b-4a contains a tradition that Herod was a slave and not a legitimate Judean king. Cohen’s implicit suggestion that a medieval Christian author, writing in Slavonic, would have been familiar with Talmudic traditions is intriguing (see *The Beginning of Jewishness*, 21ff.). However, as can be seen above, and as S.J.D. Cohen also mentions, the tradition of Herod as a former slave is also attested as early as the work of Julius Africanus.

Cyrrhus, Quaest. CXII.3). Thus, the identification of the vine with the Jewish people is made in rabbinic exegesis and by the Church Fathers. However, both rabbinic and Christian exegetical traditions ultimately derive their symbolism from the Bible itself.

Moreover, rabbinic traditions on Gen 49:11a emphasize the unique relationship of Israel to the Messiah. For example, in GenR 98:9 the verse is understood as a reference to the Messiah, whose coming represents the fulfilment of the blessing. In GenR 99:8, it teaches that the Messiah will gather all Israel together on the basis of Gen 49:11a. They are bound together as a donkey is bound to a vine. The association of the vine with the Messiah in reference to Jesus was a popular Christian tradition, established in John 15:1.<sup>173</sup> Accordingly, this represents one more point of shared symbolic imagery between rabbinic traditions and the writings of Church Fathers, but with diverging theological content.

According to another rabbinic exegetical approach, Gen 49:11a refers to God, who binds his foal, that is, the chosen city Jerusalem, to the 'vine' Israel (e.g. GenR 98:9; cf. Isaiah 5; Ps 80:9). The identification of 'his foal' and Jerusalem is based on wordplay between 'his foal' (עִירָה) and 'city' (עִיר). Jerome discusses the Hebrew word שֶׁרְקָה in his interpretation of the same verse, which he interprets as the Gentile Church (Hebr. Quest. 49:11). Interestingly, he seems to know of the alternative Hebrew meaning of 'his city' for the phrase 'his foal', but he similarly applies the meaning of 'his city/foal' to the Church. Jerome demonstrates knowledge of rabbinic exegetical traditions on this verse, which he places, however, in a strongly christological context. In particular, he prefers an alternative translation of the Hebrew בְּנֵי אִתְּנֹו 'his ass's colt' as 'my son', and implies that it refers to the Son of God. The use of attested rabbinic traditions by Jerome, albeit with christological intentions, presents a case of a direct exegetical encounter.

Another exegetical approach within rabbinic traditions understands Gen 49:11 as a reference to the coming of the Messiah based on Zech 9:9, a popular messianic proof text (e.g. GenR 98:9; 99:8). This connection was most probably established based on the linguistic similarity between Gen 49:11 and Zech 9:9, which rabbinic exegetes would have easily associated. Significantly, Gen 49:11a is a notorious proof text in Christian literature related to the messianic entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem, as described in the Gospels and in connection with Zech 9:9. Thus, the connection

<sup>173</sup> On the allegory of the Messiah as the vine, see 2 Bar 36–40.

between Zech 9:9 and Gen 49:11 is already established in the New Testament (Matt 21:5; John 12:15). It is interesting that rabbinic exegetes use Zech 9:9 as a proof text in messianic descriptions, which was commonly used of Jesus in Christian traditions, and it seems unlikely that they were unaware of its Christian associations. The common use of Zech 9:9 in a clearly messianic context by rabbinic and Christian exegetes presents the usage of shared imagery based on the same scriptural quotation, albeit in a completely different theological frame of reference. The rabbinic emphasis on the eschatological Messiah, who will gather the dispersed of Israel, appears to implicitly refute or challenge the Christian messianic understanding of Zech 9:9 in connection with Gen 49:11, as evidenced in the New Testament and subsequent Christian exegetical tradition.

Rabbinic and Christian exegetes also agreed that Gen 49:11b describes a powerful image of the Messiah. Tg Neofiti and Tg PsJon Gen 49:11 link this verse with Isa 63:1–3, and envisage a warrior Messiah clad in garments soaked with the blood of his enemies; his appearance is paralleled to a treader of grapes (Tg Neofiti Gen 49:11). Similarly, Christian commentators thought that the verse predicted the coming of a bloodstained Messiah.<sup>174</sup> However, the blood he was covered in was the blood of his own Passion. Interestingly, Origen explicitly links Gen 49:11b with Isa 63:1–3 in order to describe Jesus' appearance after his resurrection. Although the connection of Gen 49:11b with Isa 63:1–3 may appear conspicuous due to similarity in the wording of the biblical verses, it is significant that Origen makes this connection while emphatically reversing the imagery of the warrior Messiah in the Isaiah verses. The use of the same verses of Isaiah in the targumic traditions and Origen in the exegetical context of Gen 49:11b in order to describe two fundamentally distinct images of the Messiah presents an interesting case of an exegetical encounter.

Finally, Gen 49:12 was generally understood in rabbinic traditions as a reference to the teachings of the Jewish people, which were associated with the study of the Torah and, more precisely, with the teachings of the Sanhedrin. In GenR 98:10, the continuing importance of the Torah for the people is emphasized, and the Sanhedrin is identified as the way to secure a proper understanding of that Law. A similar exegetical approach

---

<sup>174</sup> An image similar to the targumic image of the warrior Messiah is reflected in Rev 19:13,15. Rev 19:13,15 also makes indirect use of Isa 63:1–3. Furthermore, it is possible that Rev 19:13,15 has been influenced by the language of Gen 49:11b. Scholarship has assumed a possible targumic or other Jewish exegetical influence on the imagery of Rev 19:13,15; see the discussion in J. Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions in the Book of Revelation*, 224ff. and passim.

is found in Christian sources where the milk in its purity and clarity was a common symbol for Jesus' teachings (Hippolytus, *De Christo* 13, et al.). Both Christian writers and rabbinic exegetes have understood Gen 49:12 to refer to the teachings of their own groups, despite the absence of the idea in the biblical verse. Once more, both traditions have used the same imagery to argue for their own positions. Taking into account internal concerns, the fact that both Christians and rabbinic exegetes use this motif in the context of messianic interpretation of Gen 49:12 further strengthens the possibility that there is some form of awareness of the type of ideas represented in each other's exegesis.

This analysis illustrates shared and conflicting interpretations found in Christian and rabbinic writings, with particular focus on the concept of messianism. Church Fathers and rabbinic exegetes broadly used the same motifs in their interpretation of Gen 49:8–12, but to argue for different theological viewpoints. The use of a cluster of the same exegetical motifs unrelated to the biblical text commented upon further supports the possibility of some form of awareness of each other's exegesis. Furthermore, it suggests that a latent dialectic—or more often a controversy—was taking place over the person of the Messiah. Of course, the definition and identification of the person of the Messiah was and remained a most crucial issue in Jewish-Christian relations. The probability of encounter is supported by the controversial nature of the subject matter, as the work of the Church Fathers and rabbinic exegetes may represent various responses to each other's exegesis on the subject of messianism.



## CONCLUSIONS

And here let us begin with what would probably make any one averse to receiving the history: I mean the play of words between *prinos* and *prisis*, *schinos* and *schisis*. You say that you can see how this can be in Greek, but that in Hebrew the words are altogether distinct. On this point, however, I am still in doubt; because, when I was considering this passage (for I myself saw this difficulty), I consulted not a few Jews about it, asking them the Hebrew words for *prinos* and *prisein*, and how they would translate *schinos* the tree, and how *schisis*. And they said that they did not know these Greek words *prinos* and *schinos*, and asked me to show them the trees, that they might see what they called them. And I at once (for the truth's dear sake) put before them pieces of the different trees. One of them then said, that he could not with any certainty give the Hebrew name of anything not mentioned in Scripture, since, if one was at a loss, he was prone to use the Syriac word instead of the Hebrew one; and he went on to say, that some words the very wisest could not translate. (Origen, Ep. to Africanus 6, trans. ANF IV, 386)

Origen famously acknowledged his consultation with 'Jews' in a number of his writings. Such evidence has led to extensive academic debate about the extent, possibility and type of contact between Jewish and Christian individuals and groups in Late Antiquity. This volume contributes to the debate through examination of encounters between rabbinic and Christian exegetical writings on the book of Genesis. The study provides a comprehensive methodology and so establishes a framework for analysis of encounters, which leads to examination of new evidence and discussion of old evidence in a new light. Eight biblical episodes from Genesis are the focus of this study and highlight diverse forms of potential encounter between rabbinic and Christian exegetical traditions. The particular stories and episodes of Genesis discussed in this volume were chosen because they represent the strongest or most interesting evidence of the various types of exegetical encounter. Typically, the complexity behind the development of traditions and possible encounters ensures that each chapter illustrates evidence of a variety of different forms of exegetical encounter, including direct acknowledgement of the exegesis of the 'other', the use of the same or similar motifs with either shared or diverging theological arguments, and apologetic and polemic.

The analysis of a number of direct and indirect exegetical encounters over the book of Genesis provides ample evidence of a wide ranging use



of shared motifs and methods of argumentation in the rabbinic and Christian sources. However, the theological intentions and conclusions of the exegesis can diverge to a large extent. For example, a shared perspective on the nature of issues of great ontological and soteriological significance can be found. In the context of the Paradise story, rabbinic and Christian exegetes used a similar chronological approach in order to express theological ideas on the theme of redemption based on exegesis of the same scriptural passage. In spite of their fundamentally divergent theological positions, rabbinic and Christian exegetes shared similar concerns on matters such as divine judgement and promise of redemption based on the biblical text.

Although several cases of the shared use of motifs on a variety of topics are found, the diversity in the respective theological aims is significant. To a degree, rabbinic exegetes and Christian authors in Late Antiquity held a shared literary environment in common (which was largely provided and facilitated by the biblical text itself), but their respective theological contexts were clearly distinctive. Accordingly, exegesis reflects the development and divergence of rabbinic Judaism and early Christianity over the most central theological questions. Most significantly, rabbinic and Christian exegesis diverged—and often clashed—on the question of the nature, the agent and the recipients of redemption. Rabbinic exegetes read the biblical history as the history of God's relationship to his elected people, Israel. For Christian interpreters, the biblical history was the revelation of Jesus Christ as the Messiah of all people. Despite the use of shared motifs, approaches and literary models, neither rabbinic exegetes nor Christian authors ever wavered in this most fundamental principle in their exegetical understanding of the book of Genesis. This fundamental theological difference is present in the earliest exegetical controversies of Christian authors with contemporary Jews, as is evident, for example, from the writings of Justin.

Thus, even when the Bible offered a common ground for awareness of theological ideas and exegetical arguments between various rabbinic and Christian traditions in Late Antiquity, it was also often a controversial ground. Rabbinic and Christian exegetes used very similar motifs and forms of argumentation in order to argue for their own firm theological positions. Even if Christian authors acknowledged the importance of the Jewish heritage for their own theological understandings, they still interpreted that heritage, which they shared with rabbinic exegetes, on a christological basis. Some of the strongest evidence of exegetical encounter can be found in discussion of those traditions that have an overall

controversial theological aim. Indeed, exegetical traditions of a controversial nature often include polemical motifs and arguments. This is manifested in a complexity of ways with different arguments on the same motif originating in different Christian exegetical schools and amongst different rabbinic traditions. For example, the chapter on the 'Blessing on Judah' illustrates how on a verse by verse and point by point basis rabbinic and Christian exegetes argued for and emphasized their own theological position on the understanding of the blessing. In a variety of rabbinic traditions, the blessing is interpreted in terms of the future expectation of a Messiah who will act on behalf of Israel and usher in the next age. For Christian authors, Gen 49:8–12 is understood as predicting the Messiahship of Jesus and outlining the nature of his role. Controversial subject matter, which is the source of respective polemical positions in rabbinic and Christian traditions, is also discussed in this volume on topics such as circumcision, priesthood and election.

It is also important to acknowledge that there are a number of topics and traditions that highlight the completely different interests of rabbinic and Christian exegetes in their interpretations of Genesis. Ultimately, exegetical writings may not reflect any evidence of encounter, because they have a different interpretative agenda altogether, not only demonstrated through diverging theological aims but also in terms of the questions that are asked of the biblical text. The chapter on 'Jacob's Ladder' illustrates the different questions that could be posed by rabbinic and Christian exegetes. For example, there is an overwhelming emphasis in a variety of Christian sources on Jacob's anointing of the stone as a christological statement, and the ladder as a symbol of the cross. In distinction, rabbinic exegetical approaches to Jacob's Ladder understand Genesis 28 to refer to themes of restoration for Israel, focusing on the Temple and election of the nation. Although the 'stone(s)' of Genesis 28 are addressed in rabbinic interpretations, traditions focus on their significance in the context of the promises to Jacob rather than his specific act in anointing the stone.

Still, common knowledge of the biblical texts and biblical history influenced the scriptural understanding of both exegetical literatures and resulted in shared exegetical approaches. Accordingly, the particular wording of a certain biblical verse could produce interpretative associations by linking together various distinctive biblical verses, or the actions of biblical heroes, to reach a specific understanding. However, both rabbinic and Christian exegetes could have arrived at such interpretations independently. For example, the patriarchs and matriarchs of biblical history were, in general, idealized by both rabbinic exegetes and Christian

authors, and their actions were justified in the context of a shared understanding of the election of these biblical role models by God to carry out the divine plan for the salvation of humanity. Thus, the rejection of Hagar and Ishmael by Abraham and Sarah, which is described in the biblical text in a controversial way, was understood in both rabbinic and Christian exegetical traditions in a positive light as God's will. Furthermore, a number of theological concepts about God's role and intervention in the lives of the righteous, and especially of the patriarchs, are shared.

The analysis of the exegetical approaches in rabbinic and Christian traditions further reveals a significant number of shared ethical values and concerns, as shown, for example, in the matter of Sarah's chastity and conjugal loyalty. This reflects a cultural and social background in which rabbinic and Christian writers lived, acted and possibly interacted in the various areas of the Roman and Persian Empires. Moreover, both rabbinic exegetes and Christian authors based their exegesis on ethical and moral values that were propagated within the Bible itself, such as the proscription against marriage between siblings in discussion of Cain and Abel. Their understanding of the Bible shaped their moral values in a socio-cultural context, and at the same time their socio-cultural background influenced their biblical exegesis. It is significant that certain socio-cultural associations based on scriptural exegesis were endorsed by both rabbinic and Christian exegetes. Thus, the Ishmaelites, for example, were perceived in a negative way on the basis of popular interpretations of biblical verses relating to Ishmael and his descendants. The broad historical context of exegesis in Late Antiquity is an important point of consideration. Biblical exegesis does not exist outside the socio-cultural environment of its authors and is influenced accordingly. Thus, shared approaches to issues such as perceptions of slavery or nobility are found, as highlighted in the Joseph Story. Furthermore, both rabbinic exegetes and Christian authors were prompted to make similar interpretations of contemporary historical events, as evidenced in the shared apocalyptic reception of the rise of Islam.

However, the largest number of similarities can be found in the use of legendary motifs and parabiblical traditions. The shared use and influence of Jewish pseudepigraphic and Jewish-Hellenistic literature is significant for exegetical approaches held in common in rabbinic and Christian traditions. A number of cases of an exegetical encounter, such as discussed for Cain and Abel, provide evidence of a shared literary environment that was very influential for both rabbinic and Christian exegetical traditions. It should be noted that the pseudepigrapha cannot be regarded

as direct sources for later interpretations, but rather should be treated as documents that preserve certain exegetical approaches or beliefs that were popular and circulated in various oral and written literary contexts. Accordingly, a seemingly shared exegetical approach did not always result from an awareness of the respective 'other' tradition, but from the influence of widespread ideas and streams of thought, as was the case with beliefs related to afterlife and resurrection. Regarding, however, specific textual traditions, the writings that preserve the most relevant motifs are Jubilees and versions of the Life of Adam and Eve (which is not surprising given the fact that this volume focuses on the book of Genesis).

Moreover, it is noted that Christian texts incorporated traditions that are also present in pseudepigraphic texts, and which are evidenced again in rabbinic texts of a considerably late date of redaction, such as the tradition of the place of Adam's burial in *Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer*. From the premise of a complex development of ideas and motifs, the question is addressed whether these traditions were developed by rabbinic exegetes in part by way of the transmission of the motifs in question amongst Christian sources and/or through independent familiarity with pseudepigraphic material. In other instances, the early pseudepigrapha clearly testify to the existence of Jewish traditions that remained popular and led to the ongoing transmission of these motifs in rabbinic sources from the earliest dates of redaction, as shown, for example, in the exegesis on the sisters of Cain and Abel and the means of the first murder.

As expected, authors such as Josephus and Philo were particularly influential for the Christians (who often quote both authors as their sources for exegetical approaches). Thus, a number of exegetical encounters can be explained by the knowledge of Jewish-Hellenistic literature by Christian authors, and with evidence of continued transmission of similar Jewish traditions in rabbinic sources, as found in discussion of the Flood Story.

The Qumran literature may also be regarded as representative of a wider 'pool' of exegetical traditions, which later re-emerge in both Christian and rabbinic exegetical traditions. However, the exact means of transmission remains obscure.

Although the emphasis in this volume is on a complex development and awareness of traditions, in certain cases it is possible to identify specific Christian knowledge of rabbinic motifs as Christian authors may declare their sources. However, there are few references in the rabbinic literature to the work of the Christian 'other', or indeed alternative sources. Rather, the internal analysis of rabbinic traditions reveals the ongoing transmission of particular exegetical motifs and the complex motivation behind

the various rabbinic interpretations. It also makes it possible to highlight the 'internal' purpose of the majority of the rabbinic traditions on Genesis. This does not exclude the possibility of encounter as a tradition can be, and often is, reused in a variety of exegetical contexts. However, it illustrates that it is only on rare occasions that a motif is introduced that is completely divergent from previous rabbinic ideas. For example, the discussion on the figure of Melchizedek demonstrates an internal concern to explain the existence of a non-Israelite priest before the priesthood had been established, but these interpretations could equally have been employed to counter a Christian view of Melchizedek as found in the Book of Hebrews and subsequent Christian writings. This highlights both the difficulty in identifying exegetical encounters, as a motif can be multipurpose, and the necessity of taking account of different exegetical motivations in analysis of encounters.

In terms of the importance of particular rabbinic collections, it is clear that those which focus on interpretation of Genesis, such as the targumic traditions on Genesis, *Genesis Rabbah*, *Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer* and the recensions of *Tanḥuma*, are of most value in the search for evidence of exegetical encounter, and have provided the majority of examples discussed in this study. However, the focus of analysis in this volume is on the transmission of traditions found in a variety of texts and, as such, the importance of rabbinic textual collections as a whole is to an extent diminished. Equally, it is not unexpected to find the largest amounts of evidence of exegetical encounter over Genesis in the largest collections of interpretations of that biblical book.

Interestingly, *Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer*, which has a clearer date of redaction than most rabbinic collections, contains certain motifs that are commonly found in earlier Christian writings. For example, the division of the generation of the flood into the descendants of Seth and Cain is a tradition also prominent in Christian exegesis. Such motifs in *Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer* are the result of a multifaceted development of ideas, including elaboration from relevant rabbinic traditions, possible awareness of Christian interpretations, and a potential re-emergence of pseudepigraphical ideas.

The cases of exegetical encounters between rabbinic sources and Syriac texts are remarkable. A number of cases of encounter indicate shared exegetical approaches on linguistic grounds and, in particular, because of the use of the Peshitta and its closeness to the Hebrew Bible or to the Targumim, as evidenced in the exegesis of Gen 49:9 or in the interpretation of Hagar as a gift from Pharaoh. However, a number of cases indicate

some form of awareness of rabbinic exegetical traditions by Syriac Church Fathers, in particular Ephraem or Aphrahat or the author(s) of the *Cave of Treasures*. For example, Ephraem argues against those who claim that Cain perished in the Flood, as is widely attested in rabbinic traditions. These and other encounters from the Syriac tradition were generally facilitated by the shared Semitic linguistic and cultural environment.

Interestingly, certain etymological interpretations of Hebrew, such as the names of biblical figures like Cain or Judah, were also known among Greek speaking authors. Although these are cases of indirect exegetical encounters, since the exact means of the dissemination of popular etymology cannot be established, nevertheless they testify to the general interest of Christian exegetes in the Hebrew language and learning and/or Jewish exegetical methods and approaches.

Christian authors often attributed exegetical approaches that they endorsed to the 'Hebrews'. The reliance on the authority of Jewish sages and their exegetical traditions by Church Fathers is striking, and particularly prominent examples are Origen and Jerome. Accordingly, Church Fathers demonstrate knowledge of rabbinic traditions in a number of cases, such as in the identification of Joseph's former master with his father-in-law. This exegetical awareness was partly connected with their efforts to learn the Hebrew language and to consult personally with Jewish sages on scriptural interpretation. It is significant that Jerome's detailed knowledge of Hebrew in connection with his translation of the Bible into Latin has modified his previous exegetical understandings in certain cases, and notably as regards the location of Adam's grave. Jerome not only preserves clusters of rabbinic traditions, but he also provides a *terminus ante quem* for a stage of their transmission. However, it should be noted that Jerome reports the traditions that he has collected, but does not necessarily always adopt them. Furthermore, a close look at Jerome's work reveals that the stories that Jerome preserves relate to material of a legendary nature, and, more importantly, they are not controversial or significant in terms of a Christian theological understanding. When Jerome does report material that could have been understood in a controversial way, he always presents and polemically defends the Christian exegetical position (as in interpretation of Gen 49:11a). It seems that Jerome was interested in collecting and preserving those exegetical stories that were enriching and theologically acceptable—but also harmless—in a Christian context of interpretation.

This volume focuses specifically on the potential relationship between traditions and motifs found in rabbinic writings and works of the Eastern

Christian tradition in Late Antiquity. The approach taken in this volume is, first, discussion of the transmission of rabbinic and Christian exegetical traditions. Then, the accompanying analysis examines what the writings can show about the interrelationship between rabbinic and Christian biblical interpretations. In many ways, this study highlights the difficulties in establishing evidence of exegetical encounter; whilst some strong evidence has been found across a range of episodes of Genesis, there are many instances where exegesis could have developed purely as a result of internal theological concerns. The breadth of the material discussed and the methodology applied to the analysis of the traditions provide both new evidence and a new approach to the study of exegetical encounters. Ultimately, however, the complexity and wide ranging nature of the material does not allow for sweeping statements about the characteristics and formation of exegetical encounters. As such, when it comes to the relationship between rabbinic and Christian exegetical ideas, it is clear that there are few patterns, and each case must be assessed on its own merits and in its own literary context.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AJA</i>	American Journal of Archaeology
<i>AJS</i>	Association of Jewish Studies
<i>ANF</i>	A Select Library of Ante-Nicene Christian Fathers
<i>AnBoll</i>	Analecta Bollandiana
<i>AnOr</i>	Analecta Orientalia
<i>ANRW</i>	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
<i>ASTI</i>	Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute
<i>Aug</i>	Augustinianum
<i>BASOR</i>	Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research
<i>BHG</i>	Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca
<i>Bib</i>	Biblica
<i>BIES</i>	Bulletin of the Israel Exploration Society
<i>BLE</i>	Bulletin de Littérature Ecclésiastique
<i>BS</i>	Bibliotheca Sacra
<i>BN</i>	Biblische Notizen
<i>BYU</i>	Brigham Young University
<i>ByzZ</i>	Byzantinische Zeitschrift
<i>BZ</i>	Biblische Zeitschrift
<i>BZAW</i>	ZAW Beihefte
<i>BZNW</i>	ZNW Beihefte
<i>CBQ</i>	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
<i>CCO</i>	Collectanea Christiana Orientalia
<i>CCA</i>	Corpus Christianorum, series apocrypha
<i>CCG</i>	Corpus Christianorum, series graeca
<i>CCL</i>	Corpus Christianorum, series latina
<i>CHR</i>	Catholic Historical Review
<i>CSEL</i>	Corpus scriptorium ecclesiasticorum latinorum
<i>CSCO</i>	Corpus scriptorium christianorum orientalium
<i>CW</i>	Classical World
<i>EI</i>	Encyclopädie des Islam
<i>EncJud</i>	Encyclopedia Judaica
<i>ExpT</i>	Expository Times
<i>FC</i>	Fontes Christiani
<i>FHG</i>	Fragmenta historicorum graecorum
<i>FJB</i>	Frankfurter Judaistische Beiträge
<i>GCS</i>	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten [drei] Jahrhunderte
<i>HR</i>	History of Religions
<i>HTR</i>	Harvard Theological Review
<i>HeyJ</i>	Heythrop Journal
<i>HUCA</i>	Hebrew Union College Annual



<i>ICCoptS</i>	International Congress of Coptic Studies
<i>JAAR</i>	Journal of the American Academy of Religion
<i>JAC</i>	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum
<i>JBL</i>	Journal of Biblical Literature
<i>JECS</i>	Journal of Early Christian Studies
<i>JJS</i>	Journal of Jewish Studies
<i>JNSL</i>	Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages
<i>JP</i>	Journal of Philology
<i>JPOS</i>	Journal of the Palestinian Oriental Society
<i>JQR</i>	Jewish Quarterly Review
<i>JR</i>	Journal of Religion
<i>JSJ</i>	Journal for the Study of Judaism
<i>JSJSup</i>	JSJ Supplements
<i>JSNT</i>	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
<i>JSNTSup</i>	JSNT Supplements
<i>JSOR</i>	Journal of the Society of Oriental Research
<i>JOT</i>	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
<i>JSOTSup</i>	SOT Supplements
<i>JSJ</i>	Journal for the Study of Judaism
<i>JSP</i>	Journal for the Study of Pseudepigrapha
<i>JSQ</i>	Jewish Studies Quarterly
<i>JSS</i>	Journal of Semitic Studies
<i>JTS</i>	Journal of Theological Studies
<i>MIO</i>	Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung
<i>MGWJ</i>	Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums
<i>NETS</i>	New English Translation of the Septuagint
<i>NPNF</i>	A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers
<i>NRSV</i>	New Revised Standard Version of the Bible
<i>NorJ</i>	Nordisk Judaistik
<i>NT</i>	Novum Testamentum
<i>NTSup</i>	NT Supplements
<i>NTS</i>	New Testament Studies
<i>OC</i>	Orientalia Christiana
<i>OCA</i>	Orientalia Christiana Analecta
<i>OCP</i>	Orientalia Christiana Periodica
<i>OrChr</i>	Oriens Christianus
<i>OrSyr</i>	L'Orient Syrien
<i>OTP</i>	Old Testament Pseudepigrapha (ed. Charlesworth)
<i>PG</i>	Patrologia Graeca
<i>PIBA</i>	Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association
<i>PL</i>	Patrologia Latina
<i>PO</i>	Patrologia Orientalis
<i>PS</i>	Patrologia Syriaca
<i>PTS</i>	Patristische Texte und Studien
<i>RRJ</i>	Review of Rabbinic Judaism
<i>RB</i>	Revue Biblique
<i>RBen</i>	Revue Benedictine

<i>REJ</i>	Revue des études juives
<i>RHR</i>	Revue de l'Histoire de Religions
<i>RSR</i>	Recherches de science religieuse
<i>SBL</i>	Society of Biblical Literature
<i>SC</i>	Sources Chrétiennes
<i>SCI</i>	Scripta Classica Israelica
<i>SP</i>	Studia Patristica
<i>ST</i>	Studia Theologica
<i>VC</i>	Vigiliae Christianae
<i>VCSup</i>	VC Supplements
<i>VT</i>	Vetus Testamentum
<i>VTSup</i>	VT Supplements
<i>ZAC</i>	Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum
<i>ZAW</i>	Zeitschrift für alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
<i>ZNW</i>	Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und für die Kunde der älteren Kirche
<i>WUNT</i>	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum neuen Testament



PRIMARY SOURCES  
EDITIONS AND TRANSLATIONS

*Bible Versions*

**MT**

*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, K. Eißler – W. Rudolph (eds), Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft 1997<sup>5</sup>.

**LXX**

*Septuaginta: id est, Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes*, A. Rahlfs (ed.), Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt 1965<sup>8</sup>.

*A new English translation of the Septuagint: and the other Greek translations traditionally included under that title*, A. Pietersma – B.G. Wright (eds), N.Y. – Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007.

**Peshitta**

*The Old Testament in Syriac: according to the Peshitta version, pt. 1, fasc. 1. vol I Genesis-Exodus*, Peshitta Institute Leiden (ed.), Leiden: E.J. Brill 1977.

**Vulgata**

*Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, R. Gryson – R. Weber (eds), Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft 1983<sup>4</sup>.

*Rabbinic Sources*

*Mishnah and Tosefta*

**Mishnah**

*Shishah Sidre Mishnah*, Ch. Albeck (ed.), 6 volumes, Jerusalem: Bialik Institute 1952–8.

*The Mishnah: translated from the Hebrew with introduction and brief explanatory notes*, H. Danby (trans.), Oxford: Clarendon Press 1933.

**Tosefta**

*Tosefta*, S. Lieberman (ed.), New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America 1955–1988.

*Tosefta*, M.S. Zuckerman (ed.), Jerusalem: Bamberger & Wahrman 1937<sup>2</sup>.

*The Tosefta: translated from the Hebrew*, J. Neusner (trans.), New York: KTAV 1977–1986.

*Talmudic Literature***Abot de Rabbi Natan**

*Abot de Rabbi Natan*, S. Schechter (ed.), Vienna: Lippe 1887.

*The minor tractates of the Talmud. Massektoth Ketannah: translated into English with notes, glossary and indices under the editorship of A. Cohen; foreword by Israel Brodie, A. Cohen (trans.)*, London: Soncino 1965.

**Babylonian Talmud**

*Talmud Bavli*, Vilna: Romm 1880–86, repr. Jerusalem 1968.

*The Babylonian Talmud: translated into English with introduction and notes by Isidore Epstein; with a foreword by J.H. Hertz, I. Epstein (trans.)*, London: Soncino 1935–48.

*Hebrew-English edition of the Babylonian Talmud: translated into English with notes, glossary and indices by M. Simon; under the editorship of I. Epstein; foreword by J.H. Hertz, I. Epstein (ed. and trans.)*, London: Soncino 1960–1994.

**Palestinian Talmud**

*Talmud Yerushalmi*, Krotoshin 1866.

*Synopse zum Talmud Yerushalmi*, P. Schäfer – H.J. Becker (eds), TSAJ 31, 33, 35, 47, 67, 82, 83, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1991–2001.

*The Talmud of the Land of Israel: A Preliminary Translation and Explanation*, J. Neusner (ed. and trans.), Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism, Chicago – London: University of Chicago Press 1982–94.

*Midrashim***Aggadat Bereshit**

*Aggadat Bereshit*, S. Buber (ed.), Cracow 1903, repr. Jerusalem 1973.

*Aggadat Bereshit: translated from the Hebrew with an introduction and notes*, L.M. Teugels (trans.), Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series 4, Leiden: Brill 2001.

**Deuteronomy Rabbah**

*Midrash Devarim Rabbah*, S. Lieberman (ed.), Jerusalem: Bamberger & Wahrmann 1940.

*Devarim Rabbah*, Vilna: Romm 1878.

*Midrash Rabbah: translated into English with notes, glossary and indices under the editorship of H. Freedman and Maurice Simon; with a foreword by I. Epstein, Deuteronomy*, J. Rabbinowitz (trans.), London: Soncino 1939.

**Ecclesiastes Rabbah**

*Qohelet Rabbah*, Vilna: Romm 1878.

*Midrash Rabbah: translated into English with notes, glossary and indices under the editorship of H. Freedman and Maurice Simon; with a foreword by I. Epstein, Ecclesiastes*, A. Cohen (trans.), London: Soncino 1939.

**Esther Rabbah**

*Esther Rabbah*, Vilna: Romm 1878.

*Midrash Rabbah: translated into English with notes, glossary and indices under the editorship of H. Freedman and Maurice Simon; with a foreword by I. Epstein*, Esther, M. Simon (trans.), London: Soncino 1939.

**Exodus Rabbah**

*Midrash Shemot Rabbah*, A. Shinan (ed.), Tel Aviv: Dvir 1984.

*Shemot Rabbah*, Vilna: Romm 1878.

*Midrash Rabbah: translated into English with notes, glossary and indices under the editorship of H. Freedman and Maurice Simon; with a foreword by I. Epstein*, Exodus, S.M. Lehrman (trans.), London: Soncino 1939.

**Genesis Rabbah**

*Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, J. Theodor – Ch. Albeck (eds), 3 volumes, Berlin 1912–36, repr. Jerusalem 1965.

*Midrash Rabbah: translated into English with notes, glossary and indices under the editorship of H. Freedman and Maurice Simon; with a foreword by I. Epstein*, Genesis, H. Freedman (trans.), 2 volumes, London: Soncino 1939.

**Lamentations Rabbah**

*Midrash Ekhah Rabbati*, S. Buber (ed.), Vilna: Romm 1899.

*Ekhah Rabbah*, Vilna: Romm 1878.

*Midrash Rabbah: translated into English with notes, glossary and indices under the editorship of H. Freedman and Maurice Simon; with a foreword by I. Epstein*, Lamentations, A. Cohen (trans.), London: Soncino 1939.

**Leviticus Rabbah**

*Midrash Wayyikra Rabbah*, M. Margulies (ed.), 5 volumes, Jerusalem 1953–1960.

*Wayyikra Rabbah*, Vilna: Romm 1878.

*Midrash Rabbah: translated into English with notes, glossary and indices under the editorship of H. Freedman and Maurice Simon; with a foreword by I. Epstein*, Leviticus, J. Israelstam – J.S. Slotki (trans.), London: Soncino 1939.

**Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael**

*Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael*, J.Z. Lauterbach (ed. and trans.), 3 volumes, The Schiff Library of Jewish Classics, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society 1933–35.

**Mekhilta de Rabbi Shimon b. Yoḥai**

*Mekhilta de Rabbi Shimon b. Yoḥai*, J.N. Epstein – E.Z. Melamed (eds), Jerusalem: Mekitse Nirdamim 1955, repr. Jerusalem 1979.

**Midrash Aggadah**

*Midrash Aggadah al Ḥamishah Ḥumshe Torah*, S. Buber (ed.), Vienna: Fanto 1894.

**Midrash ha-Gadol**

*Midrash ha-Gadol al Hamishah Humshe Torah*, M. Margulies (ed.), 5 volumes, Jerusalem: Ha-Rav Kook Institute 1947–78.

**Midrash Proverbs**

*Midrash Mishle*, B.L. Visotzky (ed.), New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America 1990.

*The Midrash on Proverbs: translated from the Hebrew with an introduction and annotations*, B.L. Visotzky (trans.), Yale Judaica Series 27, New Haven: Yale University Press 1992.

**Midrash Psalms**

*Midrash Tehillim*, S. Buber (ed.), Vilna: Romm 1891.

*The Midrash on Psalms: Translated from the Hebrew and Aramaic with introduction*, W.G. Braude (trans.), Yale Judaica Series 13, New Haven: Yale University Press 1959.

**Midrash Tanḥuma**

*Midrash Tanḥuma*, E. Zondel ben Joseph (ed.), 2 volumes, Warsaw: Visberg 1875.

*Midrash Tanhuma-Yelammedenu: an English translation of Genesis and Exodus from the printed version of Tanhuma-Yelammedenu with an introduction, notes, and indexes*, S.A. Berman (trans.), Hoboken, NJ: KTAV 1996.

**Midrash Tanḥuma Buber**

*Midrash Tanḥuma*, S. Buber (ed.), 2 volumes, Vilna: Romm 1885.

*Midrash Tanḥuma: translated into English with introduction, indices, and brief notes (S. Buber Recension)*, J.T. Townsend (trans.), 3 volumes, Hoboken, NJ: KTAV 1989–2003.

**Midrash Tannaim**

*Midrasch Tannaim zum Deuteronomium: aus der in der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin befindlichen Handschrift des Midrasch Haggadol gessammelt und mit Anmerkungen versehen nebst mehreren Beilagen*, D. Hoffmann (ed.), Berlin: Poppelauer 1909, repr. Tel Aviv 1963.

**Midrash Zuta**

*Midrash Zuta*, S. Buber (ed.), Vilna 1925.

**Numbers Rabbah**

*Bemidbar Rabbah*, Vilna: Romm 1878.

*Midrash Rabbah: translated into English with notes, glossary and indices under the editorship of H. Freedman and Maurice Simon; with a foreword by I. Epstein, Numbers*, J.S. Slotki (trans.), 2 volumes, London: Soncino 1939.

**Pesiqta de Rav Kahana**

*Pesikta de Rav Kahana according to an Oxford manuscript, with variants from all known manuscripts and Genizoth fragments and parallel passages*, B. Mandelbaum (ed.), 2 volumes, New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America 1962.

*Pesikta de-Rab Kahana: R. Kahana's Compilation of discourses for sabbaths and festal days translated from Hebrew and Aramaic*, W.G. Braude – I.J. Kapstein (trans.), The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1975.

**Pesiqta Rabbati**

*Pesikta rabbati*, *Midrasch für den Fest-Cyclus und die ausgezeichneten Sabbathe*, M. Friedmann (ed.), Vienna: Qayzer 1880.

*Pesikta Rabbati: discourses for feasts, fasts, and special Sabbaths translated from the Hebrew*, W.G. Braude (trans.), Yale Judaica Series 18, New Haven: Yale University Press 1968.

**Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer**

*Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser: nach der Edition venedig 1544 unter beruecksichtigung der Edition Warschau 1852*, D. Börner-Klein (ed.), Berlin – New York: de Gruyter 2004.

M. Higger, 'Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer', *Horeb* 8 (1946), 82–119; *Horeb* 9 (1947), 94–166; and *Horeb* 10 (1948), 185–294.

*Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer*, C.M. Horowitz (ed.), Jerusalem: Makor 1972.

*Sefer Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer ha-Gadol*, D. Luria (ed.), Warsaw 1852.

*Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer (The Chapters of Rabbi Eliezer the Great) According to the Text of the Manuscript Belonging to Abraham Epstein of Vienna: translated and annotated with introduction and indices*, G. Friedlander (trans.), New York: Sepher-Hermon Press 1981<sup>4</sup>.

**Ruth Rabbah**

*The Book of Ruth in Aggadic Literature and Midrash Ruth Rabba*, M.B Lerner (ed.), Jerusalem: unpublished PhD thesis, Hebrew University 1971.

*Ruth Rabbah*, Vilna: Romm 1878.

*Midrash Rabbah: translated into English with notes, glossary and indices under the editorship of H. Freedman and Maurice Simon; with a foreword by I. Epstein*, Ruth, L. Rabinowitz (trans.), London: Soncino 1939.

**Sifra**

*Sifra de-ve Rav*, I.H. Weiss (ed.), Vienna: Schlossberg 1862.

*Sifra de-ve Rav*, L. Finkelstein (ed.), 5 volumes, New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America 1983–91.

*Sifra: an analytical translation*, J. Neusner (trans.), 3 volumes, Brown Judaic Studies 138–140, Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press 1988–.

**Sifre Deuteronomy**

*Sifre al Sefer Devarim*, L. Finkelstein – S. Horovitz (eds), Berlin: Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums 1939, repr. New York 1969.

*Sifre: A Tannaitic Commentary on the Book of Deuteronomy: translated from the Hebrew with introduction and notes*, R. Hammer (trans.), Yale Judaica Series 24, New Haven: Yale University Press 1986.

**Sifre Numbers**

*Sifre de-ve Rav: Fasciculus primus: Siphre ad Numeros adjecto Siphre zutta*, H.S. Horovitz (ed.), Jerusalem: Wahrman 1966<sup>2</sup>.

*Sifré to Numbers: an American translation and explanation*, J. Neusner (trans.), 2 volumes, Brown Judaic Studies 118–119, Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press 1986.



**Song of Songs Rabbah**

*Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah*, Vilna: Romm 1878.

*Midrash Rabbah: translated into English with notes, glossary and indices under the editorship of H. Freedman and Maurice Simon; with a foreword by I. Epstein, Song of Songs*, M. Simon (trans.), London: Soncino 1939.

**Tanna debe Eliyyahu**

*Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah we-Seder Eliyyahu Zuta*, M. Friedmann (ed.), Vienna: Achiassaf 1902, repr. Jerusalem 1960.

*Tanna de-be Eliyyahu: translated from the Hebrew*, W.G. Braude – I.J. Kapstein (trans.), Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society 1981.

**Yalqut Shimoni**

*Yalqut Shimoni al ha-Torah*, A.B. Hyman – Y. Shiloni (eds), Jerusalem: Ha-Rav Kook Institute 1984.

*Collections of Smaller Midrashim*

*Oṣar Midrashim*, J.D. Eisenstein (ed.), New York: Reznik 1915.

*Bate Midrashot*, A.J. Wertheimer (ed.), Jerusalem: Ha-Rav Kook Institute 1951–54.

*Bet ha-Midrash*, A. Jellinek (ed.), Jerusalem: Bamberger & Wahrmann 1938<sup>2</sup>.

*Midreshe Ge'ulah*, Y. Even-Shemuel (ed.), Jerusalem: Bialik Institute 1953–4.

*Targumim***Targum Pseudo-Jonathan**

*Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia Series IV. Targum Palaestinense in Pentateuchum. Additur Targum Pseudojonatan ejusque hispanica versio. Vol. 1. Genesis*, A. Díez Macho (ed.), Madrid: CSIC 1988.

*Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis, translated, with introduction and notes*, M. Maher (trans.), The Aramaic Bible 1B, Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1992.

**Targum Neofiti**

*Targum Neophyti 1: Targum Palaestinense MS. de la Biblioteca Vaticana, Edicion Principe, vol. 1 Genesis*, A. Díez Macho (ed. and trans.), Madrid; Barcelona: CSIC 1968.

*Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia Series IV. Targum Palaestinense in Pentateuchum additur Targum Pseudojonatan ejusque hispanica versio. Vol. 1. Genesis*, A. Díez Macho (ed.), Madrid: CSIC 1988.

*Targum Neofiti I: Genesis, translated, with apparatus and notes*, M. McNamara (trans.), The Aramaic Bible 1A, Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1992.

**Targum Onqelos**

*The Bible in Aramaic: based on old manuscripts and printed texts: The Pentateuch according to Targum Onkelos, vol. 1*, A. Sperber (ed.), Leiden: Brill 1959.

*The Targum Onqelos to Genesis: translated, with a critical introduction, apparatus, and notes*, B. Grossfeld (trans.), The Aramaic Bible 6, Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1988.

## Fragment Targum

*Genizah Manuscripts of Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch*, M.L. Klein (ed.), Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press 1986.

*The Fragment Targums of the Pentateuch According to their Extant Sources*, M.L. Klein (ed. and trans.), *Analecta Biblica* 76, Rome: Biblical Institute Press 1980.

*Jewish Sources*

Philo of Alexandria, *Philo in ten volumes* (and two supplementary volumes), F.H. Colson – G.H. Whitaker (trans.); Supplement 1. *Questions and answers on Genesis*, trans. R. Marcus (Loeb classical library 226, 227, 247, 261, 275, 289, 320, 341, 363, 379, 380, 401), London: Heinemann/Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press 1929–1962.

Josephus Flavius, *Josephus Flavius with an English translation*, H. St. J. Thackeray et al. (trans.) (Loeb classical library 186, 203, 210, 242, 281, 326, 365, 410, 433, 456), Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press/London: Heinemann 1926–1965.

—, *The Jewish War*, G.A. Williamson – E.M. Smallwood (trans.), N.Y.: Dorset Press 1981  
 —, *Josephus' Jewish War and Its Slavonic Version. A Synoptic Comparison of the English translation by H.St.J. Thackeray with the critical edition by N.A. Meščerskij of the Slavonic version in the Vilna manuscript*, H. Leeming – L. Osinkina (trans.); H. Leeming–K. Leeming (ed.). (*Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums* 46), Leiden: Brill 2003.

*Pseudepigrapha*

Charlesworth, J.H. (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols, Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday 1983–1985.

*The Book of Adam and Eve: Also called the Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan*, a book of the early Eastern Church, trans. from the Ethiopic, with notes from other Eastern works by S.C. Malan, London – Edinburgh 1882.

*Christian Sources*

Ambrose of Milan, *De Sacramentis*, O. Faller (ed.) (CSEL 73), Vienna: F. Tempsky 1955.

Anastasius Sinaita, *In Hexaemeron*, PG 89: 851–1073.

—, *Quaestiones et responsiones*, M. Richard – J.A. Munitiz (ed.) (CCSG 59), Turnhout: Brepols/Leuven: University Press, 2006.

—, *Viae dux*, K.-H. Uthemann (ed.) (CCSG 80), Turnhout: Brepols/ Leuven: University Press, 1981.

*Les ancient commentateurs grecs de l'Octateuque et des Rois (fragments tires des chaînes)*, R. Devreesse (ed.) (*Studi e Testi* 201), Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana 1959.

Andrew of Crete, *In Dormitionem Mariae*, (Oratio XIII); PG 97: 1045–1109.

—, *Magnus Canon*, PG 97: 1329–1382.

*Anecdota Graeco-Byzantina* I, A. Vassiliev (ed.), Moscow 1893.

*Anonymus Dialogus Cum Iudaeis*, J.H. Declerck (ed.) (CCG 30), Turnhout: Brepols 1994.

*Anonymous Dialogue of the Bishop Gregentius with the Jew Herbanus*, PG 86:621–784.

*The Ante-Nicene fathers: translations of the writings of the fathers down to A.D. 325*, A. Roberts – J. Donaldson (eds), 10 vols, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark/ Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans 1989–1990

Aphrahat, *Demonstrations*, (*Patrologia Syriaca* Vols. I.1, I.2), J. Parisot (ed. and trans.), vols 2, Paris: Firmin-Didot et Socii, 1894. 1907.

- Apocalypse of Paul: a new critical edition of three long Latin versions*, T. Silverstein – A. Hilhorst (ed.), Genève: P. Cramer 1997.
- The Apocryphal New Testament: a collection of apocryphal Christian literature in an English translation*, J.K. Elliott, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1993.
- Apophthegmata Patrum*, PG 65:71–440.
- Apostolic Constitutions. Didascalia et Constitutiones apostolorum*, Fr.X. Funk (ed.), Paderborn: in libraria Ferdinandi Schoeningh, 1905.
- Athanasius of Alexandria, *Quaestiones in Scripturam*, PG 28: 711–732.
- , *Sermo de Patientia*, PG 26: 1207–1310.
- (ps-) Athanasius of Alexandria, *Historia de Melchisedec*, PG 28: 525–530.
- , *In passionem et crucem domini*, PG 28: 185–250.
- Athenagoras, *Legatio pro Christianis*, M. Marcovich (ed.) (PTS 31), Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 1990<sup>2</sup>.
- Augustine, *12 Homilies on the gospel of John 1–40*, E. Hill (trans.) – A.D. Fitzgerald (ed.), New York: New City Press 2009.
- Basil of Caesarea, *De temperantia et incontinentia (Sermo xix.)* PG 32:1345–1354.
- , *Homiliae in Hexaemeron*, S. Giet (ed.) (SC 26), Paris 1950.
- , *Homiliae in Psalmos*, PG 29:210–494.
- , *Lettres*, ed.-trans. Y. Courtonne, 3 vols, Paris: Belles Lettres 1957–1966.
- , *De Spiritu, (Sur le Saint-Esprit)* (SC 17), ed.-trans. B. Pruche, Paris: Éditions du Cerf 1968<sup>2</sup>.
- (ps-) Basil of Caesarea, *Commentarius in Isaïam prophetam*, PG 30.2: 118–668.
- , *Homélie sur l'Arche de Noé, attribuée à Saint-Basile, évêque de Césarée*, in H. de Vis (ed.), *Homélie Coptes de la Vaticane*, (Coptica. Consilio et Impensis Instituti Rask-Oersterdiani edita V), Hauniae 1929.
- Basil of Seleucia, *Orationes*, PG 85:27–102.
- Catena Graecae in Genesim et in Exodum, Catena Sinaitica*, F. Petit (ed.) (CCG 2), Turnhout: Brepols 1977.
- Catena Graecae in Genesim et in Exodum II, Collectio Coislana in Genesim*, F. Petit (ed.) (CCG 15), Turnhout: Brepols 1986.
- La Chaîne sur la Genèse*, F. Petit (ed.) (Traditio exegetica Graeca 1–4), 4 vols, Louvain: Peeters 1991–1996.
- Cave of Treasures*, S.Min Ri (ed.-trans.), *La caverne des tresors: les deux recensions syriaques* (CSCO 486/487—script. syr. 207/208), Louvain: Peeters 1987.
- , *The Book of the Cave of Treasures*, E.A.W. Budge, trans. London 1927
- Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus*, M. Marcovich (ed.) (VCSup 61), Leiden: Brill 2002.
- , *Christ, the educator*, S.P. Wood (trans.) (Fathers of the church 23), Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press 1954.
- , *Stromata Buch 1–VI*, O. Stählin (ed.) (GCS 12), Berlin: Akademie-Verlag 1972<sup>3</sup>.
- , *Stromateis. Books 1–3*, J. Ferguson (trans.) (Fathers of the church 85), Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press 1991.
- Cosmas Indicopleustes, *Topographie chrétienne*, W. Wolska-Conus (ed.), Paris: Éditions du Cerf 1968–1973.
- , *Christian Topography: The Christian topography of Cosmas, an Egyptian monk*, J.W. McCrindle (trans.), London: Printed for the Hakluyt Society 1897.
- Cyprian, *Epistolae*, PL 4: 193–450.
- Cyril of Alexandria, *De adoratione et cultu in spiritu et veritate*, PG 68:133–1125.
- , *Commentarius in Evangelium Ioannis*, Sanctis Patri nostril Cyrilli . . . in Joannis evangelium. Accedunt fragmenta varia necnon tractatus ad Tiberium diaconum duo III., P.E. Pusey (ed.), Oxford: J. Parker Soc. 1872.
- , *Commentarius in Isaïam prophetam*, PG 70:9–1450.
- , *Contra Julianum*, PG 76:503.
- , *Glaphyra in Genesim*, PG 69:9–386.

- , The three epistles of s. Cyril, with revised text and Engl. tr., ed. by P.E. Pusey, Oxford 1872.
- Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catéchèses mystagogiques*, A. Piédagnel (ed.) P. Paris (trans.) (SC 126), Paris: Cerf 2004<sup>2</sup>.
- , *Catechetical Lectures*, L.P. McCauley – A.A. Stephenson (trans.) (The Fathers of the Church 61, 64), 2 vols, Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1969–70.
- Didymus of Alexandria, *Sur la Genèse*, texte inédit d'après un papyrus de Tours, L. Doutreleau-P. Nautin (ed.-trans.), (SC 233.244), Paris: Éditions du Cerf 1976–1978.
- Ephraem the Syrian, Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrsers *Carmina Nisibena*, E. Beck (ed.-trans.) (CSCO 218–219, 240–241—script. syr. 92–93, 102–103), Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1961–63.
- , *In Genesis et in Exodum commentarii*, R.-R. Tonneau (ed.) (CSCO 152–153—script. syr. 71–72), Louvain: L. Durbecq 1955.
- , *Selected prose works*, E.G. Mathews, Jr. – J.P. Amar (trans.)/ K. McVey (ed.) (The Fathers of the Church 91), Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1994.
- , *Kommentar zum Diatessarion*, C. Lange (trans.) (FC 54), Turnhout: Brepols 2008.
- , *Saint Ephrem's commentary on Tatian's Diatessarion*: an English translation of Chester Beatty Syriac MS 709, C. McCarthy (trans.) (JSSSup 2), Oxford: OUP 1993.
- , *Hymnen de fide*, E. Beck (ed.-trans.) (CSCO 154–155—script. syr. 73–74), Louvain: L. Durbecq 1955.
- , Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrsers *Hymnen de ecclesia*, E. Beck (ed.-trans.) (CSCO 198–199—script. syr. 84–85), Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO 1960.
- , *Hymnen contra Haereses*, E. Beck (ed.-trans.) (CSCO 169–170—script. syr. 76–77), Louvain: L. Durbecq 1957.
- , Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrsers *Hymnen de ieiunio*, E. Beck (ed.-trans.), (CSCO 246–247—script. syr. 106–107), Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO 1964.
- , Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrsers *Hymnen de Nativitate*: (Epiphania), E. Beck, (ed.-trans.) (CSCO 186–187—script. syr. 82–83), Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1959.
- , Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrsers *Hymnen de paradiso und contra Julianum*, E. Beck (ed.-trans.) (CSCO 174–175—script. syr. 78–79), Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO 1957.
- , Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrsers *Paschahymnen: de Azymis, de Crucifixione, de Resurrectione*, E. Beck (ed.-trans.) (CSCO 248–249—script. syr. 108–109), Louvain: Secrétariat du Corpus SCO 1964.
- , Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrsers *Hymnen de Virginitate*, E. Beck (ed.-trans.) (CSCO 223–224—script. syr. 94–95), Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO 1962.
- , Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrsers *Sermones*, E. Beck (ed.-trans.) (CSCO 305–306, 311–312, 320–321, 334–335—script. syr. 130–131, 134–135, 138–139, 148–149), Louvain: Secrétariat du Corpus SCO, 1970–1973.
- (ps.-) Ephraem the Syrian, *Historie complete de Joseph: poème en douze livres*, ed. P. Bedjan, Paris/Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz 1891.
- Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion*, K. Holl – J. Dummer (ed.) (GCS 25, 31, 37), Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1915–33.
- , *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis*, F. Williams (trans.) (Nag Hammadi studies 35; Nag Hammadi and Manichaeon studies 36), 2 vols, Leiden – N.Y.: E.J. Brill 1987–1994.
- , *Treatise on weights and measures: the Syriac version*, ed. J.E. Dean (The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. Studies in ancient oriental civilization 11), Chicago IL: The University of Chicago Press 1935.
- Eusebius of Emesa, *Commentaire de la Genèse*, F. Petit, L. Van Rompay, J.J.S. Weitenberg (ed.-trans.) (Traditio exegetica Graeca 15), Louvain: Peeters 2006.
- Eusebius of Caesarea, *Werke*, I.A. Heikel/T. Mommsen/ E. Schwartz/E. Klostermann/ K. Mras/J. Ziegler (eds) (GCS 7, 9, 11, 14, 20, 23–24, 34, 43) Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1902–1926.
- , *Die Chronik des Hieronymus = Hieronymi Chronicon*, R. Helm (ed.) (GCS 47. Eusebius Werke7), Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1956<sup>2</sup>.

- , *Eclogae Propheticae*, PG 22:1021–1062.
- , *The proof of the gospel: being the Demonstratio evangelica of Eusebius of Caesarea*, W.J. Ferrar (trans.) (Translations of Christian literature. Series I, Greek texts), London: SPCK 1920.
- , *The ecclesiastical history*, J.E.L. Oulton – H.J. Lawlor (trans.-ed.), London: W. Heine-  
mann/Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1964.
- , *Evangelicae Praeparationis libri xv*, E.H. Gifford (trans.), Oxonii: Typographeo Aca-  
demico/ Novi Eboraci: H. Frowde 1903.
- Eustathius of Antioch, Eustathii Antiocheni, Patris Nicaeni, *Opera quae supersunt Omnia*,  
J.H. Declerck (ed.) (CCG 51), Turnhout: Brepols 2002.
- , Eustathii Episcopi Antiocheni, *In Lazarum, Mariam et Martham homilia christolog-  
ica*, F. Cavallera (ed.), Paris: A. Picard et filium 1905.
- , *Commentarius in Hexaemeron*, PG 18:708–793.
- Gennadius of Constantinople, *In Genesin Fragmenta*, PG 85: 1623–1641.
- George Cedrenus, *Annales*, I. Bekker (ed.), 2 vols, Bonn: E. Weber 1838–1839.
- George Monachus, *Chronicon*, C. de Boor (ed.) (Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et  
Romanorum Teubneriana), Lipsia: B.G. Teubner 1904.
- George of Pisidia, *Hexaemeron*, PG 92: 1425–1578.
- George Syncellus, *Eclogae Chronographiae* (εκλογὴ χρονογραφίας), G. Dindorf (ed.), (Cor-  
pus scriptorum historiae Byzantinae 22–23), 2vols, Bonn: E. Weber 1829.
- , *The chronography of George Synkellos: a Byzantine chronicle of universal history from  
the creation*, W. Adler – P. Tuffin (trans.), Oxford: OUP 2002.
- Gregory of Nazianzus, *Discours* 42–43, J. Bernardi (ed.–trans.) (SC 384), Paris: Cerf, 1992.
- , *The five theological orations of Gregory of Nazianzus*, A.J. Mason (trans.), Cambridge:  
CUP 1899.
- Gregory of Nyssa, *Apologia in hexaemeron*, PG 44: 61–124.
- , *Commentarius in Canticum canticorum*, PG 44: 755–1120.
- , *Discours catéchétique*, L. Méridier (ed.-trans.), Paris: A. Picard 1908.
- , *De opificio hominis*, PG 44: 124–256.
- , *Oratio Contra Fornicarios*, PG 46: 489–496.
- , *Traité de la virginité*, M. Aubineau (ed.) (SC 119), Paris: Éditions du Cerf 1966.
- Hebraeus, bar Gregory, *Chronography: The chronography of Gregory Abû'l Faraj, the son  
of Aaron, the Hebrew physician, commonly known as Bar Hebraeus: being the first part  
of his political history of the world*, E.A.W. Budge (trans.), London: Oxford Univ. Press,  
H. Milford 1932.
- Hippolytus of Rome, *Benedictiones Isaac et Jacob = Sur les bénédictions d'Isaac, de Jacob et  
de Moïse*, M. Brière, L. Mariès, B.C. Mercier (trans.-ed.), PO 27.1–2, Paris: Firmin-Didot  
1954, 2–115.
- , *Demonstratio de Christo et Antichristo*, PG 10: 725–788.
- , *Fragmenta in Genesin*, PG 10: 585–604.
- Irenaeus of Lyons, *Adversus haereses = Contre les hérésies*, A. Rousseau – L. Doutreleau  
(ed.-trans.), 10 vols (SC 100, 152–153, 210–211, 263–264, 293–294), Paris: Éditions du Cerf,  
1965–1982.
- , *Demonstratio = Proof of the apostolic preaching*, J.P. Smith (trans.), Westminster, MD:  
Newman Press 1952.
- Isaiah of Sketis, *Asketikon*, PG 40: 1105–1206.
- , *Ascetic Discourses*, J. Chryssavgis (trans.) (Cistercian studies series 150), Kalamazoo  
MI: Cistercian Publications 2002.
- Ishodad of Merv, *Commentaire sur la Genèse. Commentaire d'Ïso'dadh de Merv sur l'Ancien  
Testament*, ed. J.-M. Vosté – C. van den Eynde (CSCO 156—script. syr. 75), Louvain:  
L. Durbecq 1955.
- Jacob of Edessa, *Hexaemeron*, J.-B. Chabot – A. Vaschalde (ed.-trans.) (CSCO 92.97—script.  
syr. 44. 48), Paris: E. Typographeo Reipublicae 1928–1932.
- Jacob of Serugh, *Homiliae Selectae Mar-Jacobi Sarugensis*, P. Bedjan – S.P. Brock (ed.),  
6 vols, Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press 2006.

- Jerome, *Commentarii in Epistulam Pauli Apostoli ad Galatas*, S. Hieronymi presbyteri opera. Pars I. Opera exegetica 6/7. G. Raspanti (ed.) (CCL 77A), Turnhout: Brepols 2006.
- , *Commentariorum in Matheum libri IV*, S. Hieronymi presbyteri opera. Pars I. Opera exegetica 7. D. Hurst – M. Adriaen (ed.) (CCL 77), Turnhout: Brepols 1969.
- , *Commentary on Matthew*, Th.P. Scheck (trans.), (Fathers of the Church 117), Washington DC 2008: Catholic University of America Press, 2008.
- , *Commentariorum in Esaia, In Esaia parvula adabbreviatio*, S. Hieronymi presbyteri opera. Pars I. Opera exegetica 2, 2 A.M. Adriaen–G.Morin (ed.) (CCL 73), Turnhout: Brepols 1963.
- , *Commentariorum in Hiezechielem libri XIV*, S. Hieronymi presbyteri opera. Pars I. Opera exegetica 4., F. Glorie (ed.) (CCL 75), Turnhout: Brepols 1964.
- , *Commentarii in Prophetas Minores*, S. Hieronymi presbyteri opera. Pars I. Opera exegetica 6., M. Adriaen (ed.) (CCL 76, 76A), 2 vols, Turnhout: Brepols 1969–1970.
- , *Contra Luciferanos*, PL 23:155–182.
- , *Hebraicae quaestiones in libro Geneseos; Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum; Commentarioli in Psalmos; Commentarius in Ecclesiasten*, S. Hieronymi presbyteri opera. Pars I. Opera exegetica 1., P. de Lagarde, G. Morin, M. Adriaen (ed.) (CCL 72), Turnhout: Brepols 1959.
- , *Saint Jerome's Hebrew questions on Genesis*, C.T.R. Hayward (trans.), Oxford: Clarendon 1995.
- , *Lettres*, J. Labourt (ed.-trans.), 8 vols, Paris: Les Belles Lettres 1949–1963.
- John of Antioch, *Fragmenta*, C. Muller (ed.), FHG IV, Paris: Ambrosio Firmin-Didot 1851.
- John Climacus, *The Ladder of the Divine Ascent*, C. Luibhéid – N. Russell (trans.), London: SPCK 1982.
- John of Chrysostom, *Ad Stagiram a daemonem vexatum*, PG 47: 423–470.
- , *Adversus eos qui apud se habent subintroductas virginas*, PG 47: 495–514.
- , *Commentary on Saint John the apostle and evangelist*, T.A. Goggin (trans.) (Fathers of the church 33, 41), 2 vols, Washington DC: Catholic University of American Press, 1960–1969.
- , *Commentarius in Epistolam ad Galatas*, PG 61: 611–679.
- , *Commentary on the Psalms*, R.C. Hill (trans.), Brookline MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press 1998.
- , *Discourses against judaizing Christians*, P.W. Harkins (trans.) (The Fathers of the Church 68), Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press 1979.
- , *Homiliae in Epistulam ad Colossenes*, PG 62: 299–392.
- , *Homiliae in epistulam primam et secundam ad Corinthios*, PG 61: 9–609.
- , *Homiliae in Epistulam ad Hebraeos*, PG 63: 9–235.
- , *Homiliae in Epistulam 1 ad Thessalonicenses*, PG 62: 391–465.
- , *Homiliae in Ioannem*, PG 59: 23–482.
- , *Homiliae in Matthaem*, PG 57: 13–472.
- , *In Genesim Homiliae 1–67*, PG 53:21–385; 54:385–580.
- , *In Genesim Sermones 1–9, Sermons sur la Genèse*, L. Brottier (ed.-trans.) (SC 433), Paris: Cerf 1998.
- , *Lettres à Olympias*, A.-M. Malingrey (ed.-trans.) (SC 13), Paris: Editions du Cerf 1968.
- , *De Sanctis Martyribus*, PG 50:705–712.
- , *De statu (ad populum Antiochenum)*, PG 49: 15–221.
- (ps.-) John Chrysostom, *De Ioseph et Castitate*, PG 56: 587–590.
- (ps.-) John Chrysostom, “*On Melchizedek*”, PG 56: 257–262.
- John of Damascus, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, B. Kotter (ed.) (PTS 7, 12, 17, 22, 29, 60, 61), 7 vols Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 1969–1987.
- John Malalas, *Chronographia*, L. Dindorf (ed.) (Corpus scriptorum historiae byzantinae 15), Bonn: E. Weber 1831.
- John of Nikiu, *Chronicle*, R.H. Charles (trans.), London/Oxford: Williams & Norgate 1916.
- John Philoponus, *De opificio mundi*, G. Reichardt (ed.), Lipsia: Teubner 1897.
- Julius Africanus, *Chronographia*, PG 10:63–94.

- , *Chronographiae: the extant fragments*, M. Wallraff, et al. (ed.) – W. Adler (trans.) (GCS 15), Berlin: W. de Gruyter 2007.
- Justin Martyr, *Apologiae pro Christianis*, M. Marcovich (ed.) (PTS 38), Berlin-N.Y.: de Gruyter, 1994.
- , The first apology, the second apology: dialogue with Trypho, exhortation to the Greeks, discourse to the Greeks, the monarchy, of the rule of God, T.B. Falls (trans.) (Fathers of the church 6), Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press 1965 [repr.].
- , *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, T.B. Falls (trans.) (Selections from the Fathers of the church 3), Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press 2003.
- , *Dialogus cum Tryphone*, M. Marcovich (ed.) (PTS 47), Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 1997.
- (ps.-) Justin, *De resurrectione*, PG 6:1571–1592.
- Kitāb al magāll, or The book of the rolls*, M.D. Gibson (ed.-trans.), Apocrypha arabica, Studia Sinaitica VIII. London: C.J. Clay and Sons 1901.
- Libri de nativitate Mariae*, J. Gijzel (ed.) (CCA), Turnhout: Brepols 1997.
- Macarius Magnes, *Commentarii de mundi creatione*, G. Schalkhauser (ed.) 'Zu den Schriften des Makarius von Magnesia', TU 31.4, Leipzig 1907, 130–185.
- Marcus Eremita, *De Melchisedech*, PG 65: 893–1140.
- Matthaeuskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*, J. Reuss (ed.), TU 61, Berlin: Akademie Verlag 1957.
- Maximus the Confessor, *Quaestiones et dubia*, J.H. Declerck (ed.) (CCG 10), Turnhout: Brepols 1982.
- Melito of Sardis, *On Pascha, and fragments*, S.G. Hall (trans.-ed.), Oxford: Clarendon Press 1979.
- Methodius of Olympus, *Methodius*, G.N. Bonwetsch (ed.) (GCS 27), Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs 1917
- Methodius of Olympus, *Sermo in Ramos Palmarum*, PG 18: 383–398.
- Methodius of Olympus, *The symposium; A treatise on chastity*, H. Musurillo (trans.) (Ancient Christian writers 27), Westminster MD: Newman Press 1958.
- Michael Glykas, *Annales*, I. Bekker (ed.), Bonn: E. Weber 1836.
- Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, J.-B. Chabot (ed.-trans.), 4 vols, Paris: 1899–1910.
- Narsai, *Homélies sur la création*, P. Gignoux (ed.-trans.), PO 34. 3–4, Paris: Brepols 1968.
- , *Die Geschichte Josefs von Mar Narses*, nach einer syrischen Handschrift der Königl. Bibliothek in Berlin, ed.-trans. V. Grabowski, Berlin: H. Itzkowski 1889.
- , *Homiliae Mar Narsetis in Joseph*, P. Bedjan (ed.), Paris/Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz 1901
- Nicene and post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church: A Select Library*, 2nd ser., P. Schaff – H. Wace (eds), 14 vols, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark/ Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans 1988–1991
- Neutestamentliche Apokryphen in deutscher Übersetzung*, E. Hennecke (trans.) – W. Schneemelcher (ed.), 2 vols, Tübingen: Mohr 1989<sup>5</sup>.
- (ps-) Nilus of Ancyra, *Peristeria seu tractatus de virtutibus excolendis et vitiis fugendis*, PG 79: 811–965.
- Origen, *Origenes Werke*, P. Koetschau/ E. Klostermann/ E. Preuschen/ W.A. Baehrens (eds) (GCS 2, 3, 6, 10, 22, 29, 30, 33, 35, 38, 40, 41), Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs 1899–1955.
- Origen – Jerome, *The commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, R.E. Heine (trans.), Oxford: OUP 2002.
- , *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, T.P. Scheck (trans.) (Fathers of the church 103–104), 2 vols Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press 2001–2002.
- , *Commentarii in Genesim*, PG 12: 92–145.
- , *Opera Omnia. Tom XI: in Libros Josuae, Judicum et I Samuelis Homiliae, Fragmenta Graeca ex Ejusdem in Libros Josuae, Judicum, Ruth, Samuelis, Regum et Jobi Commentariis, itemque Selectorum in Psalmos Pars I*, C.H.E. Lommatszsch (ed.), Berlin: Sumtibus Haude et Spener (S.J. Josephy) 1841.

- , *Commentary on the Gospel according to John*, books 1–10, R.E. Heine (trans.) (The Fathers of the Church 80), Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1989.
- , *Commentaria in Evangelium secundum Matthaeum*, PG 13: 829–1800.
- , *Commentaria in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, PG 14: 839–1290.
- , *Contra Celsum*, H. Chadwick (trans.), Cambridge: CUP 1980.
- , *An exhortation to martyrdom, Prayer, First principles, book IV, Prologue to the commentary on 'The song of songs', Homily XXVII on 'Numbers'*, R.A. Greer (trans.), London: S.P.C.K. 1973.
- , *Exegetica in Psalmos*, PG 12: 1053–1685.
- , *Homélie sur le Cantique des cantiques*, O. Rousseau (ed.-trans.) (SC 37), Paris: Éditions du Cerf 1954.
- , *Homélie sur Ézéchiel*, M. Borret (ed.-trans.) (SC 352), Paris: Éditions du Cerf 1989.
- , *Homélie sur la Genèse*, L. Doutreleau – H. de Lubac (ed.-trans.) (SC 7), Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1944.
- , *Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, R.E. Heine (trans.) (Fathers of the Church 71), Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press 1982.
- , *Homélie sur Jérémie*, P. Husson – ed. P. Nautin (trans.) (SC 232, 238), Paris: Cerf 1976–1977.
- , *Homiliae in Numeri*, PG 12: 583–800.
- , *Sur les écritures: Philocalie, 1–20. La lettre à Africanus sur l'histoire de Suzanne*, M. Harl–N. De Lange (ed.-trans.) (SC 302), Paris: Éditions du Cerf 1983.
- , *On first principles*, G.W. Butterworth (trans.), London 1936.
- , *Selecta in Genesim*, PG 12: 91–143.
- Philastrius, *Diversarum hereseon liber*, F. Heylen (ed.) (CCL 9), Turnhout: Brepols 1957.
- Procopius of Gaza, *Catena in Octateuchum (In Genesim)*, PG 87: 22–511.
- Protevangeliū Jacobi = The Infancy Gospels of James [and Thomas]*, R.F. Hock (ed.-trans.), Sonoma CA: Polebridge Press 1995.
- Pseudo-Clementine Homilies*, B. Rehm, J. Irmscher, F. Paschke (ed.) (GCS 51), 3 vols Berlin: Akademie-Verlag 1953–1989.
- (ps.-) Sebeos, *The Armenian history attributed to Sebeos*, R.W. Thomson (trans.) (Translated texts for historians 31), Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999.
- Severian of Gabala, *De Mundi Creationi Orationes*, PG 56: 429–500.
- , *In Genesim Sermones III*, PG 56: 519–538.
- , *De serpente homiliae*, PG 56: 499–516.
- Severus of Antioch, *Les homiliae cathedrales de Sévère d'Antioche, version syriaque de Jacques d'Édesse. Homélie LVIII à LXIX*, M. Briere (ed.-trans.), PO 8 Paris: Firmin-Didot 1912; *Homélie XCIX à CIII*, I. Guidi, (ed.-trans.), PO 22, Paris: Firmin-Didot 1930.
- Solomon, Bishop of Basra, *The book of the bee: the Syriac text*, E.A.W. Budge (ed.-trans.) (Anecdota oxoniensia Semitic series.1.2), Oxford: Clarendon Press 1886.
- Sozomenus, *Historia Ecclesiastica = Kirchengeschichte*, J. Bidez (ed.) (GCS 50), Berlin: Akademie-Verlag 1960.
- Symeon the New Theologian, *Discourses*, C.J. deCatanzaro (trans.), London: SPCK 1980.
- Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autolyicum*, R.M. Grant (ed.-trans.), Oxford: Clarendon Press 1970<sup>2</sup>.
- Theodore bar Koni, *Liber Scholiorum, Livre des scolies*, R. Hespel – R. Draguet (ed.-trans.), (CSCO 431–432—script. syr. 187–188), Louvain: Peeters 1981–1982.
- Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Fragments on Genesis*, PG 66: 633–646.
- Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Commentary of the Gospel of John*, M. Conti (trans.), J.C. Elowsky (ed.), Downers Grove IL: InterVarsity Press 2010.
- Theodoret of Cyrillus, *De Incarnatione Domini*, PG 75: 1419–1478. (*apud* Cyril of Alexandria)
- , *Historia Religiosa*, PG 82: 1270–1498.
- , *The questions on the Octateuch*, J.F. Petruccione (ed.) – R.C. Hill (trans.) (The library of early Christianity 1–2), Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press 2007.
- Zacharias Rhetor, *Vita of Severus of Antioch*, M.A. Kugener (ed.-trans.), PO 2, 7–115, Paris 1903.





## GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aalen, S., 'St. Luke's Gospel and the Last Chapters of 1 Enoch', *NTS* 13 (1967), 1–13.
- Aaron, D.H., 'Early rabbinic exegesis on Noah's son Ham and the so-called "Hamitic myth"', *JAAR* 63.4 (1995), 721–759.
- Aberbach, M. – B. Grossfeld, *Targum Onqelos on Genesis 49 / translation and analytical commentary* (Society of Biblical Literature Aramaic Studies Series 1), Missoula MT: Scholars Press 1976.
- Abusch, R., 'Eunuchs and Gender Transformation: Philo's Exegesis of the Joseph Narrative', in S. Tougher (ed.), *Eunuchs in Antiquity and Beyond*, London: Classical Press of Wales and Duckworth 2002, 103–121.
- , 'Circumcision and Castration under Roman Law in the Early Empire', in E.W. Mark (ed.), *The Covenant of Circumcision: New Perspectives on an Ancient Jewish Rite* (Brandeis series on Jewish women), Lebanon NH: Brandeis University Press 2003, 75–86.
- Achelis, H., *Virgines subintroductae. Ein Beitrag zum VII. Kapitel des I. Korintherbriefs*, Leipzig: S.C. Hinrichs 1902.
- Adelman, R., *The Return of the Repressed: Pirqa de-Rabbi Eliezer and the Pseudepigrapha* (JSJSup 140), Leiden-Boston: Brill 2009.
- Adler, W., 'Abraham and the Burning of Idols: Jubilees Traditions in Christian Chronography', *JQR* 77 (1986/87), 95–117.
- , *Time Immemorial: Archaic History and Its Sources in Christian Chronography from Julius Africanus to George Syncellus* (Dumbarton Oaks Studies 26), Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection 1989.
- , 'Jacob of Edessa and the Jewish Pseudepigrapha in Syriac Chronography', in J.C. Reeves (ed.), *Tracing the Threads* (Early Judaism and its literature 6), Atlanta GA: Scholars Press 1994, 143–171.
- , 'The Apocalyptic Survey of History adapted by Christians: Daniel's prophecy of 70 weeks', in idem—J. VanderKam (eds), *The Jewish apocalyptic heritage in Early Christianity* (Compendia rerum judaicorum ad Novum Testamentum Section 3; Jewish Traditions in Early Christian Literature 4), Assen: Van Gorcum – Minneapolis: Fortress Press 1996, 201–238.
- , 'The Pseudepigrapha in Early Christianity', in J. Sanders – L. MacDonald (eds), *The Canon Debate*, Peabody MA: Hendrickson Publishers 2002, 211–228.
- , 'Jewish Pseudepigrapha in Jacob's of Edessa's Letters and Historical Writings', in R.B. ter Haar Romeny (ed.), *Jacob of Edessa and the Syriac culture of his day* (Monographs of the Peshitta Institute, Leiden. Studies in the Syriac versions of the Bible and their cultural contexts 18), Leiden: Brill 2009, 49–65.
- Aeby, G., *Les missions divines; de Saint-Justin à Origène* (Paradosis; études de littérature et de théologie anciennes 12), Friburg: Editions universitaires 1958.
- Albl, M., 'And Scripture Cannot Be Broken'. *The Form and Function of the Early Christian Testimonia Collections* (NTSup 96), Leiden et al.: Brill 1999.
- Alexander, P.J., *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, ed. D. de F. Abrahamse, Berkeley: University of California Press 1985.
- Alexander, P.S., 'The Targumim and Early Exegesis of 'Sons of God' in Genesis 6', *JJS* 23 (1972), 60–71.
- , 'The Parting of the Ways from the Perspective of Rabbinic Judaism', in J.D.G. Dunn (ed.), *Jews and Christians*, 1–26.
- , 'Pre-emptive Exegesis: Genesis Rabba's Reading of the Story of Creation', *JJS* 43 (1992), 230–245.

- , 'Targum, Targumim', in D.N. Freedman (ed.), *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 6, New York: Doubleday 1992, cols 320–31.
- , 'The King Messiah in Rabbinic Judaism', in J. Day (ed.), *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (JSOTSup 270), Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1998, 456–473.
- , 'Jerusalem as the *Omphalos* of the World: On the history of a geographical concept', in L.I. Levine (ed.), *Jerusalem: Its Sanctity and Centrality to Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, New York: Continuum 1999, 104–119.
- , '"In the beginning": Rabbinic and Patristic Exegesis of Genesis 1:1', in E. Grypeou – H. Spurling (eds), *The Exegetical Encounter*, 1–30.
- Alexandre, M., *Le Commencement du Livre: Genèse I–V. La version grecque de la Septante et sa réception* (Christianisme antique 3), Paris: Beauchesne 1988.
- Allison, D.C., *Resurrecting Jesus: the earliest Christian tradition and its interpreters*, N.Y. – London: T&T Clark 2005.
- Altaner, B. – A. Stuiber, *Patrologie. Leben, Schriften und Lehre der Kirchenväter*, Freiburg: Herder 1966.
- Altaner, B., 'Die Schrift περι τοῦ Μετὰ τὴν Ἐξοδὸν des Eustathius von Antiocheia', *ByzZ* 40 (1940), 34–36.
- Amihay, A., 'Noah in Rabbinic Literature', in M.E. Stone et al. (eds), *Noah and His Book(s)*, Atlanta: SBL 2010, 193–214.
- Amirav, H., *Rhetoric and Tradition: John Chrysostom on Noah and the Flood* (Traditio Exegetica Graeca 12), Louvain: Peeters 2003.
- Anderson, G.A., 'The Cosmic Mountain: Eden and Its Early Interpretation in Syriac Christianity', in G.A. Robbins (ed.), *Genesis 1–3 in the History of Exegesis* (Studies in Women and Religion 27), N.Y. – Ontario: Edwin Mellen Press 1988, 186–222.
- , 'The Garden of Eden and Sexuality in Early Judaism', in H. Eilberg-Schwartz (ed.), *People of the Body: Jews and Judaism from an embodied perspective*, Albany: State University of New York Press 1992, 47–68.
- , 'The Exaltation of Adam and the Fall of Satan', *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 6 (1997), 105–134.
- , – M.E. Stone (eds), *A Synopsis of the books of Adam and Eve*, Atlanta: Scholars Press 1999<sup>2</sup>.
- , 'The Fall of Satan in the Thought of St. Ephrem and John Milton', *Hugoye* 3.1 (2000), 3–27.
- , *The Genesis of Perfection: Adam and Eve in Jewish and Christian Imagination: Intrigue in the Garden*, Louisville KY: Westminster John Knox Press 2001.
- Aptowitz, V., *Cain und Abel in der Agada, in den Apokryphen, der hellenistischen und muhammedanischen Literatur*, Vienna – Leipzig: Löwt 1922.
- , 'Les éléments juifs dans la légende du Golgotha', *REJ* 79 (1924), 145–162.
- , 'Asenath, the wife of Joseph. A Haggadic Literary-Historical Study', *HUCA* 1 (1924), 239–306.
- , 'Malkizedek. Zu den Sagen der Agada', *MGWJ* 70 (1926), 93–113.
- Argyle, A.W., 'Joseph the Patriarch in Patristic Teaching', *ExpTimes* 67 (1955–56), 199–201.
- Armstrong, G.T., 'The cross in the Old Testament according to Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem and the Cappadocian Fathers', in C. Andersen – G. Klein (eds), *Theologia Crucis Signum Crucis: FS Erich Dinkler zum 70. Geburtstag*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1979, 17–38.
- Attridge, H.W., *A Commentary on the Hebrews: The Epistle to Hebrews* (Hermeneia Commentary), Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1989.
- Avemarie, F. – H. Lichtenberger (eds), *Auferstehung-Resurrection* (WUNT 135), Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck 2001.
- Avery-Peck A.J. – J. Neusner (eds), *Judaism in Late Antiquity Part Four: Death, Life-After-Death, Resurrection and the World-to-Come in the Judaisms of Antiquity* (Handbook of Oriental Studies Ant. 1. The Near and Middle East 79), Leiden: Brill 2000.
- Avi-Yonah, M., *The Madaba Mosaic Map*, Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society 1954.

- Baasland, E., 'Persecution: A Neglected Feature in the Letter to the Galatians', *ST* 38 (1984), 135–156.
- Bakhos, C., *Ishmael on the border: rabbinic portrayals of the first Arab*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006.
- , (ed.), *Current Trends in the Study of Midrash* (Supplements to JSJ 106), Leiden: Brill 2006.
- Barbel, J., *Christos Angelos. Die Anschauung von Christus als Bote und Engel in der gelehrten und volkstümlichen Literatur des christlichen Altertums* (Theophaneia 3), Bonn: Hanstein 1941.
- Barc, B., 'Samaël-Saklas-Yaldabaôth: Recherche sur la genèse d'un mythe gnostique', in idem (ed.), *Colloque international sur les textes des Nag Hammadi*, Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval – Louvain: Peeters 1981, 123–150.
- Bardenhewer, O., *Patrologie*, Freiburg: Herder 1901<sup>2</sup>.
- Bardy, G., 'Les traditions juives dans l'oeuvre d'Origène', *RB* 34 (1925), 217–252.
- , 'Melchisédech dans la tradition patristique', *RB* 35 (1926), 496–509; 36 (1927), 25–45.
- , 'Saint-Jérôme et ses maîtres hébreux', *Revue Bénédictine* 46 (1934), 145–164.
- Barker, M., *The Lost Prophet: The Book of Enoch and Its Influence on Christianity*, London: SPCK 1988.
- , *The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple in Jerusalem*, London: SPCK 1991.
- Barrett, C.K., 'The Allegory of Abraham, Sara and Hagar in the Argument of Galatians', in idem, *Essays on Paul*, London: SPCK Westminster John Knox Press 1982, 154–170.
- Barthélemy, D., *Les Devanciers d' Aquila: première publication intégrale du texte des fragments du Dodécaprophète: trouvés dans le désert de Juda, précédée d' une étude sur les traductions et recensions grecques de la Bible réalisées au premier siècle de notre ère sous l'influence du rabbinat palestinien* (VTSup 10), Leiden: Brill 1963.
- Baskin, J., *Pharaoh's Counsellors: Job, Jethro and Balaam in Rabbinic and Patristic Traditions* (Brown Judaic Studies 47), Chico CA: Scholars Press 1983.
- , 'Rabbinic-Patristic Exegetical Contacts in Late Antiquity: A Bibliographical Reappraisal', in W.S. Green (ed.), *Approaches to Ancient Judaism* 5 (Brown Judaic Studies 32), Atlanta GA: Scholars Press 1985, 53–80.
- , *Midrashic Women: Formations of the Feminine in Rabbinic Literature*, Hanover, NH – London: University Press of New England 2002.
- Bassler, J.M., 'Cain and Abel in the Palestinian Targums: A brief note on an old controversy', *JSJ* 17.1 (1986), 56–64.
- Battista, A. – B. Bagatti (ed.-trans.), *La Caverna dei Tesori. Testo arabo con traduzione italiana e commento* (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum 26), Jerusalem: Franciscan Print. Press 1979.
- Baukham, R., 'The Horarium of Adam and the Chronology of the Passion', in B. Lourié (ed.), *L'Église des Deux Alliances: Mémorial Annie Jaubert (1912–1980)* (Supplement Series to Scrinium), Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press 2008, 39–68.
- Bauer, W., *Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum* (Beiträge zur historischen Theologie 10), Tübingen: Mohr 1964<sup>2</sup>.
- Baumstark, A., 'Pešittā and palästinensisches Targum', *BZ* 19 (1931), 257–270.
- Baxter, W., 'Noachic Traditions and the Book of Noah', *JSP* 15.3 (2006), 179–194.
- Becker, A.H., 'Anti-Judaism and Care of the Poor in Aphrahat's Demonstration 20', *J ECS* 10.3 (2002), 305–327.
- , 'Beyond the Spatial and Temporal Limes: Questioning the "Parting of the Ways" Outside the Roman Empire', in idem—A.Y. Reed (eds), *The Ways That Never Parted*, 343–362.
- , 'Bringing the Heavenly Academy Down to Earth: Approaches to the Imagery of Divine Pedagogy in the East-Syrian Tradition', in R. Boustān—A.Y. Reed (eds), *Heavenly Realms and Earthly Realities in Late Antique Religions*, Cambridge: CUP 2004, 174–194.

- Becker, A.H.—A.Y. Reed (eds), *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages* (Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 95), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2003.
- Beckwith, R.T., *Calendar, Chronology and Worship* (Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity 61), Leiden: Brill 2005.
- Benjamins, H.S., 'Noah, the Ark, and the Flood in Early Christian Theology: The Ship of the Church in the Making', in F. García Martínez – G. Luttikhuisen (eds), *Interpretations of the Flood* (Themes in Biblical Narrative 1), Leiden: Brill 1998, 134–149.
- Benko, S., *The Virgin Goddess. Studies in the Pagan and Christian roots of Mariology* (Studies in the history of religions 59), Leiden: Brill 1993.
- Benz, E., *The Eastern Orthodox Church. Its Thought and Life*, Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books 1963 (repr. 2009).
- Berger, D., 'Three Typological Themes in Early Jewish Messianism: Messiah Son of Joseph, Rabbinic Calculations, and the Figure of Armilus', *AJS Review* 10.2 (1985), 141–164.
- Bergmann, C.D., *Childbirth as a Metaphor for Crisis: Evidence from the Ancient Near East, the Hebrew Bible, and 1QH XI, 1–18* (BZAW 382), Berlin: Walter De Gruyter 2008, 164–217.
- Bernard, J.H., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John* (The International Critical Commentary), Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1928.
- Betz, H.D., *Galatians. A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Hermeneia 62), Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1979.
- Bezold, C. (ed.-trans.), *Die Schatzhöhle. Mē'ārath Gazzē'. Syrischer Text, Arabische Version und Übersetzung*, Leipzig: Hinrichs 1883–1888, repr. Amsterdam: Philo Press 1981.
- Biale, D., *Cultures of the Jews: A New History*, N.Y.: Schocken Books 2002.
- Bidermann, S. – B.A. Scharfstein (eds), *Interpretation of Religion* (Philosophy and Religion 2), Leiden: Brill 1992.
- Bieringer R. et al. (eds), *The New Testament and Rabbinic Literature* (JSJSup 136), Leiden-Boston: Brill 2010.
- Black, M., 'The Pauline Doctrine of the Second Adam', *SJT* 7 (1957), 174–176.
- Blenkinsopp, J., 'Family in First Temple Israel', in L.G. Perdue et al. (eds), *Families in ancient Israel*, Louisville KY 1997, 48–103.
- Blönnigen, C., *Der griechische Ursprung der jüdisch-hellenischen Allegorie und ihre Rezeption in der alexandrinischen Patristik*, Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang Verlag 1992.
- Blowers, M., 'Origen, the Rabbis, and the Bible: Toward a Picture of Judaism and Christianity in Third-Century Caesarea', in C. Kannengiesser – W.L. Petersen (eds), *Origen of Alexandria: His World and Legacy* (Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity 1), Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press 1988, 96–116.
- Boccabello, J.S., 'Why would a pagan read Zechariah? Apologetics and Exegesis in the second-century Greek Apologists', in C. Tuckett (ed.), *The Book of Zechariah and its Influence*, Aldershot-Burlington: Ashgate 2003, 135–144.
- Bockmuehl, M. – J. Carleton Paget (eds), *Redemption and Resistance: The Messianic Hopes of Jews and Christians in Antiquity*, London: T&T Clark 2007.
- , – G. Stroumsa (eds), *Paradise in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Views*, Cambridge: CUP 2010.
- Boda, M.J., – Floyd, M.H. – R. Mason (eds), *Bringing out the Treasure: Inner-Biblical Allusion in Zechariah 9–14* (JSOTSup 370), Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 2003.
- Bolgiani, F., 'L'ascesi di Noe: a proposito di Theoph. ad Autol. III 19', in *Forma futuri: studi in onore del cardinal Michele Pellegrino*, Turin: Bottega d' Erasmio 1975, 295–333.
- Borgen, P., 'Some Hebrew and Pagan Features in Philo's and Paul's Interpretation of Hagar and Ishmael', in idem—G. Giversen (eds), *New Testament and Hellenistic Judaism*, Aarhus: Aarhus University Press 1997, 151–164.
- Borig, R., *Der wahre Weinstock. Untersuchungen zu Jo 15,1–10* (Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 16), München: Kösel 1967.
- Böttrich, C., *"Die Vögel des Himmels haben ihn begraben": Überlieferungen zu Abels Bestattung und zur Ätiologie des Grabes*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1995.
- , *Geschichte Melchizedeks* (JSRHZ – N.F. 2.1), Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus 2010.

- Bousset, W., *Kyrios Christos: Geschichte des Christusglaubens von den Anfängen des Christentums bis Irenaeus* (Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 21—n.F. 4), Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1921.
- Boustan, R.S., *From Martyr to Mystic: rabbinic martyrology and the making of merkavah mysticism* (Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 112), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2005.
- Bowker, J., *The Targums and Rabbinic Literature: an introduction to Jewish interpretations of scripture*, Cambridge: CUP 1969.
- Boyarin, D., *Dying for God: martyrdom and the making of Christianity and Judaism*, Stanford CA: Stanford University Press 1999.
- Brakke, D., *Demons and the Making of the Monks: spiritual combat in early Christianity*, Cambridge MA – London: Harvard University Press 2006.
- Braun, H.-J., *Das Jenseits: Die Vorstellung der Menschheit über das Leben nach dem Tod*, Zürich: Artemis und Winkler Verlag 1996.
- Braun, T., 'The Jews in the Late Roman Empire', *SCI* 27 (1998), 142–171.
- Braverman, J., *Jerome's 'Commentary on Daniel': a study of comparative Jewish and Christian interpretations of the Hebrew Bible* (CBQ Monograph series 7), Washington D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association of America 1978.
- Brock, S.P., 'A Syriac Life of Abel', *Le Muséon* 87 (1974), 467–492.
- , 'Jewish Traditions in Syriac Sources', *JJS* 30 (1979), 212–232.
- , 'Syriac views on emergent Islam', in G.H.A. Juynboll (ed.), *Studies on the first century of Islamic history*, Carbondale IL: Southern Illinois University Press 1982.
- , 'From Antagonism to Assimilation: Syriac Attitudes to Greek Learning', in N.G. Garsoïan, T.F. Mathews, and R.W. Thomson (eds), *East of Byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the formative period*, Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, Trustees for Harvard University 1982, 17–34.
- , 'Early Syrian Asceticism', in idem, *Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity*, London: Variorum Reprints 1984, 1–19.
- – S. Hopkins, 'A Verse Homily on Abraham and Sarah in Egypt: Syriac Original with Arabic Translation', *Le Muséon* 105 (1992), 87–146.
- , 'Greek and Syriac in Late Antique Syria', in A.K. Bowman – G. Woolf (eds), *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World*, Cambridge: CUP 1994, 149–160.
- , *The Bible in the Syriac Tradition* (Gorgias handbooks 7), Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press 2006.
- , 'Joseph and Potiphar's Wife (Gen 39): Two Anonymous Dispute Poems', in W.J. van Bekkum et al. (eds), *Syriac Polemics: studies in honour of G.J. Reinink* (Orientalia Lovaniensia analecta 170), Leuven: Peeters 2007, 41–58.
- , 'Creating Women's Voices: Sarah and Tamar in Some Syriac Narrative Poems', in E. Grypeou – H. Spurling, *The Exegetical Encounter*, 125–141.
- Brooke, G.J., 'Commentary on Genesis A+B', in idem et al. (eds), *Qumran Cave 4.XVII, Parabiblical Texts, Part 3 (Discoveries in the Judaean Desert 22)*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1996, 185–207.
- , 'Commentaries on Genesis and Malachi', in idem et al. (eds), *Qumran Cave 4.XVII, Parabiblical Texts, Part 3 (Discoveries in the Judaean Desert 22)*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, 135–236.
- , '4Q252 et le Nouveau Testament', in D. Marguéat (ed.), *Le Déchirement: Juifs et Chrétiens au premier siècle* (Monde de la Bible 32), Genève: Labor et Fides 1996, 221–242.
- , *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press 2005.
- Brooks, R., 'Straw Dogs and Scholarly Ecumenism: The Appropriate Jewish Background for the Study of Origen', in C. Kannengiesser – W.L. Petersen (eds), *Origen of Alexandria: His World and Legacy*, Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press 1988, 63–95.
- Broszio, G., 'Julius Africanus', in S. Döpp – W. Geerlings (eds), *Lexikon der antiken christlichen Literatur*, Freiburg i. Br. et al.: Herder 1999, 363–364.
- Brown, M., *The Authentic Writings of Ignatius. A Study of Linguistic Criteria* (Duke studies in religion 2), Durham NC: Duke University Press 1963.

- Brown, P., *The Cult of the Saints: its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Haskell lectures on history of religions; n.s. 2), Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1981.
- Bruce, F.F., *The Epistle to the Galatians: a Commentary on the Greek Text* (New international Greek Testament commentary), Grand Rapids MI: W.B. Eerdmans 1982.
- Bruns, P., *Aphrahat. Unterweisungen* (FC 5), Freiburg: Herder 1991.
- Budge, E.A.W., *The Book of Governors: The Historia Monastica of Thomas Bishop of Marga, A.D. 840*, 2 vols, London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner & co., Ltd. 1893.
- Burchard, C., 'Zum Text von 'Joseph and Asenath'', *JSJ* 1 (1970), 3–34.
- Burchard, C. with C. Burfeind and U.B. Fink, *Joseph and Aseneth* (Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti Graece 5), Leiden-Boston: Brill 2003.
- Burkitt, F.C., *Early Eastern Christianity: St. Margaret's Lectures 1904 on the Syriac-Speaking Church*, London: John Murray 1904.
- Burton-Christie, D., 'Oral Culture and Biblical Interpretation in Early Egyptian Monasticism', in E. Livingstone (ed.), *Papers presented at the Twelfth International Conference on Patristics* (International Conference on Patristic Studies. *Studia patristica* 29–33), Peeters: Leuven 1997, 144–150.
- Busse, H. – G. Kretschmar (eds), *Jerusalem Heiligtumstraditionen in altkirchlicher und frühislamischer Zeit* (Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästinavereins), Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1987.
- Buytaert, E.M., *L' héritage littéraire d'Eusèbe d'Émèse, étude critique et historique* (Bibliothèque du Muséon 24), Louvain: Bureaux du Muséon 1949.
- Bynum, C.W., 'Images of the Resurrection of the Body in the Theology of Late Antiquity', *CHR* 80.2 (1994), 215–37.
- , *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity: 200–1336* (Lectures on the history of religions; n.s. 15), N.Y.: Columbia University Press 1995.
- Byron, J., 'Slaughter, Fratricide, and Sacrilege: Cain and Abel Traditions in 1 John 3', *Bib* 88 (2008), 526–535.
- Caner, D.F., 'The Practice and Prohibition of Self-Castration in Early Christianity', *VC* 51 (1997), 365–415.
- Caquot, A., 'Une homélie éthiopienne attribuée à saint Mari Ephrem sur le séjour d'Abraham et Sara en Égypte', in *Mélanges Antoine Guillaumont: contributions à l'étude des christianismes orientaux: avec une bibliographie du dedicataire* (Cahiers d'Orientalisme 20), Geneva: Patrick Cramer 1998, 173–185.
- Carleton Paget, J., 'The Christian Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Alexandrian Tradition', in M. Sæbø, *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament*, 478–542.
- , 'Some Observations on Josephus and Christianity', in idem, *Jews, Christians and Jewish Christians in Antiquity* (WUNT 251), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2010, 185–226.
- Cassel, J.D., 'Patristic and rabbinic interpretations of Genesis 3: a case study in contrasts', *Studia Patristica* 39 (2006), 203–211.
- Cathcart, K.J. – R.P. Gordon, *The Targum of the Minor Prophets*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1989.
- Chadwick, H., 'Philo and the Beginnings of Christian thought', in A.H. Armstrong (ed.), *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, Cambridge: CUP 1967, 137–192.
- Charles, H., *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Translations of early documents. Ser. I. Palestinian Jewish texts (Pre-Rabbinic) 5), London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge 1917.
- Charlesworth, J.H., *The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research* (Septuagint and cognate studies series 7), Missoula MO: Scholars Press for the Society of Biblical Literature 1981.
- , et al. (eds), *Qumran-Messianism: Studies on the Messianic Expectations in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1995.

- Chesnutt, R.D., *From Death to Life: Conversion in Joseph and Aseneth* (JSPSup 16), Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1995.
- Childers, J., *Virtuous Reading: Aphrahat's Approach to Scripture* (Analecta Gorgiana 121), Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press 2009.
- Chryssavgis, J., *John Climacus: from the Egyptian desert to the Sinaiite mountain*, Aldershot: Ashgate 2004.
- Clark, E.A., *Women in the Early Church* (Message of the Fathers of the Church 13), Wilmington Del: M. Glazier 1983.
- Clark, G., *Women in Late Antiquity: Pagan and Christian Lifestyles*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1993.
- Clements, R.A. – D.R. Schwartz (eds), *Text, Thought and Practice in Qumran and Early Christianity* (Studies on the texts of the desert of Judah 84), Leiden: Brill 2009.
- Cohen, G., 'Esau as Symbol in Early Medieval Thought', in A. Altmann (ed.), *Jewish Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press 1967, 19–48.
- Cohen, J., *Be Fertile and Increase. Fill the Earth and Master It: The Ancient and Medieval Career of a Biblical Text*, Ithaca – London: Cornell University Press 1989.
- Cohen, N.G., *Philo Judaeus*, Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang 1995.
- Cohen, S.J.D., 'Parallel Traditions in Josephus and Rabbinic Literature', *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies Jerusalem, August 4–12, 1985*. 2.1, Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies 1986, 7–14.
- , *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Hellenistic culture and society 31), Berkeley-L.A. CA – London: University of California Press 1999.
- Cole, R.A., *The Letter of Paul to the Galatians: An introduction and commentary* (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries), Leicester: Inter-Varsity 1989.
- Coleman-Norton, R., 'St. Chrysostom's Use of Josephus', *CP* 26 (1931), 85–89.
- Collins, J.J., *The Scepter and the Star: The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Ancient Literature* (Anchor Bible reference library), N.Y. – London: Doubleday 1995.
- , *The Apocalyptic Imagination: an introduction to Jewish apocalyptic literature* (Biblical resource series), Grand Rapids MI – Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans 1998<sup>2</sup>.
- , 'Messianism and Exegetical Tradition: The evidence of the LXX Pentateuch', in idem, *Jewish Cult and Hellenistic Culture: essays on the Jewish encounter with Hellenism and Roman rule* (JJSJSup 100), Leiden: Brill 2005, 58–81.
- Cook, J., 'The Composition of the Peshitta Version of the Old Testament (Pentateuch)', in B. Dirksen – M.J. Mulder (eds), *The Peshitta: its early text and history, papers read at the Peshitta Symposium held at Leiden, 30–31 August, 1985* (Monographs of the Peshitta Institute, Leiden 4), Leiden: Brill 1988, 147–168.
- Coquin, R.G. – G. Godron (ed.–trans.), 'Un encomion copte sur Marie-Madeleine attribué à Cyrille de Jerusalem', *BIFAO* 90 (1990), 188.
- Creed, J.M., 'The Slavonic Version of Josephus. History of the Jewish War', *HTR* 25 (1932), 277–319.
- Dagron, G., 'Judaiser', *Travaux et memoires* 11 (1991), 359–380.
- Danielou, J., *Sacramentum Futuri: études sur les origines de la typologie biblique* (Etudes de théologie historique), Paris: Beauchesne 1950.
- , *Les anges et leur mission dans les Pères de l'Église* (Collection Irénikon, n.s., 5), Paris: Gembloux 1953.
- , *Les saints 'paiens' de l'Ancient Testament*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil 1955.
- , 'La typologie biblique traditionnelle dans la Liturgie du Moyen Age', in *La Bibbia nell'Alto Medioevo*, 26 Aprile – 2 Maggio 1962 (Settimana di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo X), Spoleto: Il Centro 1963, 141–161.
- , *Primitive Christian Symbols* (Compass books 3), London: Burns & Oates 1964.
- , *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, London: Darton, Longman and Todd 1964.
- Davies, W.D., *Torah in the Messianic Age and / or the Age to Come*, Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature 1952.



- , *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: some rabbinic elements in Pauline theology*, London: SPCK 1970<sup>3</sup>.
- D.A. Allison (eds), *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, 3 vols (International critical commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments), Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark 1988–1997.
- Davila, J.R., 'Melchizedek: King, Priest, and God', in S.D. Breslauer (ed.), *The Seductiveness of Jewish Myth: challenge or response?* (SUNY series in Judaica), Albany NY: SUNY Press 1997, 217–234.
- , *The Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha: Jewish, Christian, or Other?* (JSJSup 105), Leiden: Brill 2005.
- Davos, P., 'Le dossier syriaque de S. Eusebe de Samosata', *AnBoll* 85 (1967), 195–240.
- Day, J. (ed.), *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East: proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament seminar* (JSOTSup 270), Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1998.
- de Hoop, R., *Genesis 49 in its Literary and Historical Context* (Oudtestamentische studiën 39), Leiden: Brill 1999.
- de Jonge, M., *The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, Assen: van Gorcum 1953.
- , 'The Use of the Word 'Anointed' in the Time of Jesus', *NT* 4 (1966), 132–148.
- , 'The Two Messiahs in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs', in idem, *Jewish Eschatology and Early Christian Christology and the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs. Collected Essays* (NTSup 63), Leiden: Brill 1991, 191–203.
- J. Tromp (eds), *The Life of Adam and Eve and related literature*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1997.
- , 'The Christian Origins of the Greek Life of Adam and Eve', in G.A. Anderson et al. (eds), *Literature on Adam and Eve: Collected Essays*, Leiden: Brill 2000, 347–364.
- , *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament as part of the Christian literature: the case of the testaments of the twelve patriarchs and the Greek Life of Adam and Eve* (Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha 18), Leiden: Brill 2003.
- De Lagarde, P., *Materialien zur Kritik und Geschichte des Pentateuchs*, 2 vols, Leipzig: Teubner 1867.
- De Lange, N.M.R., *Origen and the Jews: studies in Jewish-Christian relations in third-century Palestine* (University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 25), Cambridge: CUP 1976.
- , 'Midrach et Byzance', *RHR* 206 (1989), 171–181.
- , et al. (eds), *Jewish reception of Greek Bible versions. Studies in their use in late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Texts and studies in medieval and early modern Judaism 23), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2009.
- Deissman, A., *Paulus: Eine kultur- und religionsgeschichtliche Skizze*, Tübingen: Mohr 1925<sup>2</sup>.
- Delcor, M., 'Melchizedek from Genesis to the Qumran Texts and the Epistle to the Hebrews', *JSJ* 2 (1971), 115–136.
- Dexinger, F., *Sturz der Göttersöhne oder Engel vor der Sintflut? Versuch eines Neuverständnisses von Genesis 6, 2–4 unter Berücksichtigung der religionsvergleichenden und exegetisch-geschichtlichen Methode* (Wiener Beiträge zur Theologie 13), Wien: Herder 1966.
- Dirksen, B. – A. Van der Kooij (eds), *The Peshitta as a Translation: papers read at the II Peshitta Symposium, held at Leiden, 19–21 August 1993* (Monographs of the Peshitta Institute, Leiden, 8), Leiden: Brill 1995.
- Dirksen, B., 'The Old Testament Peshitta', in M.J. Mulder – H. Sysling (eds), *Mikra*, 255–297.
- Dochhorn, J. – A.K. Petersen, 'Narratio Iosephi: A Coptic Joseph-Apocryphon', *JSJ* 30 (1999), 431–463.
- Dochhorn, J., 'Die Historia de Melchisedech', *Le Muséon* 117 (2004), 7–48.
- , *Die Apokalypse des Mose: Text, Übersetzung, Kommentar* (Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 106), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2005.
- , 'Mit Kain kam der Tod in die Welt', *ZNW* 98 (2007), 150–159.
- Dodd, C.H., *According to the Scriptures*, London: Nesbit 1952.
- Donner, H., *Pilgerfahrt ins Heilige Land. Die ältesten Berichte christlicher Palästinapilger (4.–7. Jahrhundert)*, Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk 2002.

- Döpp, S. – W. Geerlings (eds), *Lexikon der antiken christlichen Literatur*, Freiburg et al.: Herder 1999<sup>2</sup>.
- Douglas, M., *Purity and Danger: an analysis of concept[s] of pollution and taboo*, London: Routledge 2002.
- Drijvers, H.J.W., 'Jews and Christians at Edessa', *JJS* 36 (1985), 88–102.
- Drijvers, J.W., *Helena Augusta. The Mother of Constantine the Great and the Legend of her Finding the True Cross* (Brill's studies in intellectual history 27), Leiden: Brill 1992.
- , *Cyril of Jerusalem: The Bishop and the City* (VCSup 72), Leiden: Brill 2004.
- Drobner, H.R., 'Eine pseudo-athanasianische Osterpredigt (CPG II. 2247) über die Wahrheit Gottes und ihre Erfüllung', in L.R. Wickham et al. (eds), *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy in Late Antiquity. Essays in Tribute to G.Chr. Stead* (VCSup 19), Leiden: Brill 1993.
- Duguid, J.M., 'Hagar the Egyptian: A Note on the allure of Egypt in the Abraham cycle', *Westminster Theological Journal* 56 (1994), 419–421.
- Dulay, M., 'Joseph, le patriarche, figure du Christ', in P. Maraval (ed.), *Figures de l'Ancien Testament chez les Pères* (Cahiers de Biblia Patristica 2), Strasbourg: Centre d'analyse et de documentation patristique 1989, 83–105.
- Dunn, J.D.G., *The partings of the ways: between Christianity and Judaism and their significance for the character of Christianity*, London: SCM 1991.
- (ed.), *Jews and Christians: the parting of the ways, A.D. 70 to 135: the second Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium on Earliest Christianity and Judaism (Durham, September 1989)* (WUNT 66), Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr – Paul Siebeck 1992.
- (ed.), *Paul and the Mosaic Law: the Third Durham Tübingen Research Symposium on Earliest Christianity and Judaism (Durham, September, 1994)* (WUNT 89), Tübingen: Mohr 1996.
- , *Christology in the Making: a New Testament enquiry into the origins of the doctrine of the Incarnation*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans 1996.
- (ed.), *The Cambridge companion to St Paul*, Cambridge: CUP 2003.
- Egenter, N., *La prière des Églises de rite byzantin*. Vol. 1: *La prière des heures: Horologion*, Chevetagne: Éditions de Chevetagne 1975.
- Eifert, V.S., 'The Ancient Art of Beautification', *Natural History* (1937), 663–667.
- Eisenbaum, P.M., *The Jewish Heroes of Christian History: Hebrews 11 in a Literary Context* (SBL Dissertation series 156), Atlanta GA: Scholars Press 1996.
- Eisler, R., *The Messiah Jesus and John the Baptist: according to Flavius Josephus' recently rediscovered 'Capture of Jerusalem' and the other Jewish and Christian sources*, London-N.Y.: Methuen 1931.
- Eldridge, M.D., *Dying Adam with his Multiethnic Family. Understanding the Greek Life of Adam and Eve* (Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha 16), Leiden: Brill 2001.
- Elm, S., *Virgins of God: the making of asceticism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford classical monographs), Oxford: Clarendon Press 1994.
- Emerton, A., *The City of Salem, the City of Melchizedek (Genesis XIV 18)*, in idem (ed.), *Studies in the Pentateuch* (VTSup 41), Leiden: Brill 1990.
- Eph'al, I., *The Ancient Arabs: nomads on the border of the Fertile Crescent, 9th – 5th centuries B.C.*, Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University – Leiden: Brill 1982.
- , 'Ishmaelites', *EncJud* 9: 87–90.
- Epstein, L.M., *The Jewish Marriage Contract: A Study of the Woman in Jewish Law*, New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America 1927.
- Erffa, H.M. v., *Ikonologie der Genesis. Die christlichen Bildthemen aus dem alten Testament und ihre Quellen*, 2 vols, München: Deutscher Kunstverlag 1995.
- Esche, S., *Adam und Eva: Sündenfall und Erlösung* (Lukas-Bücherei zur christlichen Ikonographie), Düsseldorf: Lukas 1957.
- Fédou, M., 'La vision de la croix dans l'oeuvre de saint Justin', *Recherches Augustiniennes* 19 (1984), 29–110.
- Féghali, P., 'Note sur l'exégèse de Saint-Ephrem commentaire sur le deluge (Gn 6,1–9,17)', *Parole de l'Orient* 8 (1977/78), 67–86.

- , 'Le Messie de Juda. Gn 49,8–10 dans saint Ephrem et les traditions judaïques', in *La vie de la Parole de l'Ancien au Nouveau Testament: Études d'exégèse et d'herméneutique bibliques offertes à Pierre Grelot*, Paris: Desclée 1987, 165–172.
- Fekkes, J., *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions in the Book of Revelation: visionary antecedents and their development* (JSNTSup 93), Sheffield: JSOT Press 1994.
- Feldman, L.H. – G. Hata (eds), *Josephus, Judaism and Christianity*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press 1978.
- Feldman, L.H., 'Josephus' Portrait of Noah and Its Parallels in Philo, Pseudo-Philo's "Biblical Antiquities", and Rabbinic Midrashim', *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 55 (1988), 31–57.
- , *Studies in Josephus' Rewritten Bible* (JSJSup 58), Leiden: Brill 1998.
- , *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 2001.
- , 'Questions about the Great Flood, as Viewed by Philo, Pseudo-Philo, Josephus, and the Rabbis', *ZAW* 115 (2003), 401–422.
- , *Remember Amalek! Vengeance, Zealotry and Group Destruction in the Bible according to Philo, Pseudo-Philo and Josephus* (Monographs of the Hebrew Union College 31), Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press 2004.
- Ferguson, E., *Backgrounds of early Christianity: Canon and Interpretation in the Light of Modern Research*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans 1991.
- Fernandez Marcos, N., *The Septuagint in Context. Introduction to the Greek Versions of the Bible*, Leiden: Brill 2000.
- Field, F., *Origenis Hexaplorum suae supersunt; sive veterum interpretum graecorum in totum vetus testamentum fragmenta*, 2 vols, Oxonii: e typographeo Clarendoniano 1875.
- Fiensy, D.A., *Prayers Alleged to Be Jewish: An Examination of the Constitutiones Apostolorum* (Brown Judaic Studies 65), Chico CA: Scholars Press 1985.
- Firestone, R., 'Patriarchy, Primogeniture, and Polemic in the Exegetical Traditions of Judaism and Islam', in N.B. Dohrmann – D. Stern (eds), *Jewish Biblical Interpretation and Cultural Exchange*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 2008, 108–123.
- Fishbane, M., *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1985.
- (ed.), *The Midrashic Imagination: Jewish exegesis, thought, and history*, Albany NY: State University of New York Press 1993.
- Fitzmyer, J.A., *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Christian Origins* (Studies in the Dead Sea scrolls and related literature), Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans 2000.
- , *The One Who is to Come*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans 2007.
- Flesher, V.M., 'The Resurrection of the Dead and the Sources of the Palestinian Targums to the Pentateuch', in A.J. Avery-Peck – J. Neusner (eds), *Judaism in Late Antiquity*, 31–331.
- Flusser, D., *Judaism in the Second Temple Period*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans 2007.
- Forbes, R.J., *Studies in Ancient Technology*, Leiden: Brill 1955.
- Fossum, J.E., *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord: Samaritan and Jewish Concepts of Intermediation and the Origins of Gnosticism* (WUNT 36), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1985.
- Fraade, S., *Enoch and his Generation: pre-Israelite hero and history in postbiblical interpretation* (SBL Monograph series 30), Chico CA: Scholars Press 1984.
- , 'Rabbinic Midrash and Ancient Jewish Biblical Interpretation', in C.E. Fonrobert – M.S. Jaffee (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, Cambridge: CUP 2007, 99–120.
- , *Legal Fictions. Studies of Law and Narrative in the Discursive Worlds of Ancient Jewish Sectarians and Sages* (JSJSup 147), Leiden: Brill 2011.
- France, R.T., *Jesus and the Old Testament: his application of Old Testament passages to himself and his mission*, London: Tyndale Press 1971.
- , *The Gospel of Matthew*, Grand Rapids – Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans 2007.
- Frankel, Z., *Über den Einfluß der palästinischen Exegese auf die alexandrinische Hermeneutik*, Leipzig: J.A. Barth 1851.

- Fredriksen, P., 'What "Parting of the Ways?" Jews, Gentiles in the Ancient Mediterranean City', in A.H. Becker – A.Y. Reed (eds), *The Ways that Never Parted*, 35–64.
- Freedman, S., 'Anthropomorphism and its Eradication', in W.J. van Asselt et al. (eds), *Iconoclasm and iconoclasm: struggle for religious identity* (Jewish and Christian Perspectives 14), Leiden: Brill 2007, 157–178.
- Friedländer, M., 'La secte de Melchisédec et l'Épître aux Hébreux', *REF* 5 (1882), 1–26; 6 (1883), 187–199.
- Frishman, J. – L. van Rompay (eds), *The Book of Genesis in Jewish and Christian Oriental Interpretation* (Tradition exegetica graeca 5), Louvain: Peeters 1997.
- , 'Themes on Genesis 1–5 in Early East Syrian Exegesis', in eadem—L. van Rompay (eds), *The Book of Genesis in Jewish and Christian Oriental Interpretation*, 171–186.
- , '"And Abraham Had Faith": But in What? Ephrem and the Rabbis on Abraham and God's Blessings', in E. Grypeou – H. Spurling (eds), *The Exegetical Encounter between Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity*, 143–162.
- Frot, Y., 'L'interprétation ecclésiologique de l' épisode du deluge chez les pères des trois premiers siècles', *Aug* 26 (1980), 335–348.
- Frye, R.N., 'Zoroastrian incest', in *Orientalia Iosephi Tucci memoriae dicata*, vol. 1, Rome: Ist. Ital. per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente 1985, 445–455.
- Funk, G., *Die haggadischen Elemente in den Homilien des Aphraates, des persischen Weisen*, Vienna 1891 Thesis—Universität Leipzig, 1891.
- Gafni, I., *Land, Centre and Diaspora: Jewish Constructs in Antiquity* (JSPSup 21), Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1997.
- , 'The Modern Study of Rabbinics and Historical Questions: The Tale of the Text', in R. Bieringer (ed.), *The New Testament and Rabbinic Literature*, 43–62.
- , 'Rabbinic Historiography and Representations of the Past', in C.E. Fonrobert – M. Jaffee (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, 295–312.
- Gager, J.G., 'Jews, Christians and the Dangerous Ones In Between', in S. Bidermann – B.A. Scharfstein (eds), *Interpretation of Religion*, Leiden: Brill 1992, 249–257.
- Gahbauer, F.R., 'Die Jakobsleiter, ein aussagenreiches Motiv der Väterliteratur', *ZAC* 9 (2006), 247–278.
- Gammie, J.G., 'Loc of the Melchizedek Tradition of Genesis 14:18–20', *JBL* 90 (1971), 385–396.
- García Martínez, F., 'Messianic Hopes in Qumran Writings', in idem—J. Trebolla Barrera (eds), *The People of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Their Writings, Beliefs and Practices*, Leiden: Brill 1995.
- – G. Luttikhuisen (eds), *Interpretations of the Flood* (Themes in biblical narrative 1), Leiden: Brill 1999.
- , 'Eve's Children in the Targumim', in G. Luttikhuisen (ed.), *Eve's children*, 27–45.
- , 'Samma'el in Pseudo-Jonathan and the Origin of Evil', *JNSL* 30.2 (2004), 19–41.
- (ed.), *Echoes from the Caves: Qumran and the New Testament* (Studies on the texts of the desert of Judah 85), Leiden: Brill 2009.
- Garney, P., *Ideas of Slavery from Aristotle to Augustine* (W.B. Stanford memorial lectures), Cambridge: CUP 1996.
- Gaster, M., *The Asatir: The Samaritan Book of the 'Secrets of Moses'*, London: Royal Asiatic Society 1927.
- Gavin, F., 'Aphraates and the Jews', *JSOR* 7 (1923), 95–166.
- Geljon, A.C., 'Philo's Interpretation of Noah', in M.E. Stone et al. (eds), *Noah and his Books*, 183–191.
- Gelzer, H., *Sextus Julius Africanus und die byzantinische Chronographie*, 2 vols, Hildesheim: Gerstenberg 1978 (repr. of the ed. Leipzig 1880–85/98).
- Gerson, D., 'Die Commentarien des Ephraem Syrus im Verhältnis zur jüdischen Exegese. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Exegese', *MGWJ* 17 (1868), 15–33; 64–72; 98–109; 141–149.
- Giannotto, C., *Melchisedek, e la sua tipologia. Tradizioni giudaiche, cristiane e gnostiche* (sec. II. a.C.–sec. III. d.C.) (Supplementi alla Rivista Biblica 12), Brescia: Paideia 1984.
- Gieschen, C.A., *Angelomorphic Christology* (Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 42), Leiden: Brill 1998.

- Ginzberg, L., 'Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern', *MGWJ* 42 (1898), 537–550; 43 (1899), 17–22, 61–75, 117–125, 149–159, 293–303, 409–416, 46–470, 485–504, 529–547.
- , *The Legends of the Jews*, 7 vols, Philadelphia: JPS 1909–38.
- Glancy, J.A., *Slavery in Early Christianity*, Oxford: OUP 2002.
- Glenthøj, J.B., *Cain and Abel in Syriac and Greek Writers (4th–6th centuries)* (CSCO 567—Subs. 95), Louvain: Peeters 1997.
- Goldberg, A., 'Kain Sohn des Menschen oder Sohn der Schlange?', *Judaica* 25 (1969), 203–221.
- , 'Die Namen des Messias in der rabbinischen Traditionsliteratur. Ein Beitrag zur Messiaslehre des rabbinischen Judentums', *FJB* 7 (1979), 1–93.
- , 'The Tosefta—Companion to the Mishna', in S. Safrai (ed.), *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 1, 283–302.
- , 'The Mishna—A Study Book of Halakha', in S. Safrai (ed.), *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 1, 211–262.
- , 'The Palestinian Talmud', in S. Safrai (ed.), *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 1, 303–322.
- Goldberg, D.M., *The Curse of Ham: Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press 2003.
- Goldenberg, R., 'The destruction of the Jerusalem temple: its meaning and its consequences', in S.T. Katz (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Judaism vol. 4*, 191–205.
- Goldingay, J., 'The Place of Ishmael', in R. Davies – D.J.A. Clines (eds), *The World of Genesis: Persons, Places, Perspectives* (JSOTSup 257), Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1998, 146–149.
- Gomes, J., *The Sanctuary at Bethel and the Configuration of Israelite Identity* (BZAW 368), Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2006.
- Goodman, M. – P.S. Alexander (eds), *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late-Roman Palestine*, Oxford: OUP 2010.
- Goodman, M., 'The Function of Minim in Early Rabbinic Judaism', in H. Cancik et al. (eds), *Geschichte—Tradition—Reflexion: Festschrift für Martin Hengel zum 70. Geburtstag*, vol. 1, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr Siebeck 1996, 501–510.
- , 'Modeling the 'Parting of the Ways'', in A.H. Becker – A.Y. Reed (eds), *The Ways that Never Parted*, 119–130.
- Görg, M., 'Hagar, die Ägypterin', *BN* 33 (1986), 17–20.
- Goshen-Gottstein, M.H., 'Theory and Practice of Textual Criticism: The Text-critical Use of the Septuagint', *Textus* 3 (1963), 130–159.
- Götze, A., *Die Schatzhöhle. Überlieferung und Quellen* (Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften; Phil.-hist. Klasse 4), Heidelberg: Winter 1922.
- Grabbe, L.L., 'Philo and Aggada: A Response to B.J. Bamberger', in D.T. Runia et al. (eds), *Heirs of the Septuagint: Philo, Hellenistic Judaism and early Christianity: Festschrift for Earle Hilgert* (Brown Judaic studies 230), Atlanta GA: Scholars Press 1991, 153–166.
- , 'Aquila's Translation and Rabbinic Exegesis', *JJS* 33 (1992), 527–36.
- Grabowski, V., *Die Geschichte Josefs von Mar Narses*, Leipzig 1889.
- Graf, G., *Geschichte der christlich-arabischen Literatur*, vol. 1 (ST 118), Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana 1944.
- Graham, W.A., *Beyond the Written Word: Oral Aspects of Scripture in the History of Religions*, Cambridge: CUP 1987.
- Grant, R.M., 'The Resurrection of the Body', *JR* 28 (1948), 188–199.
- Graves, M., *Jerome's Hebrew Philology: A Study Based on Jeremiah* (VCSup 90), Leiden: Brill 2007.
- Grelot, P., 'Le exégèse messianique d'Isaïe LXIII.1–6', *RB* 70 (1963), 371–380.
- Griffith, S.H., *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the world of Islam* (Jews, Christians, and Muslims from the ancient to the modern world), Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press 2008.
- Grillmeier, A., *Christ in Christian Tradition: From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*, vol. 1, London: Mowbay 1975<sup>2</sup>.

- Grisgby, B., 'Washing in the Pool of Siloam—a thematic anticipation of the Johannine Cross', in D.E. Orton (ed.), *The Composition of John's Gospel. Selected Studies from 'Novum Testamentum'* (Brill's Reader in Biblical Studies 20), Leiden: Brill 1999, 251–260.
- Grossfeld, B., *Targum Neofiti 1: An Exegetical Commentary to Genesis including full rabbinic parallels*, N.Y.: Sepher-Hermon Press 2000.
- Grypeou, E., 'Die Dämonologie der koptisch-gnostischen Literatur im Kontext jüdischer Apokalyptik', in A. Lange et al. (eds), *Die Dämonen*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2003, 600–609.
- , *„Das vollkommene Pascha“: gnostische Bibelexegese und Ethik* (Orientalia Biblica et Christiana 15), Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2005.
- Grypeou, E. – H. Spurling (eds), *The Exegetical Encounter between Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity* (Jewish and Christian Perspectives 18), Leiden: Brill 2009.
- Hachlili, R., *Jewish Funerary Customs, Practices and Rites in the Second Temple Period* (JSJ-Sup 94), Leiden: Brill 2005.
- Haines-Eitzen, K., 'Late Antique Christian Textual Communities', in P. Rousseau (ed.), *A Companion to Late Antiquity*, Chichester – Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell 2009, 246–256.
- Hannah, D., *Michael and Christ: Michael Traditions and Angel Christology in Early Christianity* (WUNT 2. Reihe 109), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1999.
- Hanson, A.T., *The Prophetic Gospel. A Study on John and the Old Testament*, London – N.Y. – Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark 1991.
- Hardwick, M.E., *Josephus as an historical source in patristic literature through Eusebius* (Brown Judaic studies 128), Atlanta: Scholars Press 1989.
- Harl, M., *La Bible d'Alexandrie: La Genèse*, Paris: Éditions du Cerf 1986.
- Harlow, D.C., *The Greek Apocalypse of Baruch* (3 Baruch) *in Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity* (Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha 12), Leiden: Brill 1996.
- , 'The Christianization of Early Jewish Pseudepigrapha. The Case of 3 Baruch', *JSJ* 32 (2001), 416–444.
- Harnack, A.v., *Die Altercatio Simonis Iudaei et Theophili Christiani: nebst Untersuchungen über die antijüdische Polemik in der alten Kirche und Die Acta Archelai und das Diatesaron Tatians* (Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur; Bd. 1, Heft 3), Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung 1883.
- , *Der kirchengeschichtliche Ertrag der exegetischen Arbeiten des Origenes. ii.* (Texte u. Untersuch. zur Gesch. d. altchristl. Lit. 3e Reihe, Bd. 12), Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs 1919.
- Harrington, D.J., 'Joseph in the Testament of Joseph, Pseudo-Philo, and Philo', in G.W.E. Nickelsburg (ed.), *Studies in the Testament of Joseph* (Septuagint and cognate studies series 5), Missoula MT: Scholars Press for the Society of Biblical Literature, Pseudepigrapha Group 1975, 127–131.
- Harris, J.R., *Testimonies*, 2 vols, Cambridge: CUP 1916–1920.
- Harvey, A.E., 'Eunuchs for the Sake of the Kingdom', *HeyJ* 48 (2007), 1–17.
- Hayman, P., 'The Image of the Jew in the Syriac Anti-Jewish Polemical Literature', in J. Neusner – E.S. Frerichs (eds), *To See Ourselves as Others See Us* (Scholars Press studies in the humanities series), Chico CA: Scholars Press 1985, 423–441.
- , 'Some Observations on Sefer Yesira: (2) The Temple at the Centre of the Universe', *JJS* 37 (1986), 176–82.
- Hayward, C.T.R., 'Saint Jerome and the Aramaic Targumim', *JSS* 32.1 (1987), 105–123.
- , 'Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and Anti-Islamic Polemic', *JSS* 34 (1989), 77–93.
- , 'Some Observations on St. Jerome's 'Hebrew Questions on Genesis' and the Rabbinic Tradition', *PIBA* 13 (1990), 58–76.
- , 'Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan', *JJS* 42 (1991), 215–246.
- , 'Shem, Melchizedek, and Concern with Christianity in the Pentateuchal Targumim', in K.J. Cathcart – M. Maher (eds), *Targumic and cognate studies: essays in honour of Martin McNamara* (JSOTSup 230), Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1996, 67–80.
- , 'What did Cain do wrong? Jewish and Christian Exegesis of Gen 4:3–6', in E. Grypeou – H. Spurling (eds), *The Exegetical Encounter*, 101–123.

- Heal, K.S., 'Joseph as a type of Jesus in Christian Syriac Literature', *BYU Studies* 41.1 (2002), 29–49.
- , 'Reworking the Biblical Text in the Dramatic Dialogue Poems on the Old Testament Patriarch Joseph', in B. ter Haar Romeny (ed.), *The Peshitta*, 67–98.
- , 'Identifying the Syriac Vorlage of the Ethiopic History of Joseph', in G.A. Kiraz (ed.), *Malphono w-Rabo d-Malphone: Studies in Honor of Sebastian Brock* (Gorgias Eastern Christian Studies 3), Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press 2008, 205–210.
- Heinemann, I., *Darkhei ha-Aggadah*, Jerusalem: Magnes Press 1954 [in Hebrew].
- Heither, T. – C. Reemts (eds), *Abraham* (Biblische Gestalten bei den Kirchenvätern 1), Münster: Aschendorff Verlag 2005.
- Helderman, J., 'Melchisedeks Wirkung. Eine traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung eines Motivkomplexes in NHC IX, I, 1–27,10 (Melchisedek)', in J.-M. Sevrin (ed.), *The New Testament in Early Christianity: la réception des écrits néotestamentaires dans le christianisme primitif* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum theologicarum Lovaniensium 86), Leuven: Leuven University Press 1989, 335–362.
- , 'Melchisedek, Melchisedekianer und die koptische Frömmigkeit', in M. Rassart-Debergh – J. Ries (eds), *International Congress of Coptic Studies (4th: 1988: Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium)*, vol. 2, Louvain-la-Neuve: Université Catholique de Louvain 1992, 402–415.
- Hengel, M., 'Die Septuaginta als von den Christen beanspruchte Schriftensammlung bei Justin und den Vätern vor Origenes', in J.D.G. Dunn (ed.), *Jews and Christians*, 39–84.
- , – R. Deines, *The Septuagint as Christian Scripture. Its Prehistory and the Problem of its Canon*, Edinburgh: T & T Clark 2002.
- Herford, R.T., *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash*, London: Williams & Norgate 1903.
- Herr, M.D., 'The Calendar', in S. Safrai – M. Stern (eds), *The Jewish People in the First Century*, Assen: Van Gorcum 1976, 843–845.
- Hertzberg, H.W., 'Melchisedeq-Traditionen', *JPOS* 8 (1928), 169–179.
- Hesse, O., 'Marcus Eremita und seine Schiff 'De Melchisedech'', *OC* 51 (1967), 72–77.
- Hezser, C., *The Social Structure of the Rabbinic Movement in Roman Palestine* (Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 66), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1997.
- , *Jewish Literacy in Roman Palestine* (Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 81), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2001.
- , *Jewish Slavery in Antiquity*, Oxford: OUP 2005.
- , 'Classical Rabbinic Literature', in M. Goodman et al. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Studies*, Oxford: OUP 2005, 115–140.
- , 'Form-Criticism of Rabbinic Literature', in R. Bieringer (ed.), *The New Testament and Rabbinic Literature*, 97–110.
- Hidal, S., *Interpretatio Syriaca: die Kommentare des heiligen Ephram des Syrers zu Genesis und Exodus mit besondere Berücksichtigung ihrer Auslegungs-geschichtlichen Stellung* (Coniectanea biblica. Old Testament series 6), Thesis-Lund 1974.
- , 'Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Antiochene School with its Prevalent Literal and Historical Method', in M. Saebo (ed.), *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament*, 544–568.
- Higgins, A.J.B., *Jesus and the Son of Man*, Cambridge: James Clarke & Co 1964.
- Himmelfarb, M., *Ascent to heaven in Jewish and Christian apocalypses*, N.Y. – Oxford: OUP 1993.
- Hirschler, E., 'Der biblische Joseph in orientalischen Literaturwerken', *MIO* 4 (1956), 81–108.
- Hirshman, M., *A Rivalry of Genius: Jewish and Christian Biblical Interpretation in late Antiquity* (SUNY series in Judaica), Albany NY: SUNY Press 1996.
- , 'Torah in Rabbinic Thought: The Theology of Learning', in S.T. Katz (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Judaism. Vol. 4*, 899–924.
- Hoehner, H.W., *Herod Antipas: A Contemporary of Jesus Christ*, Cambridge: CUP 1980.
- Hollander, H.W., *Joseph as an Ethical Model in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha 6), Leiden: Brill 1981.

- , – M. de Jonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Commentary* (Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha 8), Leiden: Brill 1985.
- , 'The Portrayal of Joseph in Hellenistic Jewish and Early Christian Literature', in M.E. Stone – T.A. Bergren (eds), *Biblical Figures Outside the Bible*, 237–263.
- Hollerich, M.J., 'Eusebius as a polemical interpreter of scripture', in H.W. Attridge – G. Hata (eds), *Eusebius, Christianity and Judaism* (Studia post-Biblica 42), Leiden: Brill 1992, 585–618.
- Horbury, W., 'The Benediction of the *Minim* and Early Jewish-Christian Controversy', *JTS* 33 (1982), 19–61.
- , 'The Messianic Associations of the Son of Man', *JTS* n.s.36 (1985), 34–55.
- (ed.), *Templum Amicitiae: essays on the Second Temple presented to Ernst Bammel* (JSNTSup 48), Sheffield: JSOT Press 1991.
- , *Jewish Messianism and the Cult of Christ*, London: SCM Press 1998.
- , *Jews and Christians in Contact and Controversy*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1998.
- , 'Women in the Synagogue', in idem et al. (eds), *The Cambridge History of Judaism. Vol. 3: The Early Roman Period*, Cambridge: CUP 1999, 358–401.
- , *Messianism among Jews and Christians: twelve biblical and historical studies*, London: T&T Clark 2003.
- , 'Church and Synagogue', in: E. Kessler – N. Wenborn (eds), *Dictionary of Jewish-Christian Relations*, Cambridge: CUP 2005, 93–94.
- , 'Jewish Messianism and Early Christology', in R.N. Longenecker (ed.), *Contours of Christology in the New Testament. H.H. Bingham Colloquium in New Testament* (McMaster New Testament studies), Grand Rapids MI – Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. 2005, 3–24.
- Horton, F.L., *The Melchizedek Tradition: a critical examination of the sources to the fifth century A.D. and in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Society for New Testament Studies Monograph series 30), Cambridge: CUP 1976.
- Hoyland, R., *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It* (Studies in late antiquity and early Islam 13), Princeton N.J.: Darwin Press 1997.
- Hruby, K., 'Exégèse rabbinique et exégèse patristique', *RSR* 47 (1973), 341–372.
- Hübner, R.M., 'Thesen zur Echtheit und Datierung der sieben Briefe des Ignatius', *ZAC* 1 (1997), 44–72.
- Huggins, R.V., 'Noah and the Giants: A Response to John C. Reeves', *JBL* 114.1 (1995), 103–110.
- Hunt, E.D., *Holy Land pilgrimage in later Roman Empire AD 312–460*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1982.
- Hunter, D.G., *Marriage, Celibacy and Heresy in Early Christianity: The Jovinianist controversy* (Oxford early Christian studies), Oxford: OUP 2007.
- Hunter, E., 'The Cult of Saints in Syria during the Fifth Century A.D.', in E.A. Livingstone (ed.), *Studia Patristica XXV. Papers presented at the Eleventh International Conference on Patristic Studies held in Oxford 1991. Biblica et apocrypha, Orientalia, Ascetica*, Louvain: Peeters 1993, 308–313.
- Hyvarinen, K., *Die Übersetzung von Aquila* (Coniectanea biblica. Old Testament series 10), Thesis – Uppsala 1977.
- Ilan, T., 'The Names of Biblical Women in the Apocryphal Traditions', *JSP* 11 (1993), 3–67.
- Irshai, O., 'Dating the Eschaton: Apocalyptic Calculations in Late Antiquity', in A.I. Baumgarten (ed.), *Apocalyptic Time* (Studies in the history of religions 86), Leiden – Boston: Brill 2000, 113–153.
- Isaac, E., 'The Ethiopic History of Joseph. Translation with Introduction and Notes', *JSP* 6 (1990), 3–125.
- Isenberg, S.R., 'On the Jewish-Palestinian Origins of the Peshitta and the Pentateuch', *JBL* 90 (1971), 69–81.
- Jacobs, A.S., 'The Lion and the Lamb: Reconsidering Jewish-Christian Relations in Antiquity', in A.H. Becker – A.Y. Reed (eds), *The Ways that Never Parted*, 95–118.



- Jacobs, I., *The Midrashic Process; tradition and interpretation in rabbinic Judaism*, Cambridge: CUP 1995.
- Jaffee, M., 'Writing and Rabbinic Oral Tradition: On Mishnaic Narrative Lists and Mnemonics', *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 4 (1994), 123–144.
- , *Torah in the Mouth: Writing and Oral Tradition in Palestinian Judaism 200 BCE–400 CE*, Oxford: OUP 2001.
- James, M.R., *The Lost Apocrypha of the Old Testament: Their Titles and Fragments*, N.Y.: SPCK 1920.
- Jansma, T., 'Ephraem on Genesis XLIX: 10. An Enquiry into the Syriac Text Forms as Presented in his Commentary on Genesis', *Parole de l'Orient* 4 (1973), 247–256.
- Jastrow, M., *A dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic literature: with an index of scriptural quotations*, London – N.Y.: Luzac-Putnam 1903.
- Jensen, R.M., *Understanding Early Christian Art*, London: Routledge 2000.
- Jeremias, J., 'Der Eckstein', *AITEAOΣ* 1 (1925), 65–70.
- , 'Wo lag Golgotha und das Heilige Grab? Die Überlieferung im Lichte der Formgeschichte', *AITEAOΣ* 1 (1925), 141–175.
- , 'Golgotha und der heilige Felsen', *AITEAOΣ* 2 (1926), 74–128.
- , 'Eckstein – Schlußstein', *ZNW* 36 (1937), 154–157.
- , *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu: kulturgeschichtliche Untersuchung zur neutestamentlichen Zeitgeschichte* II B, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1958<sup>2</sup>.
- Jonckheere, F., 'L' Eunuque dans l' Égypte pharaonique', *Revue d'Histoire des Sciences* 7.2 (1954), 139–155.
- Jones, F.S., 'The Pseudo-Clementines. A History of Research', *The Second Century* 2 (1982), 1–33; 63–96.
- Juel, D., *Messianic Exegesis: Christological Interpretation of the Old Testament in Early Christianity*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1988.
- Juster, J., *Les Juifs dans l' empire romain leur condition juridique, économique et sociale*, Paris: Paul Geuthner 1914.
- Kadisch, G.E., 'Eunuchs in Ancient Egypt?', in idem (ed.), *Studies in Honor of J.A. Wilson*, Chicago: Chicago University Press 1969, 55–62.
- Kahana, M., 'The Halakhic Midrashim', in S. Safrai et al. (eds), *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 2, 3–105.
- Kahle, P., *The Cairo Geniza*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1959<sup>2</sup>.
- Kalimi, I., 'The Land of Moriah, Mount Moriah, and the Site of Solomon's Temple in Biblical Historiography', *HTR* 83.4 (1990), 345–362.
- , *Early Jewish Exegesis and Theological Controversy: Studies in Scriptures in the Shadow of Internal and External Controversies* (Jewish and Christian heritage series 2), Assen: Royal van Gorcum 2002.
- Kalmin, R., 'Christians and Heretics in Rabbinic Literature of Late Antiquity', *HTR* 87.2 (1994), 155–169.
- , *The Sage in Jewish Society of Late Antiquity*, London: Routledge 1999.
- – S. Schwartz (eds), *Jewish Culture and Society under the Christian Roman Empire* (Interdisciplinary studies in ancient culture and religion 3), Leuven: Peeters 2003.
- , *Jewish Babylonia between Persia and Roman Palestine*, N.Y. – Oxford: OUP 2006.
- Kalmin, S., 'The Theological Significance of the *Hebraica Veritas* in Jerome's Thought', in M.A. Fishbane – E. Tov (eds), '*Sha'aarei Talmon*: Studies in the Bible, Qumran and the Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon, N.Y.: Eisenbrauns 1992, 243–253.
- Kamesar, A., *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible: a study on the *Questiones hebraicae* in Genesis* (Oxford classical monographs), Oxford: Clarendon Press 1993.
- , 'The Evaluation of the Narrative Aggada in Greek and Latin Patristic Literature', *JTS* 45 (1994), 53–56.
- Karim, C.A., *Symbols of the Cross in the Writings of the Early Syriac Fathers*, Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press 2004.

- Kasher, R., 'The Palestinian Targums to Genesis 4:8: A New Approach to an Old Controversy', in I. Kalimi – J. Haas (eds), *Biblical interpretation in Judaism and Christianity* (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament studies 439—T & T Clark library of biblical studies), N.Y. – London: T & T Clark 2006, 33–39.
- , 'The Interpretation of Scripture in Rabbinic Literature', in M.J. Mulder – H. Sysling (eds), *Mikra*, 547–594.
- Katz, S.T., (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Judaism. Vol. 4: The late Roman-Rabbinic period*, Cambridge: CUP, 2006.
- , 'Man, Sin and Redemption in Rabbinic Judaism', in idem (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Judaism. Vol. 4*, 925–945.
- , 'The Rabbinic Response to Christianity', in idem (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Judaism. Vol. 4*, 259–298.
- Kedar, B., 'The Latin Translations', in M.J. Mulder – H. Sysling (eds), *Mikra*, 299–338.
- Kee, H.C., 'The Socio-Cultural Setting of Joseph and Aseneth', *NTS* 29 (1983), 394–413.
- Kelber, W., *The Oral and Written Gospel: the hermeneutics of speaking and writing in the synoptic tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1983.
- Kelly, J.N.D., *Jerome: His Life, Writings and Controversy*, London: Duckworth 1975.
- Kennard, J.S., Jr., 'Slavonic Josephus: A Retraction', *JQR* 39 (1948/49), 281–283.
- Kerrigan, H., *St. Cyril of Alexandria. Interpreter of the Old Testament* (Analecta biblica 2), Roma: Pontificio Istituto Biblico 1952.
- Kessler, E., *Bound by the Bible: Jews, Christians and the Sacrifice of Isaac*, Cambridge: CUP 2004.
- Kim, A.Y., 'Cain and Abel in the light of envy: a study in the history of the interpretation of envy in Genesis 4.1–16', *JSP* 12.1 (2001), 65–84.
- Kimelman, R., 'The Rabbinic Theology of the Physical: blessings, body and soul, resurrection and covenant and election', in S.T. Katz (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Judaism, Vol. 4*, 946–976.
- King, A.A., *The Rites of Eastern Christendom*, vol. 1, Piscataway NJ: Gorgias 2007 (repr. Rome 1948).
- Kinman, B., *Jesus' entry into Jerusalem: in the context of Lukan theology and the politics of his day* (Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 28), Leiden: Brill 1995.
- Kinzig, W., 'Non-Separation': Closeness and Co-operation between Jews and Christians in the Fourth Century', *VC* 45 (1991), 27–53.
- Klauck, H.J., *Apocryphal Gospels: an Introduction*, London: T&T Clark International 2003.
- Klausner, J., *The Messianic Idea in Israel: from its beginning to the completion of the Mishnah*, London: Allen and Unwin 1956.
- Klawans, J., *Purity Sacrifice and the Temple: Symbolism and Supersessionism in the Study of Ancient Judaism*, Oxford – N.Y.: OUP 2006.
- Klijn, A.F.J. – G.J. Reinink, *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects* (NTSup 36), Leiden: Brill 1973.
- Klijn, A.F.J., *Seth in Jewish, Christian and Gnostic Literature* (NTSup 46), Leiden: Brill 1977.
- Koch, D.-A., *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums: Untersuchungen zur Verwendung und zum Verständnis der Schrift bei Paulus* (Beiträge zur historischen Theologie 69), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1986.
- Kofsky, A., *Eusebius of Caesarea against Paganism*, Boston-Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers 2002.
- , 'Eusebius of Caesarea and the Christian-Jewish Polemics', in O. Limor – G. Stroumsa (eds), *Contra Iudaeos*, 159–184.
- Koltun-Fromm, N., 'Aphrahat and the Rabbis on Noah's Righteousness in light of the Jewish-Christian Polemic', in J. Frishman – L. van Rompay (eds), *The Book of Genesis in Jewish and Oriental Christian Interpretation*, 57–71.
- , *Hermeneutics of Holiness: ancient Jewish and Christian notions of sexuality and religious community*, Oxford: OUP 2010.

- Kominiak, B., *The Theophanies of the Old Testament in the Writings of St. Justin* (Studies in Sacred Theology 14), Washington DC: The Catholic University of America 1948.
- Koster, M.D., 'Aphrahat's Use of his Old Testament', in B. ter Haar Romeny (ed.), *The Peshitta*, 131–141.
- Kourcikidze, C., *La Caverne des Trésors. Version georgienne* (CSCO 526—script. iber. 23), Louvain: Peeters 1993.
- Kraemer, D., 'Rabbinic Sources for Historical Study', in A.J. Avery-Peck – J. Neusner (eds), *Judaism in Late Antiquity: Part 3*, 201–212.
- Kraemer, R.S., *When Aseneth Met Joseph: A Late Antique Tale of the Biblical Patriarch and His Egyptian Wife Reconsidered*, Oxford: OUP 1998.
- , 'Recycling Aseneth', in A. Brenner – J.W. van Henten (eds), *Recycling Biblical Figures: papers read at a NOSTER colloquium in Amsterdam, 12–13 May 1997* (Studies in theology and religion 1), Leiden: Deo 1999, 234–265.
- Kraft, R., 'Philo on Seth', in B. Layton (ed.), *The Rediscovery of Gnosticism II*, Leiden: Brill 1981, 457–458.
- , 'The Pseudepigrapha in Christianity', in J.C. Reeves (ed.), *Tracing the Threads: Studies in the Vitality of Jewish Pseudepigrapha* (Early Judaism and its literature 6), Atlanta: Scholars Press 1994, 55–86.
- , 'The Pseudepigrapha and Christianity Revisited; Setting the Stage and Framing Some Central Questions', *JSJ* 32 (2001), 371–95.
- Krause, D., 'The One who Comes Unbinding the Blessing of Judah: Mark 11.1–10 as Midrash on Genesis 49.11, Zechariah 9.9, and Psalm 118.25–26', in C.A. Evans – J.A. Sanders (eds), *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel* (JSNTSup 148 – Studies in scripture in early Judaism and Christianity 5), Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1997, 141–153.
- Krauss, S., *The Jewish-Christian controversy from the Earliest Times to 1789. I. History*, (ed. and rev. by W. Horbury) (Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 56), Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) 1996.
- , 'The Jews in the Works of the Church Fathers', *JQR* 5 (1892), 122–157.
- , *Griechische und lateinische Lehnwörter in Talmud, Midrasch und Targum*, 2 vols, Leipzig 1897, 1899.
- Kronholm, T., *Motifs from Genesis 1–11 in the Genuine Hymns of Ephrem the Syrian with particular reference to the influence of Jewish exegetical tradition* (Coniectanea biblica. Old Testament series 11), Thesis – Lund 1978.
- Kuefler, M., *The Manly Eunuch. Masculinity, Gender, Ambiguity and Christian Ideology in Late Antiquity* (Chicago series on sexuality, history, and society), Chicago – London: University of Chicago Press 2001.
- Kugel, J.L., 'Why was Lamech Blind?', *Hebrew Annual Review* 12 (1990), 91–103.
- , *In Potiphar's House: the interpretative life of Biblical texts*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press 1994.
- , *Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible as It Was at the Start of the Common Era*, Cambridge MA – London: Harvard University Press 1998.
- , *The Ladder of Jacob: Ancient Interpretations of the Biblical Story of Jacob and His Children*, Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press 2006.
- Kugler, R.A., *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Guides to Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha), Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 2001.
- Laderman, H. – Y. Furstenberg, 'Jewish and Christian Imaging of the 'House of God': A Fourth Century Reflection of Religious and Historical Polemics', in M. Poorthuis et al. (eds), *Interaction between Judaism and Christianity in History, Religion, Art and Literature* (Jewish and Christian perspectives series 17), Leiden-Boston: Brill 2009, 433–456.
- Lange, A. et al. (eds.), *Die Dämonen: die Dämonologie der israelitisch-jüdischen und frühchristlichen Literatur im Kontext ihrer Umwelt = Demons: the demonology of Israelite-Jewish and early Christian literature in context of their environment*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2004.

- Lapide, P. – P. Stuhlmacher, *Paul: Rabbi and Apostle*, Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House 1984.
- Lapin, H., *Economy, Geography, and Provincial History in Later Roman Palestine* (Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 85), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2001.
- Larsson, G., *Bound for Freedom: The Book of Exodus in Jewish and Christian Tradition*, Peabody MA: Hendrickson 1999.
- Lassus, J., *Sanctuaires chrétiens de Syrie: essai sur la genèse, la forme et l'usage liturgique des édifices du culte chrétien, en Syrie, du III<sup>e</sup> siècle à la conquête musulmane* (Bibliothèque archéologique et historique 42), Paris: Geuthner 1947.
- Lawlor, C., 'Early Citations from the Book of Enoch', *JP* 25 (1897), 167–225.
- Lefkowitz, M.R. – M.B. Fant (eds), *Women's Life in Greece & Rome: a source book in translation*, Baltimore – London: Johns Hopkins University Press 1992.
- Légasse, S., 'Exégèse juive ancienne et exégèse patristique. Le cycle biblique de Gédéon', *Liber Annuus* 50 (2000), 181–262.
- Leloir, L., 'Ephrem et l'ascendance davidique du Christ', *SP* 1 (1957), 389–394.
- Leonhard, C., 'Observations on the Date of the Syriac *Cave of Treasures*', in M.M. Daviau – J.M. Wevers – M. Weigl (eds), *The World of the Arameans III. Studies in Language and Literature in Honour of E. Dion* (JSOTSup 326), Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 2001, 253–293.
- Lerner, M.B., 'The Works of Aggadic Midrash and the Esther Midrashim', in S. Safrai (ed.), *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 2, 133–230.
- , 'The External Tractates', in S. Safrai (ed.), *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 1, 369–379.
- Levene, A., *The Early Syrian Fathers on Genesis from a Syriac ms. on the Pentateuch in the Mingana collection*, London: Taylor's Foreign Press 1951.
- , 'Pentateuchal Exegesis in early Syriac and rabbinic sources', *TU* 63 [Studia Patristica 1] (1957), 484–91.
- , 'The Blessing of Jacob in Syriac and Rabbinic Exegesis', *Studia Patristica* 7 (1966), 524–530.
- Levene, D. – B. Rothenberg, *A Metallurgical Gemara: Metals in the Jewish Sources*, London: The Institute of Archaeo-Metallurgical Studies 2007.
- Levey, H., *The Messiah: An Aramaic Interpretation* (Monographs of the Hebrew Union College 2), Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College 1974.
- Leviant, C., 'Ishmael and Hagar in the Wilderness: A parallel *Akedah*', *Midstream* 43.8 (1997), 17–19.
- Levine, E., *The Aramaic Version of the Bible: Contents and Context* (BZAW 174), Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 1988.
- Levine, L.I., *Caesarea under Roman Law* (Studies in Judaism in late antiquity 7), Leiden: Brill 1975.
- , *The Rabbinic Class of Roman Palestine in Late Antiquity*, Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi – N.Y.: Jewish Theological Seminary of America 1989.
- , 'The Sages and the Synagogue in Late Antiquity: The Evidence of the Galilee', in idem (ed.), *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, N.Y.: Jewish Theological Seminary of America 1992, 201–222.
- Levinson, P.N., *Einführung in die rabbinische Theologie*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1993.
- Lewis, J.P., *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood in Jewish and Christian Literature*, Leiden: Brill 1968.
- , 'Noah and the Flood: In Jewish, Christian and Muslim Tradition', *The Biblical Archaeologist* 47.4 (1984), 224–239.
- Lieberman, S., *Greek in Jewish Palestine: studies in the life and manners of Jewish Palestine in the II – IV centuries C.E.*, N.Y.: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America 1942.
- Lieu, J., *Image and Reality: The Jews in the World of the Christians in the Second Century*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1996.

- , *Neither Jew nor Greek?: constructing early Christianity* (Studies of the New Testament and its world), London: T & T Clark 2002.
- Lifshitz, B., 'Greek Inscriptions from Eretz Israel', *BIES* (=Yediot) 22 (1958), 115–126 [Hebrew].
- , 'Inscriptions de Césarée', *RB* 74 (1964), 50–59.
- Limor, O. – G. Stroumsa (eds), *Contra Iudaeos: ancient and medieval polemics between Christians and Jews* (Texts and studies in medieval and early modern Judaism 10), Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr-Paul Siebeck 1996.
- Lindars, B., 'The Place of the Old Testament in the Formation of the New Testament Theology: Prolegomena', *NTS* 23 (1976), 59–66.
- Lipatov, N.A., 'The Problem of the Authorship of the Commentary on the Prophet Isaiah attributed to St. Basil the Great', in E. Livingstone (ed.), *Studia Patristica XXVIII. Papers presented at the Eleventh International Conference on Patristic Studies held in Oxford 1991*, Louvain: Peeters 1993, 42–48.
- Lipatov, N.A. (trans.), *St. Basil the Great: commentary on the Prophet Isaiah* (Studies in the History of Theology 7), Mandelbachtal-Cambridge: Cicero 2001.
- Loewe, R., 'Apologetic Motifs in the Targum to the Song of Songs', in A. Altmann (ed.), *Biblical Motifs: Origins and Transformations* (Brandeis University Philip W. Lown Institute of Advanced Judaic Studies: Studies and Texts 3), Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press 1966, 159–196.
- Löffgen, O. – S. Euringer, *Die beiden gewöhnlichen äthiopischen Gregorius-Anaphoren* (OCA 85), Rome: Pont. institutum orientalium studiorum 1933.
- Löfsted, T., 'The Allegory of Hagar and Sarah: Gal 4:21–31', *Estudios Biblicos* 58 (2000), 475–494.
- Lohse, E., 'Hosianna', *NT* 5 (1963), 113–119.
- Longenecker, J.N., *Galatians* (Word biblical commentary 41), Dallas, TX: Word Books 1990.
- Lührmann, D., 'Alttestamentliche Pseudepigraphen bei Didymus von Alexandrien', *ZAW* 104 (1992), 231–249.
- Lund, A., 'Observations on Some Biblical Quotations of Ephraem's Commentary on Genesis', *Aramaic Studies* 4.2 (2006), 205–218.
- Luttikhuisen, G.P. (ed.), *The Creation of Man and Woman: Interpretations of the Biblical Narratives in Jewish and Christian Traditions* (Themes in biblical narrative 3), Leiden: Brill 2000.
- , *Eve's children: The biblical stories retold and interpreted in Jewish and Christian traditions* (Themes in biblical narrative 5), Leiden – London: Brill 2003.
- Macchi, J.-D., *Israël et ses tribus selon Genèse 49* (Orbus biblicus et orientalis 171), Fribourg: Editions universitaires – Göttingen: Vanderhoek & Ruprecht 1999.
- MacLennan, R.S., *Early Christian texts on Jews and Judaism* (Brown Judaic studies 194), Atlanta GA: Scholars Press 1990.
- MacMullen, R., *Christianity and Paganism in the fourth to eighth centuries*, New Haven – London: Yale University Press 1997.
- Maier, J., *Jesus von Nazareth in der talmudischen Überlieferung* (Erträge der Forschung 82), Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1978.
- Mandel, P., 'Midrashic exegesis and its precedents in the Dead Sea Scrolls', *Dead Sea Discoveries* 8.2 (2001), 149–168.
- Maori, Y., *The Peshitta Version of the Pentateuch and Early Jewish Exegesis*, Jerusalem: Magnes Press 1995 [in Hebrew].
- Marschies, C., 'Hieronymus und die *Hebraica veritas*: ein Beitrag zur Archäologie des protestantischen Schriftverständnisses', in M. Hengel – A.M. Schwemer (eds), *Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum* (WUNT 72), Tübingen: Mohr (Paul Siebeck) 1994, 131–181.
- Marmorstein, B., 'Die Gestalt Josefs in der Agada und die Evangeliengeschichte', *AITEAOΣ: Archiv für neutestamentliche Zeitgeschichte und Kulturkunde* 4 (1932), 51–55.
- Martinez, F.J., 'Eastern Christian Apocalyptic in the Early Muslim Period: Pseudo-Methodius and Pseudo-Athanasius' (unpublished Ph.D. diss. Catholic University of America, Washington D.C. 1985).

- Marx, A., 'Jusqu'à ce que vienne Shiloh: Pour une interprétation messianique de Genèse 49, 8–12', in R. Kuntzmann, *Ce Dieu qui vient: Études sur l'Ancien et le Nouveau Testament offertes au Professeur Bernard Renaud* (Lectio divina 159), Paris: Cerf 1995, 95–111.
- Mason, E.F., 'You Are Priest Forever': *Second Temple Jewish Messianism and the Priestly Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Studies on the texts of the desert of Judah 74), Leiden-Boston: Brill 2008.
- Massonnet, J., 'Targum, Midrash et Nouveau Testament: le songe de Jacob (Gn 28,10–22)', in C.-B. Amphoux – J. Margain (eds), *Les premières traditions de la Bible*, Lausanne: Editions du Zebre 1996, 67–101.
- Mayer, J., 'Circumcision in Primitive Christianity', in J. Kittel et al. (eds), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. VI, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1995, 81–84.
- McCullough, J.M., 'Aphrahat the Biblical Exegete', *Studia Patristica* 18 (1990), 263–268.
- McGuckin, J., 'Caesarea maritima as Origen knew it', in R.J. Daly (ed.), *Origeniana quinta* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum theologicarum Lovaniensium 105), Leuven: Leuven University Press 1992, 3–25.
- (ed.), *The Westminster Handbook to Origen* (Westminster handbooks to Christian theology), Louisville KY – London: Westminster John Knox Press 2004.
- McKelvey, R., *The New Temple: the Church in the New Testament* (Oxford theological monographs), London: OUP 1969.
- McKinnon, J., *Music in Early Christian Literature* (Cambridge readings in the literature of music), Cambridge: CUP 1978.
- McKinton, S.A. (ed.), *Isaiah 1–39* (Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Old Testament X), Downers Grove IL: Doubleday 2004.
- McNamara, M., *The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch* (Analecta biblica 27), Thesis – Pontificio Istituto biblico, Rome 1966.
- , 'Melchizedek: Gen 14:17–20 in the Targums, in Rabbinic and Early Christian Literature', *Bib* 81 (2000), 1–31.
- Meeks, W.A. – R.L. Wilken, *Jews and Christians in Antioch in the first four centuries of the common era* (Sources for biblical study 13), Missoula MT: Scholars Press 1978.
- Menn, E.M., *Judah and Tamar (Genesis 38) in Ancient Jewish Exegesis: Studies in Literary Form and Hermeneutics* (JSJSup 51), Leiden: Brill 1997.
- Michaelis, W., *Zur Engelchristologie im Urchristentum*, Basel: Heinrich Majer 1942.
- Milburn, R., *Early Christian Art and Architecture*, Berkeley: University of California Press 1991.
- Miletto, G., 'Die Hebraica veritas in S. Hieronymus', in H. Merklein et al. (eds), *Bibel in jüdischer und christlicher Tradition: Festschrift für Johann Maier zum 60. Geburtstag* (Athenäums Monografien. Theologie 88), Frankfurt a.M.: Hain 1993, 56–63.
- Milikowsky, C., 'The Status Quaestionis of Research in Rabbinic Literature', *JJS* 39 (1988), 201–211.
- , 'Why did Cain kill Abel? How did Cain kill Abel?: Methodological Reflections on the Retelling of the Cain and Abel Narrative in Bereshit Rabbah', *Nordisk Judaistik* 24 (2003), 79–93.
- Millar, F., 'Hagar, Ishmael, Josephus and the Origins of Islam', *JJS* 44.1 (1993), 23–45.
- Mitchell, D.C., 'Rabbi Dosa and the rabbis differ: Messiah ben Joseph in the Babylonian Talmud', *RRJ* 8 (2005), 77–90.
- , 'Messiah ben Joseph: a sacrifice of atonement for Israel', *RRJ* 10.1 (2007), 77–94.
- Mitterauer, M., 'The customs of the Magians: the problem of incest in historical societies', in R. Porter – M. Teich, (eds), *Sexual knowledge, sexual science: the history of attitudes to sexuality*, Cambridge: CUP 1994, 231–250.
- Mizugaki, W., 'Origen and Josephus', in L.H. Feldman – G. Hata (eds), *Josephus, Judaism, and Christianity*, 325–337.
- Montgomery, J.A., *Arabia and the Bible*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 1934.
- Moss, J.L., 'Being the Temple: Early Jewish and Christian Interpretative Transpositions', in L.M. Teugels – R. Ulmer (eds), *Midrash and Context: proceedings of the 2004 and 2005*

- SBL Consultation on Midrash* (Judaism in context 5), Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press 2007, 39–59.
- Mowinckel, S., *He that cometh: the Messiah Concept in the Old Testament and Later Judaism*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 2005.
- Mulder, M.J. – H. Sysling (eds), *Mikra: text, translation, reading and interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in ancient Judaism and early Christianity* (Compendia rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum. Section 2, Literature of the Jewish people in the period of the Second Temple and the Talmud), Assen: Van Gorcum – Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1988.
- Müller, H.-P., 'Weisheitliche Deutungen der Sterblichkeit: Gen 3,19 und Pred 3,21; 12,7 im Licht antiker Parallelen', in idem, *Mensch, Umwelt, Eigenwelt; gesammelte Aufsätze zur Weisheit Israels*, Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer 1992, 69–100.
- Müller, K., 'Joh 9,7 und das jüdische Verständnis des Siloh-Spruches', *BZ* n.F. 13 (1969), 251–256.
- Murray, R., *Symbols of Church and Kingdom: a study in early Syriac tradition*, London: T & T Clark 2006 (rev. ed.).
- Muto, S., 'Interpretation in the Greek Antiochenes and the Syriac Fathers', in B. ter Haar Romeny (ed.), *The Peshitta*, 201–222.
- Naeh, S., 'Freedom of Celibacy', in J. Frishman – L. van Rompay (eds), *The Book of Genesis in Jewish and Oriental Christian Interpretation*, 73–89.
- Näf, H., *Syrische Josefgedichte: Mit Übersetzung des Gedichts von Narsai aus Balai und Jaqob von Sarug*, Zürich: A. Schwarzenbach 1923.
- Neeb, J.H.C., 'Origen's Interpretation of Genesis 28:12 and the Rabbis', in G. Dorival – A. Le Boulluec (eds), *Origeniana Sexta* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum theologicarum Lovaniensium 118), Leuven: Leuven University Press – Peeters 1995.
- Nel, J., 'Psalm 110 and the Melchizedek Tradition', *JNWSL* 22 (1996), 1–14.
- Neusner, J., *A History of the Jews in Babylonia*, 5 vols (Studia post-Biblica 9–15), Leiden: Brill 1965–70.
- , *Aphrahat and Judaism: The Christian-Jewish Argument in Fourth-Century Iran* (Studia post-Biblica 19), Leiden: Brill 1971.
- , 'Babylonian Jewry and Shapur II's Persecution of Christianity from 339–379 A.D.', *HUCA* 43 (1972), 77–99.
- , *Messiah in Context: Israel's history and destiny in formative Judaism* (Foundations of Judaism 2), Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1984.
- , *Judaism and its social metaphors: Israel in the history of Jewish thought*, Cambridge: CUP 1989.
- et al. (eds), *Three Faiths, One God: the formative faith and practice of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, Boston: Brill Academic Publishers 2002.
- , *Neusner on Judaism: Volume One. History*, Aldershot: Ashgate 2004–2005.
- Newby, G., 'Text and Territory: Jewish-Muslim Relations 632–750 CE', in B. Hary et al. (eds), *Judaism and Islam: boundaries, communication and interaction: essays in honor of William M. Brinner* (Brill's series in Jewish studies 27), Leiden: Brill 2000, 83–96.
- Newman, H.L., 'How should we measure Jerome's Hebrew Competence?', in A. Cain – J. Lössl (eds), *Jerome of Stridon: His Life, Writings and Legacy*, Farnham: Ashgate 2009, 131–152.
- Neurey, J.H., 'Jacob's traditions and the interpretation of John 4:10–26', *CBQ* 41 (1979), 426–429.
- Niccum, C., 'The Blessing of Judah in 4Q252', in P.W. Flint et al. (eds), *Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, and the Septuagint Presented to Eugene Ulrich* (VTSup 101), Leiden: Brill 2006, 250–260.
- Nickelsburg, G.W. (ed.), *Studies on the Testament of Moses: seminar papers* (Septuagint and cognate studies series 4), Cambridge MA: Society of Biblical Literature 1973.
- – M.E. Stone (eds), *Faith and Piety in Early Judaism: texts and documents*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1983.

- , *Resurrection, Immortality and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism and Early Christianity* (Harvard theological studies 56), Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press for Harvard Theological Studies 2006.
- Niehoff, M., *The Figure of Joseph in Post-Biblical Jewish Literature* (Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 16), Leiden: Brill 1992.
- Nikaido, N., 'Hagar and Ishmael as Literary Figures: An Intertextual Study', *VT* 51.2 (2001), 219–242.
- Nöldeke, T. (ed.), 'Die von Guidi herausgegebene syrische Chronik', *Sitzungsberichte der philosophisch-historischen Classe der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 28 (1893), 1–47.
- Novaković, L., *Messiah: The Healer of the Sick: a study of Jesus as the son of David in the Gospel of Matthew* (WUNT 2. Reihe 170), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2003.
- Odeberg, H., *The Fourth Gospel interpreted in its relation to contemporaneous religious currents in Palestine and the Hellenistic-Oriental world*, Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell 1929.
- Oegema, G.S., 'Messianic Expectations in the Qumran Writings: Theses on their Development', in J.H. Charlesworth et al. (eds), *Qumran-Messianism, studies on the messianic expectations in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1998, 53–82.
- , 'Tradition-Historical Studies on 4Q252', in J.H. Charlesworth et al. (eds), *Qumran-Messianism: studies on the messianic expectations in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1998, 154–174.
- Ohana, M., 'La Polemique judeo-islamique et l'image d'Ismael dans Targum Pseudo-Jonathan et dans Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer', *Aug* 15 (1975), 367–387.
- Olson, K., 'Cosmetics in Roman Antiquity: Substance, Remedy, Poison', *CW* 102 (2009), 291–310.
- O'Neill, J.C., 'For this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia (Gal 4:25)', in S. Moyise – J.L. North (eds), *The Old Testament in the New Testament: essays in honour of J.L. North* (JSNTSup 189), Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 2000, 210–219.
- , 'Son of Man, stone of blood (John 1:51)', *NT* 45.4 (2003), 374–381.
- Oppenheim, G., *Fabula Josephi et Aenathae apocrypha e libro syriaco latine versa*, Berlin: Itzkowski 1886.
- Oppenheimer, A., *Babylonia Judaica in the Talmudic Period* (Beihefte zum Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients. Reihe B, Geisteswissenschaften 47), Wiesbaden: L. Reichert 1983.
- Orbe, A., 'Cinco exegesis ireneas de Gen 2,17b: adv.haer. V, 23,1–2', *Gregorianum* 62 (1982), 75–113.
- , *Introducción a la teología de los siglos II y III* (Analecta Gregoriana. Series Facultatis Theologiae. Sectio A. 28), Roma: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana 1987.
- Orlov, A., 'Melchizedek Legend of 2 (Slavonic) Enoch', *JSJ* 31 (2000), 23–38.
- , 'The Heir of Righteousness and the King of Righteousness: The Priestly Noachic Polemics in 2 Enoch and the Epistle to the Hebrews', *JTS* 58 (2007), 25–65.
- Osiek, C., 'Female Slaves, *Porneia* and the Limits of Obedience', in D.L. Balch – C. Osiek (eds), *Early Christian Families in Context: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue*, Grand Rapids MI: W.B. Eerdmans 2003, 255–274.
- Oullette, J., 'Sens et portee de l'argument scripturaire chez Aphraate', in R.H. Fischer (ed.), *A Tribute to Arthur Vööbus: Studies in Early Christian Literature and its Environment primarily in the Syrian East*, Chicago: Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago 1977, 191–202.
- Ouspensky, L. – V. Lossky, *The Meaning of the Icons*, Crestwood NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press 1999 (rev. ed.).
- Owens, R.J., *The Genesis and Exodus Citations of Aphrahat the Persian Sage* (Monographs of the Peshitta Institute, Leiden 3), Leiden: E.J. Brill 1983.
- Parkes, J., *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue: a study in the origins of antisemitism*, London: The Soncino press 1934.
- Paul, A., 'La Bible Grecque d' Aquila et la idéologie du judaïsme ancien', *ANRW* II.20.1 (1987), 221–285.
- Pearson, B.A. – S. Giversen, 'NHC IX,I: Melchizedek', in B.A. Pearson (ed.), *Nag Hammadi Codices IX and X*, Leiden: Brill 1981, 19–85.



- Pearson, B.A., 'Melchizedek in Early Judaism, Christianity and Gnosticism', in M.E. Stone – T.A. Bergren (eds), *Biblical Figures*, 176–202.
- Pelikan, J., *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine. 1: The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100–600)*, Chicago – London: University of Chicago Press 1971.
- Pérez Fernández, M., *Los Capítulos de Rabbi Eliezer* (Biblioteca Midrásica de la Institución San Jerónimo 1), Valencia: Verbo Divino 1984.
- Pétit, F., 'La chaîne grecque sur la Genèse miroir de l' exégèse ancienne', in G. Schollgen – C. Scholten (eds), *Stimuli*, 243–53.
- Petuchowski, J.J., 'The Controversial Figure of Melchizedek', *HUCA* 28 (1957), 127–136.
- Phenix, R.R., *The sermons on Joseph of Balai of Qenneshrin: rhetoric and interpretation in fifth-century Syriac literature* (Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 50), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2008.
- Philonenko, M., *Joseph et Aséneth*, Thèse – Strasbourg 1968.
- Poirier, P.-H., 'Le sermon pseudo-ephremien In Pulcherrimum Joseph', *Cahiers de Biblia Patristica* 2 (1989), 107–122.
- Poorthuis, M., 'Enoch and Melchizedek in Judaism and Christianity: A Study in Intermediaries', in M. Poorthuis – J. Schwartz (eds), *Saints and Role Models in Judaism and Christianity* (Jewish and Christian perspectives series 7), Leiden: Brill 2004, 97–120.
- Porter, S.E. – B.W.R. Pearson, 'Ancient Understandings of the Christian-Jewish Split', in S.E. Porter – B.W.R. Pearson (eds), *Christian-Jewish Relations through the Centuries*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 2000, 36–51.
- Porter, S.E. (ed.), *The Messiah in Old and New Testaments* (McMaster New Testament studies), Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans 2007.
- Porton, G.G., 'Exegetical Techniques in Rabbinic Literature', *RRJ* 7 (2004), 27–51.
- Prensanski, A., *Schiloh, ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Messiaslehre*, Leipzig: Hinrichs 1904.
- Preuschen, E., *Die apokryphen gnostischen Adamschriften*, Giessen: J. Richer'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung 1900.
- Priebatsch, H., *Die Josephgeschichte in der Weltliteratur: Eine legenden-geschichtliche Studie*, Breslau: Marcus 1937.
- Prijs, L., *Jüdische Tradition in der Septuaginta*, Leiden: Brill 1948.
- Pringent, P., 'Quelques testimonia messianiques: leur histoire littéraire de Qoumran aux Peres de l'Eglise', *ThZ* 15 (1959), 419–430.
- Quasten, J., *Music and Worship in Pagan and Christian Antiquity*, Washington D.C.: NPM 1973.
- (trans. A. di Berardino), *Patrology: vol. 1: The Beginning of Patristic Literature*, 4 vols, Westminster MD: Christian Classics 1984–1988.
- Rabin, C., 'The Translation Process and the Character of the Septuagint', *Textus* 6 (1968), 1–27.
- Rahmer, M., *Die hebraeischen Traditionen in den Werken des Hieronymus*, Breslau: Verlag der Schletter'schen Buchhandlung (H. Skutsch) 1861.
- Ramers, C., *Des Origenes Lehre von der Auferstehung des Fleisches. Eine historisch-dogmatische Abhandlung*, Trier: Linzersche Buchdruckerei 1851.
- Rebenich, S., 'Jerome: the vir trilinguis and the *Hebraica veritas*', *VC* 47 (1993), 56–62.
- Reed, A.Y., *Fallen angels and the history of Judaism and Christianity: the reception of Enochic literature*, Cambridge: CUP 2005.
- Reeves, J.C., *Trajectories in Near Eastern apocalyptic: a postrabbinic Jewish apocalypse reader* (Resources for biblical study 45), Atlanta GA: SBL 2005.
- Rehm, B., 'Zur Entstehung der pseudoklementinischen Schriften', *ZNW* 37 (1938), 77–184.
- Reif, S., 'Early Rabbinic Exegesis of Genesis 38', in E. Grypeou – H. Spurling (eds), *The Exegetical Encounter*, 221–244.
- Reinink, G., 'Ismael, der Wildesel in der Wüste. Zur Typologie der Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius', *ByzZ* 75 (1982), 336–344.
- Reiss, E., 'The Story of Lamech and Its Place in Medieval Drama', *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 2 (1972), 35–48.

- Retsö, J., *The Arabs in Antiquity: their history from the Assyrians to the Umayyads*, London-N.Y.: Routledge-Curzon 2003.
- Reuling, H., *After Eden: Church Fathers and Rabbis on Genesis 3:16–21* (Jewish and Christian perspectives series 10), Leiden-Boston: Brill 2006.
- Ri, Su-Min, *Commentaire de la Caverne des Trésors: étude sur l'histoire du texte et de ses sources* (CSCO 581-Subs. 103), Louvain: Peeters 2000.
- Richard, M., *Opera Minora*, 3 vols, Turnhout: Brepols 1976–1977.
- Richer, G., 'Über die älteste Auseinandersetzung der syrischen Christen mit den Juden', *ZNW* 35 (1936), 101–114.
- Ridderbos, H., *The Epistle of Paul to the Churches of Galatia* (The New International Commentary on the New Testament), Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans 1974.
- Riggren, H., 'Die Versuchung Josefs (Gen 39)', in M. Görg – A.R. Müller (eds), *Die Väter Israels: Beiträge zur Theologie der Patriarchenüberlieferung im Alten Testament*, Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk 1989, 267–270.
- Riley, G., *Resurrection Reconsidered: Thomas and John in Conflict*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press 1995.
- Ringrose, K.M., *The Perfect Servant: eunuchs and the social construction of gender in Byzantium*, Chicago IL – London: University of Chicago Press 2003.
- Robert, C., 'Les Fils de Dieu et les filles de l'homme', *RB* IV (1895), 340–373.
- Robinson, S.E., *The Testament of Adam: an examination of the Syriac and Greek traditions* (SBL Dissertation series 52), Chico CA: Scholars Press 1982.
- , 'The Apocryphal Story of Melchizedek', *JSJ* 18 (1987), 29–37.
- Rokeah, D., *Jews, Pagans and Christians in Conflict* (Studia post-Biblica 33), Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University – Leiden: E.J. Brill 1982.
- , *Justin Martyr and the Jews* (Jewish and Christian perspectives 5), Leiden: Brill 2002.
- Romeny ter Haar, R.B., *A Syrian in Greek Dress. The use of Greek, Hebrew, and Syriac biblical texts in Eusebius of Emesa's commentary on Genesis*, Louvain: Peeters 1997.
- (ed.), *The Peshitta: Its Use in Liturgy and Literature: papers read at the Third Peshitta Symposium* (Monographs of the Peshitta Institute, Leiden 15), Leiden: Brill 2006, 67–98.
- Rösel, M., *Übersetzung als Vollendung der Auslegung: Studien zur Genesis-Septuaginta* (BZAW 223), Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 1994.
- , 'Die Interpretation von Genesis 49 in der Septuaginta', *BN* 79 (1995), 54–69.
- Ross, A., 'Jacob's Vision: The Founding of Bethel', *BS* 142 (1985), 224–237.
- Rousselle, A., *Porneia: on desire and the body in antiquity*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1988.
- Rowland, C., 'John 1.51, Jewish Apocalyptic and Targumic Tradition', *NTS* 30 (1984), 498–507.
- Royse, J.R., *The Spurious Texts of Philo: a study of textual transmission and corruption with indexes to the major collections of Greek fragments* (Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums 22), Leiden: Brill 1991.
- Rubenstein, J., 'From Mythic Motifs to Sustained Myth: The Revision of Rabbinic Traditions in Medieval Midrashim', *HTR* 89.2 (1996), 131–159.
- Runia, D.T., *Philo in Early Christian Literature: A Survey* (Compendia rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum. Sect. 3; Jewish traditions in early Christian literature 3), Assen: Van Gorcum – Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1993.
- , *Philo and the Church Fathers. A Collection of Papers* (VCSup 32), Leiden: Brill 1995.
- Russell, J.B., *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity*, Ithaca – London: Cornell University Press 1987.
- Rutgers, L.V., 'Archaeological Evidence for the Interaction of Jews and non-Jews in Late Antiquity', *AJA* 96 (1992), 101–118.
- , *The Jews in Late Ancient Rome. Evidence of Cultural Interaction in the Roman Diaspora* (Brill's Scholars' list), Leiden: Brill 2000.
- Ruzer, S., 'The Cave of Treasures on Swearing by Abel's Blood and Expulsion from Paradise: Two Exegetical Motifs in Context', *J ECS* 9 (2001), 251–71.
- Sæbø, M. (ed.), *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: the history of its interpretation*, vol. I., Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht 1996.

- Sacks, S.D., *Midrash and Multiplicity: Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer and the Renewal of Rabbinic Interpretive Culture* (Studia Judaica 48), Berlin: de Gruyter 2009.
- Safrai, S., 'Jerusalem and the Temple in the tannaïtic literature of the first generation after the destruction of the Temple', in A. Houtman et al. (eds), *Sanctity of Time and Space in Tradition and Modernity* (Jewish and Christian perspectives series 1), Leiden: Brill 1998, 135–152.
- Safrai, S. (ed.), *The Literature of the Sages*, 2 vols (Compendia rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum. Section 2. Literature of the Jewish people in the period of the Second Temple and the Talmud 3), Assen: Van Gorcum 1987–2006.
- Safrai, Z., 'The Targums as Part of Rabbinic Literature', in S. Safrai (ed.), *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 2, 243–278.
- Sahas, D., *John of Damascus on Islam: The 'Heresy of the Ishmaelites'*, Leiden: Brill 1972.
- Saldarini, A.J., *The Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan [Abot de Rabbi Nathan] version B: a translation and commentary* (Studies in Judaism in late antiquity 11), Leiden: Brill 1975.
- Salvesen, A., *Symmachus and the Pentateuch* (JSS Monograph 15), Manchester: University of Manchester 1991.
- , 'Keeping it in the Family? Jacob and His Aramean Heritage according to Jewish and Christian Sources', in E. Grypeou – H. Spurling (eds), *The Exegetical Encounter*, 205–220.
- Sanders, E., *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion*, London: SCM 1977.
- , *Paul, the Law and the Jewish people*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1983.
- Sandmel, S., 'Parallelomania', *JBL* 80 (1961), 1–13.
- , *Philo's Place in Judaism: a study of conceptions of Abraham in Jewish literature*, N.Y.: Ktav 1972.
- Sarachek, J., *The Doctrine of the Messiah in Medieval Jewish Literature*, N.Y.: Hermon Press 1968<sup>2</sup>.
- Satlow, M.L., *Jewish Marriage in Antiquity*, Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press 2001.
- , 'Rabbinic Views on Marriage, Sexuality, and the Family', in S.T. Katz, *The Cambridge History of Judaism, Vol. 4*, 612–626.
- Satran, D., 'Anti-Jewish Polemic in the Peri Pascha of Melito of Sardis: The Problem of Social Context', in O. Limor – G. Stroumsa (eds), *Contra Iudaeos*, 49–58.
- Schäfer, P., 'Tempel und Schöpfung: zur Interpretation einiger Heiligtumstraditionen in der rabbinischen Literatur', *Kairos* 16 (1974), 144–153.
- , *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen: Untersuchungen zur rabbinischen Engelvorstellung* (Studia Judaica 8), Berlin-N.Y.: de Gruyter 1975.
- , 'Das 'Dogma' von der mündlichen Torah in rabbinischen Judentum', in idem, *Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie des rabbinischen Judentums* (Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 15), Leiden: Brill 1978, 153–197.
- , 'Die messianischen Hoffnungen des rabbinischen Judentums zwischen Naherwartung und religiösem Pragmatismus', in idem, *Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie des rabbinischen Judentums* (Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 15), Leiden: Brill 1978, 214–243.
- , 'Die Torah der messianischen Zeit', in idem, *Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie des rabbinischen Judentums*, 198–213.
- , 'Research into Rabbinic Literature: An Attempt to Define the Status Quaestionis', *JJS* 37 (1986), 139–152.
- , 'Once Again the Status Quaestionis of Research in Rabbinic Literature: An Answer to Chaim Milikowsky', *JJS* 40 (1989), 89–94.
- , *Jesus in the Talmud*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 2009.
- Schaff, D.S., 'Concubinage' (Christian), in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* III, (1911), cols 817ff.

- Schalit, A., 'Die frühchristliche Überlieferung über die Herkunft der Familie des Herodes', *ASTI* 1 (1962), 109–160.
- , *König Herodes: Der Mann und sein Werk* (Studia Judaica 4), Berlin: De Gruyter 2001.
- Schäublin, C., *Untersuchungen zu Methode und Herkunft der antiochenischen Exegese*, Köln: P. Hanstein 1974.
- Scheidweiler, F., 'Die Fragmente des Eustathius', *ByZ* 48 (1955), 73–85.
- Schenke, H.-M., 'Die jüdische Melchizedek-Gestalt als Thema in der Gnosis', in K.-W. Tröger (ed.), *Altes Testament-Frühjudentum-Gnosis. Neue Studien zu 'Gnosis und Bibel'*, Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Mohn 1980, 111–136.
- Schiffman, L.H., *Who was a Jew? Rabbinic and Halakic perspectives on the Jewish and Christian schism*, Hoboken, N.J.: KTAV Publishing House 1985.
- , 'The Qumran Scrolls and rabbinic Judaism', in P.W. Flint – J.C. VanderKam (eds), *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: a comprehensive assessment vol. II*, Leiden: Brill 1999, 552–571.
- , 'The Concept of Covenant in the Qumran Scrolls and Rabbinic Literature', in H. Najman – J.H. Newman (eds), *The Idea of Biblical Interpretation: Essays in Honor of James L. Kugel* (JSJSup 83), Leiden: Brill 2004, 257–278.
- , 'The Dead Sea Scrolls and rabbinic Judaism: perspectives and desiderata', *Henoch* 27.1–2 (2005), 27–33.
- Schoedel, W. – H. Koester, *Ignatius of Antioch. A commentary on the letters of Ignatius of Antioch* (Hermeneia—a critical and historical commentary on the Bible), Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1985.
- Schoeps, H.-J., *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums*, Tübingen: Mohr 1949.
- Scholem, G., *The Messianic Idea in Judaism and other essays on Jewish spirituality*, London: Allen and Unwin 1971.
- Schöllgen G. – C. Scholten (eds), *Stimuli: Exegese und ihre Hermeneutik in Antike und Christentum. Festschrift für Ernst Dassmann* (JAC. Ergänzungsband 23), Münster: Aschendorff 1996.
- Scholz, P., *Eunuchs and Castrati: the emasculation of Eros*, Princeton, N.J.: Markus Wiener 1999.
- Schork, R.J., *Sacred song from the Byzantine pulpit*, Gainesville FL: University Press of Florida 1995.
- Schrekenberg, H., *Die Flavius Josephus Tradition in Antike und Mittelalter* (Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums 5), Leiden: Brill 1977.
- , *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos Texte*, 3 vols (Europäische Hochschulschriften. Reihe XXIII, Theologie 172, 335, 497), Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang 1982, 1990, 1994.
- , 'The Works of Josephus and the Early Christian Church', in L.H. Feldman – G. Hata (eds), *Josephus, Judaism and Christianity*, 315–324.
- – K. Schubert (eds), *Jewish Historiography and Iconography in Early Christian and Medieval Christianity. I. Josephus in Early Christian Literature and Medieval Christian Art* (Compendia rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum. Section 3—Jewish traditions in early Christian literature 2), Assen: Van Gorcum – Minneapolis: Fortress Press 1992.
- Schürmann, H., *Das Lukasevangelium* (Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 3), Freiburg: Herder 1969.
- Schwartz, D., 'The Messianic Departure from Judah (4Q Patriarchal Blessings)', *TZ* 37 (1981), 257–66.
- Schwartz, H. *Tree of Souls: The Mythology of Judaism*, N.Y. – Oxford: OUP 2004.
- Schwartz, J., 'Ishmael at Play: On Exegesis and Jewish Society', *HUCA* 66 (1995), 203–221.
- Schwartz, S., *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press 2001.
- Scott, J.M. (ed.), *Exile: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Conceptions* (JSJSup 56), Leiden: Brill 1997.

- (ed.), *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish and Christian Perspectives* (JSJSup 72), Leiden: Brill 2001.
- Séd, N., 'Les Hymnes sur le Paradis de Saint Ephrem et les traditions juives', *Le Muséon* 81 (1968), 455–501.
- Seeligman, I.L., 'Indications of Editorial Alterations and Adaptations in the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint', *VT* 11 (1961), 201–211.
- Segal, A.F., *Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports about Christianity and Gnosticism* (Studies in Judaism in late antiquity 25), Leiden: Brill 1977.
- , 'Paul's Jewish Presuppositions', in J.D.G. Dunn (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to St. Paul*, Cambridge: CUP 2003, 159–172.
- Sellers, R.V., *Eustathius of Antioch and his place in the early history of the Christian doctrine*, Cambridge: CUP 1928.
- Sellin, G., 'Hagar und Sarah: religionsgeschichtliche Hintergründe der Schriftallegorese Gal 4,21–31', in U. Mell – U.B. Müller (eds), *Das Urchristentum in seiner literarischen Geschichte: Festschrift für Jürgen Becker zum 65. Geburtstag* (BZNW 100), Berlin: W. de Gruyter 1999, 59–84.
- Setzer, C., *Jewish Responses to Early Christians: History and Polemics, 30–150 C.E.*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press 1989.
- , *Resurrection of the body in early Judaism and early Christianity: doctrine, community, and self-definition*, Boston-Leiden: Brill 2004.
- Sevenster, J.N., *Do you know Greek?: How much Greek could the first Jewish Christians have known?* (NTSup 19), Leiden: Brill 1968.
- Shahid, I., *Rome and the Arabs: a prolegomenon to the Study of Byzantium and the Arabs*, Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection 1984.
- , *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth Century*, Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection 1989.
- Shanks Alexander, E., 'The Orality of Rabbinic Writings', in C.E. Fonrobert – M. S. Jaffee (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, Cambridge: CUP 2007, 38–57.
- Shapira, A., 'Traces of an Anti-Moslem Polemic in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan of Parashah "Aqedah"', *Tarbiz* 54 (1985), 293–296.
- Shephardson, C., *Anti-Judaism and Christian Orthodoxy. Ephrem's Hymns in Fourth-Century Syria* (Patristic monograph series 20), Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press 2008.
- Shinan, A., 'The angelology of the 'Palestinian' Targums on the Pentateuch', *Sefarad* 43.2 (1983), 181–198.
- , 'Dating Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Some More Comments', *JJS* 41 (1990), 57–61.
- Siker, J.S., *Disinheriting the Jews: Abraham in Early Christian Controversy*, Louisville KY: Westminster – John Knox Press 1991.
- Silberman, L.H. (ed.), 'Orality, Aurality and Biblical Narrative', *Semeia* 39 (1987).
- Silver, A.H., *A history of Messianic speculation in Israel from the first through the seventeenth centuries*, New York: The Macmillan Company 1927.
- Simon, M., 'Melchisédech dans la polémique entre juifs et chrétiens et dans la légende', *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses* 17 (1937), 58–93.
- , *Verus Israel* (Littman library of Jewish civilization), Oxford: OUP 1986.
- Simonetti, M., 'Jalons pour l'interprétation patristique du chapitre 49 de la Genèse', *SChr* 140 (1968), 11–24.
- Skarsaune, O., *The Proof from Prophecy: A Study in Justin Martyr's Proof-Text Tradition: Text-Type, Provenance, Theological Profile* (NTSup 56), Leiden: Brill 1987.
- , *In the Shadow of the Temple: Jewish influences on early Christianity*, Downers Grove IL: InterVarsity Press 2002.
- Smit Sibinga, J., *The Old Testament Text of Justin Martyr I: The Pentateuch*, Leiden: Brill 1963.

- Smith, C.R., 'Chiliasm and Recapitulation in the Theology of Irenaeus', *VC* 48 (1994), 312–331.
- Smith, Jr., E.W., 'Joseph Material in Joseph and Asenath and Josephus relating to the Testament of Joseph', in G.W.E. Nickelsburg (ed.), *Studies in the Testament of Joseph*, 133–137.
- Sollamo, R., 'Messianism and the 'Branch of David'', in M.A. Knibb (ed.), *The Septuagint and Messianism. Journées bibliques de Louvain (53rd: 2004)* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum theologicarum Lovaniensium 195), Leuven: Leuven University Press 2006.
- Sperber, D., 'Rabbinic Knowledge of Greek', in S. Safrai et al. (eds), *The Literature of the Sages*, vol. 2, 627–640.
- Springer, A.J., 'Proof of identification: Patristic and rabbinic exegesis of the Cain and Abel narrative', *Studia Patristica* 39 (2006), 259–271.
- Sprödowsky, H., *Die Hellenisierung der Geschichte von Joseph in Ägypten bei Flavius Josephus*, Greifswald: H. Dallmeyer 1937.
- Spurling, H. – E. Grypeou, 'Pirke-de Rabbi Eliezer and Eastern Christian Exegesis', *CCO* 4 (2007), 217–243.
- Spurling, H., 'The Biblical Symbol of Edom in Jewish Eschatological and Apocalyptic Imagery', in J.P. Monferrer-Sala – A. Urban (eds), *Sacred Text: Explorations in Lexicography*, Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang 2009, 271–299.
- Stanley, C.D., *Paul and the Language of Scripture. Citation technique in the Pauline epistles and contemporary literature* (Society for New Testament Studies. Monograph series 74), Cambridge: CUP 1992.
- Stanton, G.N., *Jesus and Gospel*, Cambridge: CUP 2004.
- Starobinski-Safran, E., 'Quelques interpretations juives antiques et medievals du songe de Jacob (Gn 28,12–13)', in J.-D. Macchi – T. Romer (eds), *Jacob—commentaire à plusieurs voix de Gen 25–36* (Monde de la Bible 44), Geneva: Labor et Fides 2001, 373–393.
- Steinberg, M.C., *Irenaeus on Creation: The Cosmic Christ and the Saga of Creation* (VCSup 91), Leiden-Boston: Brill 2008.
- Stegemann, H. et al. (eds), *Qumran Cave 1. 3, 1QHodayot with an Incorporation of 1QHodayotb and 4QHodayot a-f* (Discoveries in the Judaean desert 40), Oxford: OUP 2009.
- Stemberger, G., 'Hieronimus und die Juden seiner Zeit', in D.A. Koch et al. (eds), *Begegnungen zwischen Christentum und Judentum in Antike und Mittelalter. FS für Heinz Schreckenberg* (Schriften des Institutum Judaicum Delitzschianum 1), Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1993, 347–364.
- , *Introduction to Talmud and Midrash*, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark 1996.
- , 'Exegetical Contacts between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire', in M. Saebø (ed.), *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament*, 569–586.
- , *Jews and Christians in the Holy Land: Palestine in the Fourth Century*, Edinburgh: T & T Clark 2000.
- , 'Reaktionen auf die Tempelzerstörung in der rabbinischen Literatur', in J. Hahn (ed.), *Zerstörungen des Jerusalemer Tempels: Geschehen—Wahrnehmung—Bewältigung* (WUNT 147), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2002, 207–236.
- , 'Samael und Uzza: Zur Rolle der Dämonen im späten Midrasch', in A. Lange et al. (eds), *Die Dämonen*, 636–661.
- , 'Aktuelle Probleme in der Erforschung der rabbinischen Literatur: Überlegungen zur Abgrenzung von Werk, Redaktion, Textgeschichte', *FJB* 35 (2009), 1–18.
- , 'Genesis 15 in Rabbinic and Patristic Interpretation', in E. Grypeou – H. Spurling (eds), *The Exegetical Encounter*, 163–179.
- , 'Dating rabbinic traditions', in R. Bieringer (ed.), *The New Testament and Rabbinic Literature*, 79–96.
- Stenhouse, P., 'Samaritan Chronicles', in A.D. Crown (ed.), *The Samaritans*, Tübingen: Mohr 1989, 218–265.
- Stern, M., 'Aspects of Jewish Society: The Priesthood and Other Classes', in S. Safrai – M. Stern (eds), *The Jewish People in the First Century*, 617–618.

- Stern, S., 'Attribution and authorship in the Babylonian Talmud', *JJS* 45.1 (1994), 28–51.
- , *Jewish Identity in Early Rabbinic Writings* (Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 23), Leiden: Brill 1994.
- , 'The concept of authorship in the Babylonian Talmud', *JJS* 46 (1995), 183–195.
- Stevenson, J., *Studies in Eusebius*, Cambridge: CUP 1929.
- Stone, M.E., 'Report on Seth Traditions in the Armenian Adam Books', in B. Layton (ed.), *The Rediscovery of Gnosticism II: Sethian Gnosticism* (Studies in the History of Religions 41), Leiden: Brill 1981, 459–471.
- – T.A. Bergren (eds), *Biblical Figures Outside the Bible*, Harrisburg PA: Trinity Press International 1998.
- , *Selected Studies in Pseudepigrapha and Apocrypha With Special Reference to the Armenian Tradition* (Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha 9), Leiden: Brill 1991.
- , *A History of the Literature of Adam and Eve* (Early Judaism and its literature 3), Atlanta: Scholars Press 1992.
- , *Armenian Apocrypha relating to Adam and Eve* (Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha 14), Leiden: Brill 1996.
- , *Rediscovering Ancient Judaism: Ancient Visions and Views*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans 2011.
- Stork, H., *Die sogenannten Melchizedekianer mit Untersuchung ihrer Quellen auf Gedankeninhalt und dogmengeschichtliche Entwicklung* (Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons und der altkirchlichen Literatur 8/2), Leipzig: A. Deichert 1928.
- Strathmann, H., *Geschichte der frühchristlichen Askese bis zur Entstehung des Mönchtums I*, Leipzig 1914.
- Stroumsa, G., *Another Seed: studies in Gnostic mythology* (Nag Hammadi studies 24), Leiden: Brill 1984.
- , 'From Anti-Judaism to Anti-Semitism in Early Christianity?', in O. Limor – G. Stroumsa (eds), *Contra Iudaeos*, 1–26.
- Suermann, H., *Die geschichtstheologische Reaktion auf die einfallenden Muslime in der edesischen Apokalyptik des 7. Jhs* (Europäische Hochschulschriften. Reihe XXIII, Theologie 256), Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang 1985.
- Syrén, R., *The Blessings in the Targums: a study of the Targumic interpretations of Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33*, Åbo: Åbo Akademi 1986.
- , *The Forsaken First-Born: A Study of a Recurrent Motif in the Patriarchal Narratives* (JSOTSup 133), Sheffield: JSOT Press 1993.
- , 'Ishmael and Esau in the Book of Jubilees and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan', in D.R.G. Beattie – M.J. McNamara (eds), *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in their Historical Context* (JSOTSup 166), Sheffield: JSOT Press 1994, 310–315.
- Sysling, H., *Tehiyyat Ha-Metim: The Resurrection of the Dead in the Palestinian Targums of the Pentateuch and Parallel Traditions in Classical Rabbinic Literature* (Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 57), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1996.
- Tabet, M., 'L'Esegesi Greca nei Commenti dei primi scrittori di lingua latina alla benedizione di Giacobbe à Giuda (Gen 49,8–12)', in *L'Esegesi dei Patri Latini* (Studium Ephemeridis 'Augustinianum' 68), Roma: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum 2000.
- Tadmor, H., 'Was the Biblical saris a Eunuch?', in Z. Zevit et al. (eds), *Solving Riddles and Untying Knots: biblical, epigraphic, and Semitic studies in honor of Jonas C. Greenfield*, Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns 1995, 317–325.
- Taft, R.F., *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West: The Origins of the Divine Office and its Meaning for Today*, Collegeville: Liturgical Press 1986.
- Taylor, J., *Christians and the Holy Places. The Myth of Jewish-Christian Origins*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1993.
- Taylor, M., *Anti-Judaism and Early Christian Identity: A Critique of the Scholarly Consensus* (Studia Post-Biblica 46), Leiden: Brill 1996.
- Teppler, Y.Y., *Birkat ha Minim. Jews and Christians in Conflict in the Ancient World* (Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 20), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2007.

- Teugels, L., 'The Twin Sisters of Cain and Abel: A Survey of the Rabbinic Sources,' in G.P. Luttikhuisen (ed.), *Eve's children*, 47–56.
- Thompson, J.L., *Writing the wrongs: women of the Old Testament among biblical commentators from Philo through the Reformation* (Oxford studies in historical theology), Oxford: OUP 2001.
- Thraede, K., 'Frau', *RAC* 8 (1972), 197–269.
- Toepel, A., *Die Adam- und Seth-Legenden im syrischen 'Buch der Schatzhöhle'. Eine quellenkritische Untersuchung* (CSCO 618—Subs. 119), Louvain: Peeters 2006.
- Tomson, J. – D. Lambers Petry (eds), *The Image of Judaeo-Christians in Ancient Jewish and Christian Literature* (WUNT 158), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2003.
- Tov, E., *Hebrew Bible, Greek Bible and Qumran: collected essays* (Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 121), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2008.
- Trakatellis, D., *Pre-existence of Christ in the Writings of Justin Martyr* (Harvard dissertations in religion 6), Missoula MT: Scholars Press for Harvard Theological Review 1976.
- Trebolla Barrera, J., 'The Qumran Texts and the New Testament', in F. Garcia Martínez – J. Trebolla Barrera (eds), *The People of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Leiden: Brill 1995, 203–215.
- Treu, K., 'Die Bedeutung des Griechischen für die Juden im römischen Reich', *Kairos* 15 (1973), 123–144.
- Tromp, J., *The Assumption of Moses: A Critical Edition with Commentary* (Studia in veteris testamentis pseudepigrapha 10), Leiden: Brill 1993.
- , 'Response to Ross Kraemer: On the Jewish Origin of Joseph and Asenath,' in A. Brenner – J.W. van Henten (eds), *Recycling Biblical Figures: papers read at a NOSTER colloquium in Amsterdam, 12–13 May 1997* (Studies in theology and religion 1), Leiden: Deo 1999, 266–271.
- Tubach, J., 'Seth and the Sethites in Early Syriac Literature', in G. Luttikhuisen (ed.), *Eve's children*, 187–202.
- Turner, J., 'The Gnostic Seth', in M.E. Stone – T.A. Bergren (eds), *Biblical Figures Outside the Bible*, 34–58.
- Ulrich, E.C., 'Origen's Old Testament Text: The Transmission History of the Septuagint of the Third Century C.E.', in C. Kannengiesser – W.L. Petersen (eds), *Origen of Alexandria: his World and his Legacy* (Christianity and Judaism in antiquity 1), Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press 1988, 3–33.
- Ulrich, J., *Euseb von Caesarea und die Juden. Studien zur Rolle der Juden in der Theologie des Eusebius von Caesarea* (Patristische Texte und Studien 49), Berlin – N.Y.: de Gruyter 1999.
- Urbach, E.E., 'Redemption and Repentance in Talmudic Judaism', in R.J. Zwi Werblowsky – C.J. Bleeker (eds), *Types of Redemption; Contributions to the Theme of the Study-Conference Held at Jerusalem* (Studies in the History of Religions 18), Leiden: Brill 1970, 190–206.
- , *The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs*, Jerusalem: Magnes Press 1975.
- Urowitz-Freudenstein, A., 'Pseudepigraphical Support of Pseudepigraphical Sources: The case of Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer', in J.C. Reeves (ed.), *Tracing the threads: studies in the vitality of Jewish pseudepigrapha* (Early Judaism and its literature 6), Atlanta: Scholars Press 1994, 35–54.
- Uthemann, K.H., 'Was verraten Katenen über die Exegese ihrer Zeit? Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Exegese in Byzanz', in G. Schöllgen – C. Scholten (eds), *Stimuli*, 284–296.
- van Beek, L., '1 Enoch among Jews and Christians: A Fringe Connection?', in S.E. Porter – B.W.R. Pearson (eds), *Christian-Jewish Relations Through the Centuries*, Sheffield Academic Press 2000, 93–115.
- van Bekkum, W.J., 'The Lesson of the Flood: מַבּוּל in Rabbinic Tradition', in F. Garcia Martínez – G. Luttikhuisen (eds), *Interpretations of the Flood* (Themes in Biblical Narrative 1), Leiden: Brill 1999, 124–133.
- van den Hoek, A., 'Mistress and Servant: An Allegorical Theme in Philo, Clement and Origen', in L. Lies (ed.), *Origeniana Quarta* (Innsbrucker theologische Studien 19), Innsbruck: Tyrolia-Verlag 1995, 344–348.



- van der Horst, P.W., 'The Site of Adam's Tomb', in M.F.J. Baasten – R. Munk (eds), *Studies in Hebrew Language and Jewish Culture: Presented to Albert van der Heide on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (Amsterdam Studies in Jewish Philosophy 12), Dordrecht: Springer 2007, 251–256.
- VanderKam, J.C., 'The righteousness of Noah', in J.J. Collins – G.W.E. Nickelsburg (eds), *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism; Profiles and Paradigms* (Septuagint and cognate studies series 12), Chico CA: Scholars Press 1980, 13–32.
- , 'Messianism and the Scrolls', in E. Ulrich – idem (eds), *The Community of the Renewed Covenant: the Notre Dame Symposium on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Christianity and Judaism in antiquity 10), Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press 1994, 211–234.
- W. Adler (eds), *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity* (Compendia rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum. Section 3. Jewish traditions in early Christian literature 4), Assen: Van Gorcum – Minneapolis: Fortress Press 1996.
- , *The Book of Jubilees* (Guides to Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha), Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 2001.
- Vanhoye, A., 'Le Christ grand-prêtre selon Hébr. 2,17–18', *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 91 (1969), 449–474.
- van Loon, G.J.M., *The Gate of Heaven – Wall Paintings with Old Testament Scenes in the Altar Room and the Hurus of Coptic Churches* (Uitgaven van het Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul 85), Leiden: Brill 1999.
- , 'The Meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek and the Communion of the Apostles', in M. Immerzeel et al. (eds), *Coptic Studies at the Threshold of the New Millennium: proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Coptic Studies, Leiden, August 27–September 2, 2000*, vol. 2 (Orientalia Lovaniensia analecta 133), Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters en Dept. Oosterse Studies 2004, 1373–1392.
- van Moorsel, P., 'Treasures from Baramous with Some Remarks on a Melchizedek-Scene', in M. Rassart – Debergh – J. Ries (eds), *Actes du IVe Congrès Copte* (Publications de l'Institut orientaliste de Louvain 40), Louvain-la-Neuve: Université Catholique de Louvain 1992, 171–177.
- , 'A different Melchizedek? Some Iconographical Remarks', in M. Krause – S. Schatzen (eds), *Themelia: spätantike und koptologische Studien. Peter Grossmann zum 65. Geburtstag* (Sprachen und Kulturen des christlichen Orients 3), Wiesbaden: Reichert 1998, 329–342.
- van Rompay, L., 'The Christian Syriac Tradition of Interpretation', in M. Saebo (ed.), *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament*, 613–641.
- , 'Antiochene Biblical Interpretation: Greek and Syriac', in J. Frishman – L. van Rompay (eds), *The Book of Genesis in Jewish and Oriental Christian Interpretation*, 102–123.
- van Ruiten, J.T.A.G.M., 'Eden and the Temple: The Rewriting of Genesis 2:4–3:24 in the Book of Jubilees', in G. Luttikhuisen (ed.), *Paradise Interpreted: representations of biblical paradise in Judaism and Christianity* (Themes in biblical narrative 2), Leiden – Boston: Brill 1999, 63–94.
- Vaux, R. de, *Ancient Israel: its Life and Institutions*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans 1997.
- Vermes, G., *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies* (Studia post-Biblica 4), Leiden: Brill 1983<sup>2</sup>.
- , *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, London: Penguin Books 1988.
- Vian, M., 'Interpretazioni Giudaiche et Cristiane Antiche del Sogno di Giacobbe (Genesi 28, 10–22)', *Aug* 29 (1989), 307–332.
- Viciano, A., 'Das formale Verfahren der antiochenischen Schriftauslegung: Ein Forschungsüberblick', in G. Schöllgen – C. Scholten (eds), *Stimuli*, 370–405.
- Vigne, D., 'Origène et L'Exégèse Juive: l'Homélie II sur la Genèse', *BLE CV* (2004), 105–146.
- Visotzky, B.L., *Fathers of the World: Essays in Rabbinic and Patristic Literatures* (WUNT 80), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1995.
- , *Golden Bells and Pomegranates: Studies in Midrash Leviticus Rabbah* (Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 94), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2003.

- Vööbus, A., *Celibacy, a Requirement for Admission to Baptism in the Early Syriac Church* (Toimetused [Eesti Usuteadlaste Selts Paguluses] 1), Stockholm: Estonian Theological Society in Exile 1951.
- , *Peshitta und Targumim des Pentateuchs. Neues Licht zur Frage der Herkunft der Peshitta aus dem palästinischen Targum: Handschriftenstudien* (Toimetused [Eesti Usuteadlaste Selts Paguluses] 9), Stockholm: Etse 1958.
- Vosté, J.M., 'La benediction de Jacob d'après Mar Iso'dad de Merw', *Biblica* 29 (1948), 1–30.
- Wallace-Hadrill, D.S., *Christian Antioch. A Study of Early Christian Thought in the East*, Cambridge: CUP 1982.
- Wallraff, M. (ed.), *Iulius Africanus: Chronographiae. the extant fragments*, with U. Roberto, and, for the oriental sources, K. Pinggéra; trans. W. Adler (GCS, n.F. Bd. 15), Berlin: de Gruyter 2007.
- Wenham, G.J., *Genesis 1–15*, Waco: Word Books 1987.
- Wenin, A., 'Adam et Ève: La jalousie de Caïn, 'semence' du serpent. Un aspect du récit mythique de Genèse 1–4', *Revue de sciences religieuses* 73 (1991), 3–16.
- Wenschkewitz, H., *Die Spiritualisierung der Kultbegriffe, Tempel, Priester und Opfer im Neuen Testament* (Angelos Beiheft 4), Leipzig: E. Pfeiffer 1932.
- Wensinck, A.J., 'Qejāmā und Benai Qejāmā in der älteren christlichen Literatur', *ZDMG* 63 (1909), 561–564.
- , 'Weiteres zu Qejāmā und Benai Qejāmā', *ZDMG* 64 (1910), 812–817.
- Wernberg-Møller P., 'Some Observations on the Relationship of the Peshitta Version of the Book of Genesis to the Palestinian Targum Fragments published by Professor Kahle and to Targum Onkelos', *ST* 15 (1961), 128–180.
- Werner, M., *The Formation of Christian Dogma: an historical study of its problem*, trans. S.G.F. Brandon, London: A. & C. Black 1957.
- Wessely, C., 'Geschichte von Ioseph und seinen Brüdern', in idem, *Griechische und koptische Texte theologischen Inhalts V*, Leipzig: E. Avenarius 1917, 22–29.
- Westermann, C., *Genesis*, 3 vols, Minneapolis: Fortress Press 1994, 1995, 1998.
- Wevers, J., *Notes on the Greek text of Genesis* (Septuagint and cognate studies series 35), Atlanta GA: Scholars Press 1993.
- Wickham, L.W., 'The Sons of God and the Daughters of Men: Genesis VI.2 in Early Christian Exegesis', *Oudtestamentische Studien* 19 (1974), 135–147.
- Wilk, F., 'The Letters of Paul as Witnesses to and for the Septuagint Text', in W. Kraus – R.G. Wooden (eds), *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures* (Septuagint and cognate studies series 53), Leiden: Brill 2006, 253–272.
- Wilken, R.L., *Judaism and Early Christian Mind: A Study of Cyril of Alexandria's Exegesis and Theology* (Yale publications in religion 15), New Haven CT: Yale University Press 1971.
- (ed.), *Isaiah: Interpreted by Early Christian and Medieval Commentators*, Grand Rapids MI: W.B. Eerdmans 2007.
- Wilkinson, J.W., *Jerusalem pilgrims before the Crusades*, Warminster: Aris & Phillips 2002.
- Willi, T., 'Melchisedek: der alte und der neue Bund im Hebräerbrief im Lichte der rabbinischen Tradition über Melchisedek', *Judaica* 42 (1986), 158–170.
- Williams, M.H., *The Monk and the Book: Jerome and the Making of Christian Scholarship*, Chicago – London: University of Chicago Press 2006.
- , 'Lessons from Jerome's Jewish Teachers: Exegesis and Cultural Interaction in Late Antique Palestine', in N.B. Dohrmann – D. Stern (eds), *Jewish Biblical Interpretation and Cultural Exchange: Comparative Exegesis in Context* (Jewish culture and contexts), Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 2008, 66–86.
- Williams, R. (ed.), *The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick*, Cambridge: CUP 1989.
- Wilson, S.G., *Related Strangers: Jews and Christians 70–170 C.E.*, Minneapolis MN: Fortress Press 1995.

- Winnett, F.V., 'The Arabian Genealogies in the Book of Genesis', in H.T. Frank – W. LaForest Reed (eds), *Translating and Understanding the Old Testament. Essays in honour of H.G. May*, Nashville TN: Abingdon Press 1988, 171–196.
- Winsted, E.O., 'Addenda to 'Some Coptic Apocryphal Legends'', *JTS* 39 (1909), 389–412.
- Winston, D., 'Philo's Doctrine of Repentance', in J.P. Kenney (ed.), *The School of Moses: Studies in Philo and Hellenistic Religion in memory of Horst R. Moehring* (Brown Judaic studies 304; Studia Philonica monographs 1), Atlanta: Scholars Press 1995.
- , 'Philo and Rabbinic Literature', in A. Kamesar (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Philo* (Cambridge companions to philosophy), Cambridge: CUP 2009, 231–265.
- Wolfson, H., *Philosophy of the Church Fathers*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press 1970<sup>3</sup>.
- Wuttke, G., *Melchisedech, der Priesterkönig von Salem. Eine Studie zur Geschichte der Exegese* (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche 5), Giessen: A. Töpelmann 1927.
- Yarnold, E., *Cyril of Jerusalem* (Early Church Fathers), London: Routledge 2000.
- Yohannan, J.D., *Joseph and Potiphar's Wife in World Literature: An Anthology of the Story of the Chaste Youth and the Lustful Stepmother*, N.Y.: New Directions Pub. Corp. 1968.
- Young, F.M., *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, Cambridge: CUP 1995.
- , 'The Rhetorical Schools and their Influence on Patristic Exegesis', in R. Williams (ed.), *The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick*, Cambridge: CUP 1989, 182–199.
- Youssef, Y.N., 'Eastern Christian Hagiographical Traditions', in K. Perry (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to Eastern Christianity* (Blackwell companions to religion), Oxford: Blackwell 2007.
- Zandee, J., 'Iosephus contra Apionem. An Apocryphal Story of Joseph in Coptic', *VC* 15 (1961), 193–213.
- Zeitlin, S., *Josephus on Jesus with particular reference to the Slavonic Josephus and the Hebrew Josippon*, Philadelphia: The Dropsie college for Hebrew and cognate learning 1931.
- Zucker, D.J., 'Conflicting Conclusions: The Hatred of Isaac and Ishmael', *Judaism* 39.1 (1990), 37–46.

## INDEX OF ANCIENT SOURCES

### BIBLE

<i>Genesis</i>	11–12, 16–17, 19–21, 23–25, 31, 33, 37–39, 97, 116, 213, 220, 228, 239, 323, 437–439, 441–442, 444 60, 84	4:10 4:11–12 4:12 4:14 4:15 4:17 4:18 4:21 4:23–24 4:23 4:25 4:26 5 5:1 5:2 5:3 5:4 5:5 5:24 5:25 5:32–10:32 5:32 6 6:1–8 6:1–7 6:1–2 6:2–4 6:2 6:3 6:4 6:5 6:6 6:7 6:8–9 6:9–10 6:9 6:14	119 115 170 114 n46 113, 115–116, 142–143 105, 122, 137, 148, 149 n10 115–116, 142–143, 148–149 174 n81 129 112–113, 115–116, 143 108 n28, 170 n64 172–173 50, 103, 114 n44, 142, 162 n39 148–149 170 n64 102–103, 115, 133, 136, 149 n11 122, 137–138 50, 55 n45, 61 n57 128, 227 115 n49, 142, 148–149, 162 n39 185 161–164, 177, 181, 183, 191 n129, 193, 196, 200 n5 192 150, 152, 188 147 150 170, 175 151, 166–167, 173, 175, 186–188 152–153, 157–158, 176, 189–190 149, 166 150, 159, 162–163, 166 155 n26 147 147 177, 191 n129 156–157, 160 n34, 161, 183 158 n30, 159
1:5	60, 84		
1:22	107 n26, 161 n37		
1:26–31	44 n15, 61		
1:26	41 n5		
1:27	55 n45, 107 n26, 108 n27, 161 n37		
1:28	107 n26, 161 n37, 162–163		
2	107 n26, 161 n37		
2–3	39, 42		
2:4–8	51		
2:6	151 n14		
2:7	42, 44 n15, 61		
2:8	42		
2:15–17	39		
2:15	42		
2:16–17	42		
2:17	59, 61, 79		
2:18	107 n26, 161 n37		
2:21–22	61		
2:22–24	107 n26, 161 n37		
3	59, 61, 68, 84		
3:1	47–49, 68, 89		
3:2	79		
3:6	42		
3:8	61, 67–68		
3:14	71		
3:15–19	83		
3:15	80		
3:17–19	54		
3:17–24	42		
3:17	55 n45		
3:18	58		
3:19	51 n35, 54–58, 73, 81–83, 91, 94–97		
3:22	55 n45		
3:24	42, 45–46		
4	50, 99, 108, 114 n44, 132, 139, 142 n138, 145, 149		
4:1–2	99–100		
4:1	100–103, 105, 116, 133, 136		
4:2	104–109, 118, 136–137		
4:7	117		
4:8	99, 108–112		

6:16	159	16:11-12	243, 247-248, 281, 286
6:17-18	147	16:11	247, 284
6:18	163-164, 182, 197	16:12	243-245, 248-249, 269, 272, 274, 276 n92, 281, 286-287
7	192		266 n72
7:1	154	16:16	206 n25, 213
7:6	177	17	206 n25
7:7	164, 196	17:1	206 n25
7:9	196 n143	17:2	207
7:10	152, 154-155, 179, 190-191	17:5	200 n3
7:11-12	147	17:9	206 n25
7:11	157	17:23	206 n25
8:16	164, 196	18:19	251
8:18	196-197	21	239, 243, 249, 253, 256, 280-281, 286
8:20	185, 203 n14	21:1	272
9:1	107 n26, 161 n37	21:4	267
9:23	202	21:5	266 n72
9:27	211	21:8	266, 279
10	200 n5	21:9-13	271
10:15	224 n78	21:9-10	239
10:21	204 n21	21:9	240, 249, 250-254, 267, 269, 280-284
11:10	201	21:10	251-252, 255, 279, 285
11:11	218	21:11-13	285
11:26	218	21:11	257-258, 284
11:31	241 n8	21:12	256-257, 284
12	241-242, 264, 277, 289	21:14	256, 258, 272 n80
12:10-20	240	21:15-19	246 n28
12:14-16	264	21:19	252
12:16	240 n2, 266, 277	21:20-21	244
12:17	240-241, 265	21:20	244, 246 n28, 254, 281
12:19	264	21:22	256
14	207, 213, 233, 237	22	297 n27
14:15	222 n71	22:9	297 n27
14:18-20	199, 215, 231 n95, 237	22:14	210
14:18	199-201, 204-206, 209-211, 213-214, 236-237	22:18	410
14:19-20	206	23	54
14:19	204	23:1	52
14:20	207-209, 221	23:2	52 n39
15	209 n37	23:9	79
15:1	266	23:19	52 n39
15:6	283	24:1	208
15:13	212-213	25	246, 272, 285
15:16	260	25:1	271, 285
15:18	209 n37	25:3	246
16	239, 277	25:5-6	285 n99
16:1-3	261	25:7	201 n9
16:1	240, 285	25:9	79
16:2	257	25:12	240
16:3	240, 258 n56, 285	25:13	246, 272 n80
16:4-8	281	25:14	273
16:6	258	25:15	246
16:7-9	261	25:22	205 n23
16:7	272 n80		

25:29-33	218	46:20	332 n31, 333, 350
26:28	254 n46	46:28-29	242 n11
28	291-293, 297 n26, 298, 300, 315-317, 319-321, 439	46:34	242 n11
28:10-22	301	47:1	242 n11
28:11-12	289	47:4	242 n11
28:11	291, 295-297	47:6	242 n11
28:12-15	289	47:27	242 n11
28:12	302, 307, 315	49	363 n8, 383 n59, 390
28:14	290, 297 n26	49:8-12	361-362, 365, 371 n28, 389, 421, 435, 439
28:17	293-294, 315, 317	49:8-10	378 n48, 423
28:18	291-292, 296, 298-301, 316, 319, 320 n97	49:8-9	410
28:19	293	49:8	362-368, 370 n26, 371, 390-391, 393, 421-422
28:22	292-293	49:9-12	394 n83
29:7	325	49:9	367-371, 393-398, 422-423, 430, 442
29:18-21	265 n67	49:10-12	361 n3
29:27	265 n67	49:10	372-380, 383, 398-403, 405-411, 412 n129, 423-427, 430-432
33:17-18	223	49:11	381-387, 388 n72, 389, 412, 414, 416-418, 432-434, 443
33:18	222	49:12	387-389, 419-420, 434-435
34	335 n40	49:22	326-328, 340, 353
34:2	335	49:29-32	52
35:27	52 n39	49:29-31	78
37-50	323	49:29	79
37:2	326, 341 n60	50:8	242 n11
37:6	370, 422		
37:19	364		
37:25-28	244, 274		
37:26-27	364, 392		
37:26	363		
37:31	326		
37:33	370		
37:36	329, 346		
38	362, 370, 422		
38:24	363-364, 370		
38:26	364		
39	339		
39:1-2	323		
39:1	244, 329, 331, 346, 350		
39:6-7	339, 355		
39:6	325-326, 328 n26, 338, 352-353		
39:12-16	342		
39:17	251		
40:15	245		
41:45	331-333, 335, 350, 355		
41:46	341 n60		
41:50	332 n31, 333, 350		
41:53	393		
42:36-38	365		
43:45	350		
44	367		
45:10	242 n11		
		<i>Exodus</i>	
		7-12	241
		8:22	242 n11
		9:26	242 n11
		15:6	153-154
		17:6	312 n76
		20:13	341
		21:8	258
		25-27	317 n87
		25:23	212
		28-29	199 n2
		32:6	251-252, 270, 280
		40	304 n53
		40:9-11	361 n3
		<i>Leviticus</i>	
		14:4	204
		18:9	125
		20:17	104-106, 139
		21:16-23	207 n26
		21:17-21	185 n112

- 22:24 331  
 23:24 40-41, 43  
 24:5-9 212  
 24:9 212  
 26:5 384 n62  
 27:30-33 208 n33
- Numbers*  
 3:9 199 n2  
 8:19 199 n2  
 13:33 149 n13  
 14:11 55 n45  
 17:23 395  
 17:25 395  
 18:1-7 199 n2  
 18:6 199 n2  
 20:7 312 n76  
 24:9 369-371  
 24:15-19 371 n28  
 24:17-20 361 n3  
 24:17 371 n28, 378 n48,  
 394 n83  
 27:1-11 327
- Deuteronomy*  
 4:32 44 n14  
 5:17 245, 341  
 13:7 387  
 14:22 289  
 20:19 110-111  
 21:14 258  
 21:15-17 280  
 21:17 254 n45  
 22:28-29 265 n67  
 32:22 423 n146  
 32:32 415  
 33:7 371 n29  
 33:17 333  
 33:21 373 n31, 424  
 33:22 367, 371
- Joshua*  
 77-78  
 7 366  
 7:8 366  
 10:1 210  
 10:41 242 n11  
 11:16 242 n11  
 14:15 52 n39, 78  
 15:13 52 n39  
 15:51 242 n11  
 15:54 52 n39  
 19:9 372 n29  
 20:7 52 n39  
 21:11 52 n39
- Judges*  
 1:10 52 n39  
 5:14 373 n31, 424
- 2 Samuel*  
 2:14-16 253 n44  
 2:14 251, 253, 281-282  
 6:1-18 254 n47, 268, 282-284  
 317 n87  
 7:10-14 394 n83  
 22:41 365 n12, 366-367  
 24:1 392  
 24:9 392  
 24:18-24 94
- 1 Kings*  
 7:50 212  
 8 304 n53  
 8:1-21 317 n87
- 2 Kings*  
 25:8 350 n85
- Isaiah*  
 1:2 391  
 1:8 404  
 1:18 389  
 1:21 210, 395  
 2:3 294  
 2:5 294  
 4:1-4 70  
 5 382, 415 n135, 432-433  
 5:1 415  
 5:7 382 n56, 414  
 7:14 394  
 8:6 402  
 8:14 312 n76  
 11 378 n48, 381  
 11:1-16 361 n3  
 11:1 379 n50, 394, 426  
 11:4 299-300  
 11:10 380-381, 386, 394 n84  
 18:7 378  
 21:13-16 246  
 25:6 384 n62  
 26:19 55 n46  
 27:2-6 414 n133  
 28:3 375-376  
 28:15 275 n89  
 28:16 300 n34, 312, 314, 319  
 28:18 275 n89  
 33:22 373 n31, 424  
 39:7 346  
 42:4 401  
 45:1 348

45:18	107 n26, 161 n37	4:7	298–300, 319–320
49:8–9	401	4:10	94, 299–300,
51:1–2	311 n73		312 n76, 320
52:7	300	6:12	377
52:8	295	6:15	394 n84
53:2	394	9:9–10	412 n129
53:8–12	361 n3	9:9	381, 383, 412–413,
57:2	52		433–434
63:1–3	386, 417–418,	11:12	386
	434	12:3	380
65:22	67		
66:9	399 n96	<i>Malachi</i>	
		3:12	297 n26
<i>Jeremiah</i>			
2:13	227	<i>Psalms</i>	
2:21	382–384, 415, 432	1:1	161 n36
16:13	377	2:9	375
18:7–10	178	3:5 (LXX 3:6)	395
23:5	394 n84	17:38–39 (LXX)	391
23:6	377	18:41	366 n15
33:15	394 n84	18:51	377
33:17	378 n47	22:4	395
39:9	350 n85	22:12	64
		32:9	414 n132
<i>Ezekiel</i>		37:28	329–331
23:20	414 n132	41:14	330 n29
27:21	246	45:7 (LXX 44:7)	310, 312, 375, 395
36:25	384	45:8	310, 314
38:12	51 n36	45:10	241 n4
39:17–18	276	46:4	415
		46:11	297 n26
<i>Hosea</i>		49	55 n46
1:9	227	49:13	45
3:4	405	50:23	364
6:2	317 n89	52:17	377
		55:20	247
<i>Joel</i>		56:5 (LXX)	420
2:19	384 n62	58:4	244 n19
2:24	384 n62	68	418 n140
3:18	384 n62	68:19 (LXX 67:19)	396, 419
		68:36	294
<i>Amos</i>		69:29	149 n10
9:13	384 n62	69:32	112
		71:6 (LXX 72:6)	171
<i>Jonah</i>		74:9	417
3	176	74:12 (LXX 73:12)	74, 93
		76:3 (LXX 76:2)	210–211, 224, 234
<i>Micah</i>		78:54	294
7:16	380 n53	80:3	367 n16
		80:8	415
<i>Zechariah</i>		80:9	382–383,
2:3	203 n17		432–433
3:8	394 n84	80:14	415
3:9	313, 320	80:15	382, 432



80:18-19	414 n133	1:16	377
81:5	40	4:21-22	361 n3
81:6-7 (LXX)	173	5:17	294
82:6-7	306		
88:10	55 n46	<i>Ecclesiastes</i>	
89:3	104, 106	3:15	254 n46
90:4	61 n57	8:1	55 n45
104:15	348		
104:22-23	43 n10	<i>Daniel</i>	288, 407
105:17	326	2:22	377
109:1 (LXX)	391	2:34	299-300, 312 n76
109:2 (LXX)	395	2:35	299-300
110	206-207, 216, 233	2:38	248-249
110:1	205	2:44	312 n76
110:4	201 n6, 205, 207, 233 n106	7:13	299
115:17	55 n46	9:24-27	431-432
118:22-23	320 n97	9:24	408
118:22	300 n34, 312 n76,	9:25	407
319		9:26	407-409, 432
118:116 (LXX)	399 n96	12:2	55 n46
119:89	40		
121:1	298, 300	<i>1 Chronicles</i>	298
121:2	300	2:55	375
139:15	44 n14	3:24	298-299
139:16	94	15:1-16:43	317 n87
142:8	164 n42	17:21	297
147:13	294	32	285
		<i>2 Chronicles</i>	
<i>Proverbs</i>		3:1	51, 91, 93
9:1-4	55 n45	5-7	304 n53
9:5	211-212		
13:14	67	<i>Matthew</i>	
14:23	334	1:2-3	394 n84
14:32	48-49	3:9	311 n73
26:18-19	251, 253-254	4:8-9	342
28:5	159	5:14	415
		5:25-28	414 n132
<i>Job</i>		7:6	414
12:5	157-158	10:1-6	414 n133
14	55 n46	11:13	405 n111
19:25-29	55 n46	12:50	391
21	151-152, 186	17:9-13	405 n111
21:14	150-151	19:12	347, 349 n83
30:23	52	21:5	412 n129, 434
38:6	291, 300 n34	21:13	75 n96
39:18	48-49, 101 n10	21:28-32	144 n133
		21:33-41	414 n133
<i>Canticles</i>		21:42	319 n96, 312 n76
1:2	389 n76	22:23-32	83
2:4	389 n76	23:35	118
		24:35-38	166
<i>Lamentations</i>		26:28	420 n143
1:2	294	27:45	66

- 27:47-50 65  
 27:51 396  
 28:19 399
- Mark*
- 2:26 304 n54  
 7:27 414  
 8:38 302 n41  
 9:9-13 405 n129  
 11:1-10 412 n129  
 11:17 75 n96, 304 n54,  
 314 n85  
 414 n133  
 12:1-9 312 n76, 319 n96  
 12:10 320 n97  
 12:10-11 83  
 12:18-27 302 n41  
 13:26-27 420 n143  
 14:24 317 n88  
 14:58 65, 66  
 15:25 66  
 15:33 68  
 15:33-38 66  
 15:37
- Luke*
- 1:17 405 n111  
 2 307  
 3:8 311 n73  
 3:33 394 n84  
 8:28 405 n111  
 9:46 75 n96  
 11:51 118  
 12:50 418  
 13:6-9 414 n133  
 17:27 166  
 19:28-40 412 n129  
 19:31 415  
 20:9-16 414 n133  
 20:17-18 312 n76  
 20:27-40 83  
 22:20 420 n143  
 23:44 66  
 23:44-46 65  
 23:54-56 61
- John*
- 1:51 301-302  
 2:19 314, 317, 395  
 2:19-22 318  
 3:23 223  
 4:1-14 402 n105  
 4:20 314 n86  
 7:20 118  
 7:37-39 402 n105  
 8:44 118, 120, 135
- 9:7 402, 427  
 10:9 311  
 10:10-17 118  
 12:3-7 314  
 12:15 412 n129, 434  
 12:15 434  
 15:1 414, 433  
 19:14 66 n68  
 19:20 73  
 19:23 337  
 19:31 61  
 20:17 391
- Acts of the Apostles*
- 3:1 63 n61, 237 n121  
 4:8-12 319 n96  
 4:11 312 n76  
 8:27-40 347 n79  
 10:9 63 n61  
 10:30 63 n61  
 15:1-29 237 n121  
 16:1-3 237 n121  
 24:15 83
- Romans*
- 2:25-29 237 n121  
 3:1 237 n121  
 4:9-12 237 n121  
 4:12 312 n73  
 5 71 n85  
 6:7 79  
 8:17 391  
 8:24 81
- 1 Corinthians*
- 3:16-17 317 n90  
 7:18-19 237 n121  
 15 71 n85, 83
- Galatians*
- 1:1 395  
 2:3 237 n121  
 3:16-29 312 n73  
 4:21-31 312 n73  
 4:29 268-269, 282, 283 n98  
 5:2-6 237 n121  
 6:11-17 237 n121
- Ephesians*
- 2:14 414  
 2:20 319 n96  
 2:21 317  
 2:20-22 312 n76  
 4:8 398, 419 n142  
 5:14 77

<i>2 Timothy</i>		2:6–7	313
2:8	394 n84	3:6–9	176
		3:20–21	165
<i>Hebrews</i>		3:20	176
1:9	310		
1:14	180	<i>1 John</i>	
3:3–6	304 n54	135 n116	
7	229–231	3:7–12	135
7:3	216	3:12	110 n33, 117, 119, 127, 135
7:12	220		
7:14	394 n84	<i>Revelation</i>	
11:4	110 n33	5:5	394 n82 n83, 423
11:7	180	12:9	69 n74, 86
12:24	118	19:13	434 n174
<i>1 Peter</i>		19:13–15	418
2:4–8	312 n76	19:15	434 n174
2:5	166, 180	20:2	69 n74, 87
2:6	319 n96	22:15	414 n132

## QUMRAN LITERATURE

Genesis Apocryphon	213, 277	1QS 9.3–6	317 n90
1QApGen 20.16–17	242 n14, 278	1Q Sb 5.20–29	378 n48
1QApGen 20.31–32	240 n2, 277		
1QApGen 22.12	211, 234, 236 n116	4Q252	378, 425 n152
1QApGen 22.14	203 n17	4Q252 fr.6	378 n47, 426
1QApGen 22.17	208 n31		
		11Q13	203 n17, 231 n98
1QHodayot <sup>a</sup> 11.1–19	103 n17, 134		
1QHodayot <sup>a</sup> 11.13	134 n111	11Q Temple 29.8–10	293 n19
1QHodayot <sup>a</sup> 11.19	134 n111		

## PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

<i>Acts of Thomas</i>		<i>2 Baruch</i> (2 Bar)	
32	70 n78	36–40	433 n173
<i>Apocryphal Acts of Andrew</i>		<i>3 Baruch</i> (3 Bar)	
24	88 n125	4:8	88 n123
		9:7	71 n81, 88 n123, 134 n113
<i>Apocalypse of Paul</i>		<i>Book of the Bee</i>	
50	182	XVIII	128 n96
51	117		
<i>Apocalypse of Abraham</i>		<i>Cave of Treasures</i>	
23	88 n123	II.15–16	75, 96
23.4–6	134 n113	III.1–7	70, 90
		III.9–10	64
<i>Ascension of Isaiah</i>		III.14	64
1:8	88 n123	IV.5	71, 87
9:7	117		

V.8	121 n71	7:3-4	177 n89
V.19-20	122, 139	7-8	168
V.1	64	9:9	177 n89
V.19-20	122, 139	16	186 n115
V.21-26	125	18:2	291
V.21-32	140	19	186 n115
V.24	173 n80	26:1	51 n36
V.29	127	48:3	300 n36
V.31-32	125	69:5-6	88
VI.21	75	85-90	295 n23
VI.22ff.	80		
VI.22-24	186	2 <i>Enoch</i>	220 n66
VIII.2-10	144	18	134 n113, 186 n115
XII	186	31:6	88 n123
XII.4-8	174	31:7-8	88 n123
XIII.8	219	68-73	223 n76
XIV.11-14	181, 193		
XVI.19-21	185, 216	3 <i>Enoch</i>	
XVII.15-17	184, 194	14:2	48 n24
XVIII.2-8	184, 194 n139	26:12	48 n24
XVIII.7	184		
XXIII.8	219	<i>The Ethiopic Book of Adam and Eve</i> (ed. Malan)	
XXIII.13-18	92, 223	95	126 n89 140 n132
XXIII.16-24	223	101	127, 141 n135
XXIII.19	217	122-123	132 n107, 144
XXIII.21	226, 236	133-135	174 n81
XXVIII.11	226		
XXVIII.14-15	264, 277	4 <i>Ezra</i>	
XXIX.4-8	223	10:44-50	295 n23
XXIX.4-9	93	11:37	394 n82, 423
XXX.3-8	223, 235	12:31	394 n82, 423
XXXI.10-11	274, 287		
XXXI.17-18	307, 309	<i>Infancy Gospel of James</i>	
XXXI.19	310	13	120 n69
XLVIII.11-30	65, 85		
<i>Pseudo-Clementine Literature</i>		<i>Joseph and Asenath</i>	
<i>Homilies</i>		7:3-4	328 n26, 327 n23
III.25	122 n74, 124, 140 n132	<i>Jubilees</i>	
III.49	400 n100, 401 n101, 412 n126	3:1-9	66 n70, 65 n66
VIII.12-15	167 n52	3:15-17	51 n35
VIII.17	90 n127, 177	3:26-27	203
<i>Recognitions</i>		3:32	51 n35
I.29	173 n76	4	124 n81
I.49-50	412 n129	4:1	105 n22, 122 n73, 138
IV.26	167 n52	4:2	109 n31
1 <i>Enoch</i>		4:8	105 n22, 123 n80, 138
6:1-2	186 n115	4:9	138
6-10	186 n115	4:15	186 n115
6-16	168, 186 n115	4:21-22	186 n115
		4:25	203
		4:29	92, 51 n35
		4:31	141, 144 n145, 129 n99

4:33	163 n40, 204 n21	<i>Testament of Abraham</i>	
5:1	186 n115	13	110
6:1-3	203		
6:10	185 n112	<i>Testament of Adam</i>	
6:17-31	185 n112	3-5	126 n88, 140 n132
7:34-39	185 n112		
8:12, 19	51 n36	<i>Testament of Benjamin</i>	
17:4-5	250 n37	7	129 n98
17:17-18	257 n54	7:1-5	114 n43, 142
20:11-13	246 n26		
20:13	273 n83	<i>Testament of Joseph</i>	
27:19-24	291 n14	11-16	325 n15
32:22	316 n86	18:4	328 n26
39:5	328 n26		
39:6	341 n61	<i>Testament of Judah</i>	
40:10	333 n34, 355	22	426
46:3	341 n60	24	426
49:1-10	66 n70		
		<i>Testament of Levi</i>	
<i>Greek Life of Adam and Eve</i>		3:4-6	295 n23
1:3	137 n124	5:1-2	295 n23
16:1-5	88	8:1-10	212 n43
26:2	90		
40:1-42:2	51 n35	<i>Wisdom</i>	
40:6	92	2:24	88
41:1-4	96		
		Gnostic Works	
<i>Latin Life of Adam and Eve</i>		<i>The Gospel of Philip</i> (NHC II, 5)	
30:2-3	75 n96	6:1, 5-10	121n70, 135-136
56:1	92 n133	<i>Melchizedek</i>	219, 231 n98
		(NHC IX, 1)	
<i>4 Maccabees</i>		<i>Pistis Sophia</i>	
2:1-4	344 n69	CAsk: IV, 139-140;	219
18:11	344 n69	I, 25-6; II, 86;	
18:8	103 n17, 134	III, 112, 128, 131	
		<i>2 Book of Jeu</i>	
<i>Pseudo-Philo, Liber Antiquitatum</i>		CBr 2:45-46	219
<i>Biblicarum (LAB)</i>			
1.1-2	138	Samaritan Literature	
1.22	161 n38	<i>Asatir</i>	
2.8	174 n81	I.3	126 n89
		II.25	61 n58
		V	222 n72

## HELLENISTIC-JEWISH WRITERS

Flavius Josephus		I.69-71	170, 187 n120
<i>Antiquitates Judaicae</i> (Ant.)		I.73	186 n115
I.2	90	I.74	192
I.41	88 n123	I.152	176 n88
I.52	105 n22, 109 n31	I.163-164	242 n14, 278
I.2.1 [58]	114 n43, 117 n57,	I.181	211, 221 n68,
	138, 142		234-235
I.3.1 [74]	190 n125	I.213-214	246 n26
I.3.67	174 n80	I.214	267 n73, 273 n83
I.67	127 n95	I.12.3-4 [215-221]	257 n54, 284

I.220–221	246 n26	<i>De Gigantibus</i> (Gig.)	
I.225–227	51 n37, 91, 293 n19	II.6.1	167
II.9–10	325 n16	<i>De Iosepho</i>	
II.4	354	21	354
II.6	354	27	330 n29
II.2.1 [9–10]	328 n26	37	330 n29
II.14	66 n69	40	328 n26
II.210–21	246 n26	57	330 n57
VII.13	74 n93, 93	<i>Legum Allegoriae</i> (Leg. Alleg.)	
VII.67	211, 234–235	3.82	213, 236 n116
XII	282	3.236	330 n29
XIII	207 n29, 233 n106	3.236–37	349 n83
XIV.1.3	431	<i>De mutationem nominum</i>	
XIV.7.3	431	173	330 n29
XV.11.4	407	<i>De opificio mundi</i> (Opif.)	
XVI.11	431	157–160	134 n133
XVIII.1	83 n116	<i>De posteritate Caini</i> (Post. Cain)	
XX. 8	407	36	123 n78, 139 n129
<i>Contra Apionem</i> (Apion)		40–48	148 n9
I:174	211, 234, 235	<i>Quaestiones in Genesim</i> (Quaest.Gen.)	
<i>Bellum Judaicum</i> (Bell.Jud.)		I.32	88 n108
VI.38	211 n68	I.36	88 n123
VI.438	211, 224, 231 234, 235	I.51	80 n108
(Pseudo- <i>Josephus</i> )		I.78	122 n73
<i>Slavonic Bellum Judaicum</i>		I.91	189
6.310–311	431	I.92	174
Philo Judaeus		II.13	190
<i>De Abrahamo</i> (Abr.)		II.49	196
96–98	242 n14, 278	III.20–21	266 n62
<i>De congressu eruditionis gratia</i> (Congr.)		<i>De sacrificiis Abelis et Caini</i> (Sacr.)	
9f.	260 n58	11	122, 137
<i>Quod deterius potiori insidiari solet</i>		52	109 n31
(Det.)		<i>De sobrietate</i> (Sobr.)	
32–37	110 n33	9	267 n72
		51–69	202
		66	202
		<i>De specialibus legibus</i> (De Spec.Leg.)	
		1.66–67	292 n17

## RABBINIC LITERATURE\*

<i>Abot de Rabbi Natan A</i>	21, 154	2	161 n35, 201 n7, 214, 229 n86, n88, n119
(ARN A)			
1	40 n2, 42 n6, 44 n13, 45–46, 49 n26, n27, n29, 84, 103, 107, 134 n115, 138 n125	4 32	230 n92, 237 45 n18, 107 n26 153 n24, 154–155

\* Tractates are distinguished as follows: preceded by M for Mishnaic tractates; T for Tosefta; PT for Palestinian Talmud; BT for Babylonian Talmud.

33	242 n9, 284	<i>Niddah</i> (BT Nid)	
34	203 n17, 257 n53	45a	414 n132
<i>Abot de Rabbi</i>	21	<i>Pesaḥim</i> (BT Pes)	
<i>Natan B</i> (ARN B)		53b	373 n33
1	40 n2, 44 n13, 45–47, 84	54a	152 n20, 300 n36
37	257 n53	88a	293 n19, 316 n85
42	40 n2, 44 n13, 45–47, 84	<i>Qiddushin</i> (BT Qid)	
		30a	15
<i>Aggadat Bereshit</i>	151 n17	71a	43 n10
40	325 n17	<i>Rosh Hashanah</i> (BT RH)	
45	298 n31, 300 n37, 319 n95	10b–11a	41 n4, 86 n118
65	248 n32	16a	41 n4
<i>Babylonian Talmud</i>	20, 198 n148, 206	27a	41 n4
<i>Abodah Zarah</i> (BT AZ)		<i>Sanhedrin</i> (BT Sanh)	198 n148
2b	245 n23	5a	374
22b	49 n29, 103, 134 n115	26b	291 n15
25a	365 n13	37a	113 n42
<i>Baba Batra</i> (BT BB)		37b	100 n7, 114 n46
3b–4a	432	38a–b	94
58a	53	38b	40 n2, 41 n5, 44 n13, 45–46, 84, 105 n22, 107, 136 n122, 138 n125
75a	53 n40		106, 138 n125, 139 n130
<i>Baba Meṣia</i> (BT BM)		58b	49 n26, n27
84a	327 n22	59b	374 n37
<i>Berakhot</i> (BT Ber)		88b	242 n9, 250 n37, 255 n50
4a	290 n7	89b	100 n5, 109 n31
25b	414 n132		290 n7, 377, 427–428
26b	289 n2	91b	100 n7
57a	382 n58	98b	147 n2, n3, n4, 198 n148
<i>Erubin</i> (BT Erub)			147 n1
18a–b	45 n18, 107 n26	101b	155, 158, 164, 190 n125, 193
18b	103, 134 n115	108a–b	
19a	51 n37, 91, 293 n19		
53a	53, 93–95	108a	147 n1
<i>Horayot</i> (BT Hor)		108b	155, 158, 164, 190 n125, 193
11b	374	<i>Shabbat</i> (BT Shab)	
<i>Ḥullin</i> (BT Ḥul)		94b–95a	45 n18, 107 n26
91b	291 n14, 296 n24	110a	103, 134 n115
92a	387 n70	146a	49 n29, 103, 134 n115
139b	248 n32	152b	58, 95
<i>Ketubbot</i> (BT Ket)		<i>Sotah</i> (BT Sot)	
111b	384 n61, n62, 385, 388 n72	11b	372 n29
<i>Megillah</i> (BT Meg)		12a	161 n35, 214 n51, 229 n88
16a	367 n16	13a	53, 93
<i>Nedarim</i> (BT Ned)		13b	330–333, 355
32a	209 n37	<i>Sukkah</i> (BT Suk)	
32b	200–201, 205–207, 229 n86, 230 n92, 233, 238	52b	203 n17
		<i>Ta'anit</i> (BT Taan)	
		11a	164 n44

- Yebamot* (BT Yeb)  
 61b 107 n26, 161 n37  
 62a 108, 138 n125  
 64a 258 n56, 285–286  
 103b 49 n29, 103, 134 n115
- Yoma* (BT Yoma)  
 53b–54b 291 n15  
 77b–78a 295 n23
- Canticles Rabbah* (CantR)  
 1:1 330 n29  
 1:7 384 n62  
 1:15 388 n74  
 2:13 203 n17, 231 n98  
 2:14 368  
 2:16 324 n11  
 4:7 372 n29  
 4:16 100 n4  
 7:11 100 n6  
 8:1 99 n3
- Chronicle of Yerahmeel*  
 22:2 50 n32  
 24:10–12 151 n17, 187 n120
- Deuteronomy Rabbah* (DeutR)  
 2:8 324 n7  
 4:5 245 n21, 256 n51,  
 257, 259, 284  
 5:10 49 n28  
 7:6 317 n89  
 8:1 100 n7, 114 n46  
 11:10 48 n24
- Ecclesiastes Rabbah* (EcclR)  
 1:35 153 n24  
 2:2 151 n15, 186 n114  
 3:18 100 n4  
 7:6 45 n18, 107 n26  
 8:2 55 n45  
 9:8 45 n18, 107 n26,  
 161 n37  
 9:17 158 n30  
 10:4 164 n42
- Esther Rabbah* (EsthR)  
 Proem 1 384 n62  
 Proem 11 324 n11  
 6:3 100 n7  
 7:7 324 n11  
 7:11 86 n118  
 9:2 317 n89
- Exodus Rabbah* (ExodR)  
 1:1 243 n17, 244 n20,  
 252–253, 256 n51,  
 257, 259, 279,  
 284  
 1:16 372 n29  
 3:2 250 n37  
 5:1 99 n3  
 15:27 208 n35, 233 n103  
 21:5 368 n18  
 23:2 324 n6  
 25:8 290 n11  
 28:4 55 n45  
 29:9 368 n17  
 30:3 245 n23  
 31:17 100 n5  
 42:2 290
- Fragmentary Targum* 56
- Genesis*  
 3:19 56 n47  
 21:9 252
- Genesis Rabbah* (GenR)  
 16 n61, 18 n68, 19,  
 21 n78, 43 n8, n9,  
 46 n20, 109 n30,  
 114, 213, 236, 294,  
 318, 324 n10, 325  
 n14, 329, 363 n8,  
 367, 380, 442  
 212 n44  
 155 n26  
 42 n6  
 45 n18  
 53 n40, 55, 95  
 42 n6, 52 n38, 91  
 51 n34  
 107 n26, 161 n37  
 45 n17, 47 n22  
 45 n18, 107 n26  
 49 n29, 103 n17,  
 134 n115  
 49 n26, 90  
 99 n3  
 49 n28  
 49 n28  
 49 n27  
 205 n23  
 55, 57–58, 95–97  
 102 n12  
 100 n8, 107, 138  
 n125



22:3	45 n18, 99 n3, 104 n19, 105 n22, 107, 136 n122, 138 n125	42:3 43:6	384 n62 204, 209-211, 213-214, 229 n87, 234 n109, 235-236, 237 n119
22:5	100 n4, 109 n31		208 n35, 233 n103
22:6	100 n5, n7, 109 n31	43:7	207 n30, 208, 233 n103
22:7	100 n5, 109 n32, 110-111, 114 n46, 140	43:8 44:1-7	209 n37
22:8	100 n6, 112, 113 n41, 141 n135	44:7	201, 204, 208 n32, 213 n48, 229 n86, 230 n92
22:9	100 n6	44:23	248 n33
22:11	100 n7	45:1	240-241, 243, 277
22:12	114 n44, n47, 141	45:6	256 n51, 258-259, 285
22:13	100 n7, 114 n46	45:8	248
23:1	149 n10	45:9	243-244, 248-249, 280, 286-287
23:2-3	149 n10		206 n25
23:2	114 n44, 116 n52, 141, 149 n10	46:1	206 n25
23:4	114, 141	46:4	206 n25
24:2-5	149 n10	46:5	206 n25
24:6	103, 114 n44, 141, 149	48:6	247 n30
26:1	161 n36	48:20	205 n23
26:2	161, 165, 194, 196, 198	51:8	384 n62
26:5	148 n8, 151 n16, 187 n118, 188	53:11	250 n38, 251 n39, 253-255, 279-281, 284
26:6	160 n33	53:13	256 n51, 258-259, 285
26:7	149	53:14	250 n37
27:1-4	147 n1	53:15	243 n17, 244, 280
27:4	155 n26	54:2	256-257, 259, 284
28:8	147 n2, 160 n33, 164 n45	55:4	255 n50
28:9	164 n45	55:6	207
29:1-5	147 n2	55:7	207, 235
29:1	160 n33	56:1	317 n89
30:6	161 n35	56:10	51 n37, 91, 201 n7, 209 n38, 210, 229 n87, 234 n109, 235, 293 n19
30:7	152 n18, 156-158, 190 n125, 192-193	58:4	53, 94-95
30:8	100 n7	58:9	53, 93-94
30:9	160 n34	61:4	108, 138 n125, 258 n56, 285-286
31:1	160 n33	63:6	205 n23, 230 n94
31:12	163 n41, 164, 196 n143	63:10	205 n23
32:5	114 n44, 141	67:13	290 n5
32:6	160 n33	68:7	205 n23
32:7	152 n18, 155	68:9	289 n2
32:8	164 n42	68:11	291 n14, 296, 318 n91, 319
34:7	163 n41, 164, 196 n143	68:12	290 n9, 293 n19, 315 n82, 316 n85
34:8	163 n41, 164 n43, n44, 196 n143, 197	68:14	290 n8
36:3	99 n3	69:7	291 n12, 293 n19, 294, 316 n84, n85
36:7	164 n44, n45	69:8	301
39:3	241 n8	70:6	384 n62
41:1	242 n13	71:5	373, 424
41:2	242 n13, n15, 278	76:1	290 n7

76:2	290 n7	<i>Kallah Rabbati</i>	
79:2	290 n5	3:22	49 n28
79:3	295 n22		
84:5	324 n7	<i>Lamentations Rabbah</i>	20, 377 n45
84:6	324 n4, n7	(LamR)	
84:7	324 n8, n9, 329	Proem 24	187 n18
84:8	324 n4, 325, 352	1:16	377, 427
84:13	323 n2, n3, 352	2:2:4	250 n37
85:2	334, 336		
86:1	324 n5, n8, 329, 352	<i>Leqah Tov</i>	
86:3	325 n15, 329-333, 352, 355-356	1:31	143 n143
86:4	324 n11	<i>Leviticus Rabbah</i>	19-20, 44, 86
86:6	323 n2, 325, 352	(LevR)	
87:1	324 n8, 329, 352	2:10	324 n11
87:2	324 n11	4:1	151 n15, 186 n114
87:3	324 n9, 326, 352	9:6	100 n4
87:5	325 n12	10:5	100 n7, 114 n46
87:7	325 n12	11:1	55 n45, 95
87:8	324 n7	11:4	212 n43
87:10	323 n2	11:7	324 n11, 384 n62
89:2	334, 336, 356	12:5	384 n62
90:3	323 n2	20:2	55 n45
90:4	323 n2	20:4	291 n15
91:5	324 n5	23:9	147 n1, 148 n8, 151 n16, 187 n118
93:7	323 n2, 367		324 n11
96	54 n44	23:11	201, 206-207, 229 n86, 230 n92, 233 n100 n4, n5, 109 n31, 158 n30
97	100 n7, 300 n36, 328, 362 n5, n6, 363-368, 369 n24, 370 n26, n27, 371, 374-375, 378, 380, 381 n54, 421-424	25:6	40-46, 84-87 290 n8
98	363 n8	27:5	290 n10
98:2	247 n30	29:1	
98:6	362 n5, n6, 365 n11, 366, 421	29:2	
98:7	367-370, 422-423	35:11	
98:8	373 n32, 374, 377-378, 380, 427-428		
98:9	381-382, 384, 386, 432-433	<i>Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael (Mek)</i>	20, 153-154
98:10	388-389, 434	<i>Amalek</i>	
98:18	324 n8, 327, 329, 353	3:106-125	206 n25
98:19	324 n8, 329	<i>Bahodesh</i>	
98:20	325 n12	5	245, 286
99	363 n8	<i>Beshallah</i>	
99:2	368 n17	3	371 n29
99:5	247 n30	6:79	289 n2
99:8	362 n5, 365, 366 n14, 367, 369, 375, 377, 380-384, 387, 389, 421, 424, 429, 432-433	<i>Bo</i>	248
		16	
		<i>Pisha</i>	
		17:23	289 n4
		18:17	295 n22
		<i>Shirata</i>	
		2	384 n62
		5:37-40	152, 153 n24, 189, 192

<i>Mekhilta de R. Shimon b. Yoḥai</i> (MRS)		100:2	100 n7
32	153 n24	119:73	374 n34
		128:4	382 n58
<i>Midrash Aggadah</i>	143		
13–14	143 n143	<i>Midrash Tadshe</i>	
		21	336 n44
<i>Midrash ha-Gadol</i> (MHG)	21, 143	<i>Midrash Tannaim</i>	
1:118–119	114 n48	22	51 n34
1:127	143 n143	<i>Midrash Zuta</i>	
<i>Midrash on Proverbs</i> (MidrProv)		Song 1:1	209 n38, 229 n87
19	373, 377 n45, 382 n56	<i>Mishnah</i>	19–20, 295 n22
23	384 n61, 388 n72	<i>Nedarim</i> (M Ned)	
26	258 n56, 286	3:11	206 n25
31	160 n34	<i>Pirqe Abot</i> (M Abot)	
<i>Midrash on Psalms</i> (MidrPss)	44	3:1	57 n53
1:9	49 n28	5:3	242 n9, 257 n53
8:2	45 n17, 47 n22	6:10	208, 233 n103
9:6	100 n5, 109 n31	<i>Rosh Hashanah</i> (M RH)	
9:7	161 n35, 214, 229 n88	1:1	86 n118
		1:2	41 n4
11:2	291 n15	<i>Sanhedrin</i> (M Sanh)	
18:25	241 n8, 242 n9, 284	10:3	148 n7, 153 n23
18:32	366 n15	<i>Sotah</i> (M Sot)	
25:11	45 n18, 107 n26	9:12	295 n22
26:7	152 n18	<i>Yoma</i> (M Yoma)	
26:9	155 n26	5:2	291 n15
37:1	234 n108	<i>Nistarot R. Shimon b. Yoḥai</i>	249 n36
49:2	194 n137	BHM 3:78–84	249 n36
55:2	289 n2	<i>Numbers Rabbah</i> (NumR)	
59:2	107 n26, 161 n37	2:1	289 n2
61:7	254 n45	2:10	374 n34
68:4	45 n18, 107 n26	3:12	374 n34
73:4	384 n62	4:1	290 n5
76:3	201 n7, 209 n38, 210–211, 229 n86, n87, 230 n92, 234 n109, 235	4:8	201 n7, 202 n13, 204 n22, 206 n25, 229 n86, 230 n92, n93, 232, 233 n101
76:27	201 n7	8:4	336 n44
78:6	290 n8, 293 n19, 316 n85	9:24	151 n15, 186 n14
81:2	291 n12, 293 n19, 294, 316 n85	12:4	291 n15
90:3	372 n29	12:8	206 n25
91:6	291 n14, 296 n25, 318 n91	12:11	207 n30, 233 n103
91:7	292 n16	12:12	292 n17
92:2	55 n45	12:13	292 n17
92:3	40 n2, 44, 46	13:2	100 n4
92:6	51 n37, 52 n38, 91, 293 n19	13:4	368 n17
		13:5	384 n62
		13:8	368 n18, 372 n29
		13:12	55, 95

13:14	364 n10	26:2	151 n15, 186 n114
14:2	208 n35, 233 n103	26:3	55 n45
14:3	324 n6	28:5	100 n4
14:6	152 n18, 324 n11		
14:12	152 n18, 163 n40	<i>Pesiqta Rabbati</i> (PR)	44
16:24	55 n45	5:4	100 n4
19:3	45 n17, 47 n22	7:4	41 n4, 86 n118
21:21	212 n43	14:2	55 n45
		14:9	45 n17, 47 n22
<i>Palestinian Talmud</i>	20	14:10	55 n45
<i>Berakhot</i> (PT Ber)		15:14/15	203 n17, 231 n98
1:5	244 n19, 248	21:2/3	245, 286
4:1	289 n2	25:3	207 n30, 233 n103,
4:3	295 n22		289 n2
<i>Ketubbot</i> (PT Ket)		30:3	293 n19, 294, 316
7:9	242 n13		n84, n85
<i>Moed Qatan</i> (PT MQ)		33:13	388 n73
3:5	155 n26	39:2	293 n19, 294, 316
<i>Nazir</i> (PT Naz)			n84, n85
7:2	52 n38, 91	42:8	55 n45, 151 n15,
<i>Rosh Hashanah</i> (PT RH)			186 n114
1:1	41 n4, 86 n118	46:2	40 n2, 44, 46
<i>Sanhedrin</i> (PT Sanh)		47:1	100 n7
5:1	106, 138 n125, 139	48:2	254, 281
	n130	48:3	206 n25
9:1	106, 138 n125, 139	50:5	100 n7
	n130	51:6	111 n35
<i>Shabbat</i> (PT Shab)			
5:1	414 n132	<i>Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer</i>	19–21, 47, 49–51,
<i>Sheqalim</i> (PT Sheq)		(PRE)	54 n44, 90, 93,
6:2	295 n23		101–106, 111 n36,
<i>Ta'anit</i> (PT Taan)			133–135, 140, 145
1:6	163, 164 n44, 196		n146, 151–152,
	n143		186–188, 204, 245
4:2	373 n32		n24, 247, 249, 287,
<i>Yebamot</i> (PT Yeb)			441–442
11:1	105 n22, 106, 138	8	201 n7, 204, 206
	n125, 139 n130		n24, 229 n86, 230
<i>Yoma</i> (PT Yoma)			n92, n93, 232, 233
5:4	291 n15		n101
<i>Pesiqta de Rav Kahana</i> (PRK)	20	10	291 n15
1:4	292 n17	11	40 n2, 44 n13,
2:8	290 n10		45–46, 51 n36, 84,
4:4	55 n45		293 n18
5:9	203 n17, 231 n98	12	42 n6, 45 n17, n18,
9:4	100 n4, 158 n30,		51, 91, 107 n26,
	254 n46, 281	13–14	293 n18
10:6	289 n2	13	89 n128, 91, 101
12:1	147 n2, 160 n33		42 n6, 47–48, 50,
23:1	40 n2, 44–46,	14	88–90, 101 n10, 134
	84–87	20	47, 90
23:2	290 n8	21	50–54, 91, 93–95
24:11	100 n7		99 n3, 100 n5,
			101–102, 104–106,

	109 n31, 110–113, 133–134, 136, 138 1125, 139 n130, 140, 141 n135, 145 1146, 149 n11	<i>Sefer ha-Yashar</i> 1:25 1:31 5:34	344 112 n38 143 n143 160 n31
22	150–152, 186–188, 198	<i>Sifra</i> (Sifra)	20, 106, 138–139
23	147 n3, n4, 148 n5, 160 n31, 163 n41, 164, 190 n125, 192, 196 1143, 197	<i>Qedoshim</i> 11	106, 138 n125, 139 n130
26	240 n2, 241 n3, 242–243, 277–279	<i>Sifre Deuteronomy</i> ( <i>Sifre Deut</i> )	20, 294–295, 374
27	201 n7, 207 n30, 208, 229 n86, 230 n92, 233 n103, 257 n53 206 n25	1 31	295 n23 250 n38, 251 n39, 253, 255 n48, 279
29	242 n9, 246 n26, 248 n31, 250 n37, n38, 252–254, 256 n51, 257–259, 279, 281, 284–287	41 43	51 n34 151 n15, 186 n114, 384 n62 100 n6
30	247–249, 287	45 47	290 n10 245
32	290 n8, 292–293, 297, 301, 316 n85, 318 n91, 319	343 352	291 n12, 293, 316–317, 374, 424
35	53 n42, 335 323 n3, 324 n4, 334–335, 354		
36	323 n2, n3, 324 n5, 325 n12, 328, 353	<i>Soferim</i> 43b	335
38	245, 287		
39	209 n37	<i>Tanḥuma</i> (Tan)	21, 115, 144, 244, 442
41		<i>Bereshit</i>	
48		9	100 n4, n5, n7, 109 n31, n32, 112 n38, 113, 141 n135 100 n5, 109 n31, 114–115, 141 n137, 142–144, 161 n35, 214 n51, 229 n88 148 n8, 151 n16 212 n45
<i>Pirqe Mashiah</i>	249 n36		
BHM 3:68–78	249 n36	11	100 n5, 109 n31, 114–115, 141 n137, 142–144, 161 n35, 214 n51, 229 n88 148 n8, 151 n16 212 n45
BHM 3:76–77	53 n40		
<i>Ruth Rabbah</i> (RuthR)			
Proem 3	194 n137	12	
Proem 7	324 n11, 384 n62	16	
2:2	389 n75	<i>Beshallah</i>	
6:2	324 n11	12 15	151 n15, 186 n114 153 n24, 154, 189 n124
<i>Seder Eliyyahu</i>	96	28	290 n7
<i>Rabbah</i> (SER)		<i>Bo</i>	
29	208 n35, 209 n36	12	295 n22
164	58	<i>Emor</i>	
<i>Seder Eliyyahu Zuta</i> (SEZ)		9	109 n31
173	52 n38	<i>Ḥayye Sarah</i>	
195	389 n75	4 8	207 n30, 233 n103 258 n56, 285–286
<i>Seder Olam Rabbah</i> (SOR)		<i>Lekh Lekha</i>	
21	201 n7, 229 n86, 230 n92	2 5	241 n8 242 n13, n15, 278

15	201 n7, 204 n20, 208 n32	<i>Wayiggash</i>	
16	206 n25	<i>Wayishlah</i>	323 n2
<i>Miqqets</i>		3	290, 315 n82
5	289 n3	<i>Yitro</i>	
9	289 n2	5	246 n28
<i>Mishpatim</i>			
13	109 n32, 114 n48	<i>Tanḥuma Buber</i>	21, 294, 300,
19	290 n9, 315 n82	(TanB)	319–320, 442
<i>Naso</i>		<i>Behar</i>	
19	292 n17	3	208 n35, 233 n103
<i>Noah</i>		5	291 n12
5	152 n18, 158 n30, 160 n34, 161 n35, 164 n44, 190 n125, 192–193, 196 n143, 214 n51, 229 n88	<i>Berakhah</i>	
7	148 n5	3	245 n22
8	164 n42	<i>Bereshit</i>	
9	164 n42	21	187 n118
11	163 n41, 164, 196 n143, 197	25	40 n2, 44 n13, 45–47, 84, 100 n7, 114 n46
12	147 n1, 164 n44, n45	30	155 n26
13	99 n3	33	148 n8, 151 n16
17	196 n143	36	164 n45
<i>Pequde</i>		37	152 n18, 158–159, 190 n125, 192–193
2	292 n17	39	162–163, 165, 194–196
<i>Shemini</i>		40	149 n13
8	40 n2, 44 n13, 46	45	164 n45
<i>Shemot</i>		<i>Emor</i>	
1	243 n17, 244, 252–253, 256 n51, 257–259, 279–280, 284	8	254 n46
27	254 n47	12	158 n30
<i>Terumah</i>		<i>Ḥayye Sarah</i>	
9	292 n17	2	45 n18, 107 n26
<i>Toledot</i>		6	207 n30, 233 n103
14	300 n37, 319 n95	9	258 n56, 285–286
<i>Wayehi</i>		<i>Lekh Lekha</i>	
3	54 n44	7	100 n6, 109 n31
10	362 n5, 363 n8, 365, 366 n14, 369, 375, 377, 380, 382 n57, 384, 387, 389, 421, 432	8	242 n13, n15
<i>Wayera</i>		19	204 n20, 208 n32
2	289 n4	21	206 n25
18	255 n50	25	206 n25
<i>Wayese</i>		<i>Miqqets</i>	
1	291 n14, 296 n24	11	289 n2
10	290 n6	<i>Noah</i>	
<i>Wayeshev</i>		4	155 n26
7	326 n20	6	160 n34, 161 n35, 214, 229 n88
8	326 n20	13	152 n18, 164 n42
		14	164 n42
		15	164 n42
		17	163 n41, 164, 197
		21	155 n26
		<i>Pequde</i>	
		3	46 n19

<i>Qedoshim</i>			384 n60, 386, 429
10	291 n15		
13	209 n37	<i>Genesis</i>	
<i>Shemini</i>		3:19	55-56, 57 n52, 95, 97
1	155 n26	4:2	105 n22
13	40 n2, 42 n6, 44 n13, 46-47, 84	4:4-8	100 n4
<i>Shemot</i>		4:8	100 n5, 110 n33
24	254 n47, 281	4:15	114 n43, 141
<i>Toledot</i>		4:24	114 n43, 141
5	258 n56, 286	6:3	152 n18, 154, 189
7	325		n124, 192
12	204, 206 n24, 230 n93, 232, 233 n101	6:6	155 n26
20	298, 300, 319-320	7:10	152 n18, 155 n26
24	297 n26	14:18	201, 203, 204 n18, 213, 229 n86, n87, 230
<i>Wayehi</i>			208 n31
5	54 n44	14:20	209 n37
12	362 n6, 364 n10	15:13	241 n8
<i>Wayera</i>		16:5	243 n17
42	255 n50	16:12	252 n40
<i>Wayese</i>		21:8	250 n38, 252-253
2	300 n37, 319 n95	21:9	296 n24
4	296 n26	28:10	293 n19, 316 n85
9	293 n19, 294, 316 n84, n85	28:17	323 n3
21	290 n6, 295 n22	40:12	323 n3
<i>Wayeshev</i>		40:18	323 n3
2	290 n9, 315 n82, n83	41:1	333, 354
4	323 n2	41:45	333, 354
5	324 n4	41:50	333, 354
14	331, 355	46:20	362 n6, 365
16	324 n6, 332 n33	49:8	368
18	325	49:9	372, 376 n43, 377, 379, 423-425, 427, 429
19	324 n4	49:10	384 n60, 385-386, 434
20	323 n2, n3	49:11	388-389
<i>Wayiggash</i>			327, 353
3	323 n2	49:12	
11	325	49:22	
<i>Wayikra</i>			
11	42 n6	<i>Targum Onqelos</i>	20, 188, 241 n5, 333, 334 n38, 362, 372, 373 n32, 376, 383 n60, 429
<i>Wayishlah</i>		(Tg Onqelos)	
27	289 n3		
<i>Targum 1 Chronicles</i>		<i>Genesis</i>	
3:24	299 n33	3:19	56 n47
<i>Targum Micah</i>		4:2	105 n22
5:1	300 n36	4:15	114 n43, 141
<i>Targum Neofiti</i>		4:24	114 n43, 141
(Tg Neofiti)		6:3	154, 192
19-20, 56, 110, 114		14:18	213
n45, 188, 241 n5,		14:20	208 n31
333, 372, 373 n31,		37:3	323 n2

41:45	333, 354	21:10	254, 281
41:50	333, 354	21:11	252
46:20	333, 354	21:13	245, 281, 287
49:8	362, 365, 421	21:14	258 n56, 285-286
49:9	368, 422	21:15-16	252
49:10	372, 376, 379, 423-425, 427, 429	21:15-17	250 n38
	383 n60, 385	21:21	246 n26
49:11	388-389	22:1	255
49:12	328 n24	25:1	258 n56, 285-286
49:22		28:10	297
		28:11	293 n19, 297, 316 n85, 318 n91, n93, 319
<i>Targum Pseudo-</i>	19-20, 50, 101-104, n22, n10, n13, 133-135, 151 n17, 188, 208 n31, 252, 297, 318 n93, 328, 372, 384 n60, 385	28:12	290 n9, 315 n82
<i>Jonathan</i> (Tg PsJon)		28:17	293 n19, 316 n85
		39:1	331, 355
		39:10	57
<i>Genesis</i>		41:45	334-335, 354
2:15	51 n34	41:50	334-335, 354
3:1-5	50	46:20	334-335, 354
3:4	49 n28	49:8	362, 365, 421
3:6	48 n24, 50	49:9	368, 369 n23
3:19	56-57, 95	49:10	373, 376 n43, 377, 379, 423
4:1-2	149 n11	49:11	384 n60, 385, 434
4:1	45 n18, 49 n29, 99 n3, 101-102, 133-134, 136	49:12	388
		49:22	328, 353
4:2	105	49:24	323 n2
4:3	100 n5, 109 n31	<i>Exodus</i>	
4:7	57	6:25	202 n10
4:8	110 n33, 112 n38, 113, 141 n135	28:30	291 n15
		<i>Numbers</i>	
4:15	114 n43, 141 n137	25:12	202 n10
4:24	114 n43, 141 n137		
5:3	102, 133 n110	<i>Targum Zechariah</i>	
6:2	188	4:7	300 n36
6:3	152 n18, 153 n24, 154, 189 n124	9:1	295 n23
6:4	188		
6:6	155 n26	<i>Tosefta</i>	19-20
6:9	161 n35	<i>Abodah Zarah</i> (T AZ)	
7:1	161 n35	4:5	290 n6, 295 n22
7:4	152 n18, 156	<i>Rosh Hashanah</i> (T RH)	
7:10	152 n18, 156 n27	1:1	86 n18
12:19	241 n7, 242 n13, 278	<i>Sotah</i> (T Sot)	
14:18	201 n7, 204 n18, 213, 229 n86, 230 n92	3:6-9	147 n1, 151 n15, 186 n114
	209 n37	6:6	250-251, 253-255, 279-281, 284
15:13	240 n2, 241, 243, 277	10:3-4	154-155, 189, 192
16:1	241	10:3	152 n18
16:5	243 n17	<i>Sukkah</i> (T Suk)	
16:12	250 n38	3:3-10	295 n23
21:9-11	252, 279	<i>Yoma</i> (T Yoma)	
21:9		2:14	291 n15



<i>Yalqut Shimoni</i>	21	I, 54a–b	102 n12
1:38	114 n48	I, 54b	112 n38
1:135	143 n143	I, 127a	53 n42
		I, 189b	326 n20
<i>Zohar</i>	109	III, 117a	102 n12
I, 3a–3b	114 n48		
I, 31a	102 n12	<i>Zohar Hadash</i>	
I, 35b	50 n32	24a on Gen 4:2	109 n31

## CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

Ambrose of Milan		XXI.9	337–338, 354
<i>De Sacramentis</i>		XXIII.14	173 n78
IV.10;V.1	225 n82	<i>Apostolic Constitutions</i>	
		III.11	401
Anastasius of Sinai		VIII.5:3	217
<i>On the Hexaemeron</i>		VIII.34	66 n68
7.895 [PG 89:967])	65 n67		
Viae Dux		Athanasius of Alexandria	
IV. 38–42	170 n65, n66, 186	<i>Questions (Quaest.)</i>	
	n117	LXV (PG 28:740)	170 n65
XIII.8.71–74	170 n65	<i>On the Incarnation of the Word</i>	
		40	410 n126
Andrew of Crete		(Pseudo-) Athanasius of Alexandria	
<i>Orationes</i>		<i>De passione et cruce domini</i>	
13.3 (PG 97:1104C–1105A)	304	PG 28:208	72, 92–93
<i>Magnus Canon</i>	303 n48	(Pseudo-) Athanasius of Alexandria	
(PG 97: 1347–8)		<i>Sermo de Patientia</i>	
<i>Anonymous Dialogue with Jews</i>		4	180 n95, 193
I.225	314		n135
Aphrahat		(Pseudo-) Athanasius of Alexandria	
<i>Demonstrations</i>		<i>Historia Melchisedeco (Hist.Melch.)</i>	
I.6	311 n71	PG 28:525–530	66, 219
I.17–21	311 n72		
II.9	178	Barnabas	
IV	309	<i>Epistle</i>	
IV.2	117 n55	4:11	317 n90
IV.5	311, 318	16:9	312 n73
IV.6.	394 n84	16:7–10	317 n90
V.232.3–4	403 n107		
VII.8	178, 191	Bar Hebraeus Gregory	
XIII.5	173	<i>Chronicle (trans. Budge)</i>	
XIII.5–7	183, 194 n139	4	168 n58
XIII.7	166		
VII.8	178, 191	Basil of Caesarea	
XI.3	227	<i>Epistles ii; xlvi</i>	339n56
XI.3–4	237 n120	<i>Epistle to Amphilocheus</i>	400 n100
XI.5.10	270	236.3	409
XVI	311 n72	<i>Epistle to Optimus</i>	
XVI.10	403, 429	143	
XVIII.9	173	4	130, 142 n139
XIX.11	408, 411 n128, 430	5	129 n97

<i>On the Holy Spirit</i>		1513	304–305,
62	304		316 n85
<i>Homily on Psalms</i>		1749b (Gennadius)	336 n45
I.4	308 n64	1750 (Diodore of Tarsus)	336
<i>De temperantia et incontinentia</i>		1753 (Eusebius of Emesa)	336
PG 32:1348	339 n59	1847	337 n48,
			348, 349
(Pseudo-) Basil of Caesarea		1851	340
<i>Bohairic Homily on Noah's ark</i>		1852	342
167 n55		1855	341, 349
224–225	178 n92		n83
225–226	179	1861	341
		1864	341, 347
(Pseudo-) Basil of Caesarea		1867	336 n45,
<i>Commentary on Isaiah</i>			337
5.1	76 n99	1877	336 n45
		1940	351n88,
Basil of Seleucia			356
Oratio V	193	1946	338 n53
PG 85:72	110	2152	391
PG 85:77	176	2153	394 n83
PG 85:80	180	2156	395 n87,
PG 85:88	171 n69		n88, n89
PG 85:90	172	2157	394
		2158	395 n88
<i>Catena on Genesis (ed. Petit) (Cat. Petit)</i>		2165	396
55	139 n131	2166	396 n91
214 (Eusebius of Emesa)	271	2167	396 n81
320 (Eusebius of Emesa)	70 n78	2175	414
329 (Eusebius of Emesa)	173		
486	121, 137	<i>Catena Coisliana (Cat.Csl)</i>	
555	123 n79	138 (Gennadius)	176 n88
564	130 n101	142 (Diodore of Tarsus)	177, 190
577 (Eusebius of Emesa)	268 n75		n127
585	122 n754	200 (Acacius of Caesarea)	268
608	180 n95	201 (Diodore of Tarsus)	267, 283
613	170 n65	204 (Diodore of Tarsus)	74
614	173 n76	233	306
616	173 n76	234 (Diodore of Tarsus)	306 n59,
617	170 n65,		315 n83
	174 n81	238 (Diodore of Tarsus)	305, 316
623	178	275 (Gennadius)	347 n80
626	178 n92	276 (Diodore of Tarsus)	348
902	266 n70	298 (Diodore of Tarsus)	411
1201	267 n73	299 (Diodore of Tarsus)	392, 397,
1206 (Diodore of Tarsus)	268 n75		422
1207	269 n76	300 (Diodore of Tarsus)	414
1208	269 n76	302 (Diodore of Tarsus)	420
1210 (Eusebius of Emesa)	268	304 (Theodore of	417
1216 (Eusebius of Emesa)	271	Mopsuestia)	
1242 (Eusebius of Emesa)	74, 93	<i>Catena Sinaitica (Cat.Sin)</i>	
1260	74 n90,	G 2 (Eusebius of Emesa)	68, 222,
	394 n85		278
1504 (Severus)	304	G 43 (Diodore of Tarsus)	62 n62
1505	308 n64		



- |  |                                       |   |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| ad Gen 4:24 [143]                        | 129, 144                              | XI.2  | 216, 230 n91                           |
| ad Gen 6:2 [150]                         | 170, 187 n199                         | XIII  | 263                                    |
| ad Gen 6:18 [175]                        | 185 n101                              | XIII.1  | 264                                    |
| ad Gen 7:6                               | 178 n90, 191<br>n130                  | XVIII.1   | 254–265, 267,<br>269, 280, 283<br>270  |
| ad Gen 16:1–2<br>[235–236]               | 260                                   | XVIII.2   | 230 n94                                |
| ad Gen 16:1–2 [235]                      | 262                                   | XXIII.3   | 306, 315 n82                           |
| ad Gen ad loc. [246]                     | 273 n82                               | XXVI.2  | 304                                    |
| <i>Commentary on Zechariah</i>           |                                       | XXXV.8  | 345, 352                               |
| 9:9                                      | 412 n129                              | XLII.2  | 340 n59, 420                           |
|  |                                       | XLII.5  | 392, 397, 403,<br>411, 421–422,<br>429 |
| Diodore of Tarsus                        |                                       | XLII.6  | 415, 417, 420<br>n144                  |
| <i>Fragments</i> (ed. Devreese)          |                                       | XLII.6.2  | 420                                    |
| 4:17                                     | 123 n79, 138,<br>139 n31, 188         | XLII.13   | 340 n59                                |
|  |                                       | XLIII.4   | 403                                    |
| Ephraem the Syrian                       |                                       | LII.22  | 184 n105                               |
| <i>Commentary on the Diatessaron</i>     |                                       | <i>Armenian Hymns</i>                                   |  |
| 2.6                                      | 184 n107                              | 4.13  | 184 n107                               |
| 21.21                                    | 311 n71                               | <i>Hymns against Heresies</i>                           |  |
| 26                                       | 394 n84                               | (Contra Haereses)                                       |  |
| <i>Commentary on Genesis</i> (Comm.Gen.) |                                       | 7.2; 19.4–5   | 173 n79                                |
| I.8.1                                    | 66 n70, 86<br>n120                    | <i>Hymn on Ecclesia</i> (Eccl.)                         |  |
| I.19                                     | 63 n60                                | XI.3  | 216 n55                                |
| II.16                                    | 70 n79                                | XI.7  | 120 n66                                |
| II.19                                    | 70 n78                                | XXXIV.6.2   | 184 n105                               |
| II.31                                    | 81                                    | <i>Hymns on Epiphany</i> (Hymn.Epiph.)                  |  |
| III.1                                    | 120 n65                               | 12.2–3  | 70 n72, n80                            |
| III.2                                    | 117 n58                               | 9.11  | 308                                    |
| III.3                                    | 139, 142                              | <i>Hymns on Faith</i> (De Fide)                         |  |
| III.7                                    | 118 n59                               | I.4   | 184 n105                               |
| III.9                                    | 129, 142                              | XLVI.8  | 173                                    |
| IV.2                                     | 127 n91, 142,<br>170 n66, 186<br>n117 | XLIX 1.6  | 184 n105                               |
|  |                                       | LVI.2   | 179 n94                                |
| IV.3                                     | 130                                   | <i>Hymns on Fasting</i> (De ieiunio)                    |  |
| VI                                       | 191                                   | II.2  | 173 n79, 174 n81                       |
| VI.1                                     | 184, 191 n130,<br>194 n139            | III.4   | 71 n82                                 |
|  |                                       | <i>Hymns on Nativity</i> (Hymn.Nat.)                    |  |
| VI.2                                     | 170 n66, 186<br>n117, 191<br>n130     | 1.7   | 406 n112                               |
|  |                                       | 1.22  | 184 n107                               |
| VI. 3                                    | 173                                   | 1.22.1  | 184 n105                               |
| VI. 4                                    | 177, 190 n127                         | 3.17  | 394                                    |
| VI. 6–7                                  | 178                                   | 8.13  | 269                                    |
| VI.6                                     | 179                                   | 8.17  | 269, 283, 293                          |
| VI.7                                     | 179                                   | 28.1  | 184 n107                               |
| VI.8.2–9                                 | 180, 193                              | <i>Carmena Nisibina/Hymns on Nisibis</i><br>(Carm.Nis.) |  |
| VI.9.3                                   | 181                                   | 1.4   | 184 n107                               |
| VI.10                                    | 179                                   | 1.9   | 184 n107                               |
| VI.12                                    | 184, 197                              | XLIV.6.4  | 119 n64                                |
| IX.3                                     | 265                                   | LVII.4  | 120 n66                                |
| IX.9                                     | 265                                   | LXXI.7  | 119 n64                                |

- Hymns on Paradise* (Hymn.Parad.)  
 1.10–11 80 n173  
 3.4 71 n83  
 7.11 80 n173  
 13.1–5. 71 n83  
 15.14 70 n78
- Hymns on Virginity* (Hymn.Virg.)  
 1.9 265 n69  
 8.20 215  
 21.9 337, 354  
 22.16–17 265 n69  
 44.21f. 124
- Memra on Nicomedia*  
 V. 95–114 179 n94
- Sermones*  
 I,6,22 184 n105
- Epiphanius of Salamis  
*On Weights and Measures*  
 79 222 n71, 235 n112
- Panarion*  
 4.1.6–7 274  
 20.1.1 400 n100  
 20.2.2–3 409  
 26.17.5 340  
 29.3.3 407 n118  
 29.3.5 431 n168  
 29.3.7 405  
 33.3 410  
 37.2.7 70 n78  
 39.5.4 123, 139 n131  
 39.5.9 124  
 40.1 135 n117  
 40.5 135  
 40.5.3 120  
 40.5.4 126 n90, 140 n134  
 46.5.1 76  
 46.5.6 76  
 51.22.21 406  
 55 219, 231  
 55.2.1 219, 231, 234 n110  
 55.3.1 222, 237 n120  
 55.6 231 n96  
 55.6.1 218  
 55.6.3–10 218  
 55.6.11 218  
 55.7.1 218  
 64 110  
 64.29.6 121  
 66.23.1 122 n74, 124 n82  
 66.63.10 121  
 66.63.11 121  
 67.7 224, 231 n97
- Eusebius of Caesarea  
*Eclogae Propheticae*  
 III.45 407
- Evangelical Demonstration* (Dem.Ev.)  
 I.9 194  
 I.22 406, 425  
 I.27–28 311 n71  
 I.53 182  
 II.70 394 n83  
 V.241 220, 224 n77, 232  
 n100, 234 n107,  
 235 n113, 237  
 n120  
 V.242 225, 236 n115  
 VII.90 394 n83  
 VII.332–333 402  
 VIII 427  
 VIII.96 430  
 VIII.99 400  
 VIII.102 431  
 VIII.112.145 394 n83  
 VIII.114 412 n129, 416  
 n136  
 VIII.369 391  
 VIII.370ff. 392  
 VIII.374 401 n104, 406  
 VIII.377 391  
 VIII.378 414, 396  
 VIII.380 420  
 VIII.399 411
- Historia Ecclesiastica* (H.E.)  
 I.6 406  
 I.6.1 408 n120  
 I.6.2–3 408 n120  
 I.6.7. 406, 407  
 I.7.11 408  
 VI.16 357 n95
- Praeparatio Evangelica* (Praep.Ev.)  
 I.9.16ff. 182 n101  
 V.4 167 n52  
 VII.8 399  
 IX.17 222, 235 n112  
 IX.19 273  
 IX.21 341 n60
- Vita Constantini* (Vit.Const.)  
 III.25 74  
 IV.25 347 n77
- Eusebius of Emesa  
*Fragments* (ed. Hovhanessian)  
 51, 121–122 414  
 56–57, 218–226 266 n70  
 66, 522–527 268 n74 n75

86, 93–87	348	Hippolytus of Rome	
92, 242–250	398 n94	<i>Benedictiones Isaac et Jacob</i> (Bened)	
Eustathius of Antioch		XVI	391, 395
<i>De engastrimitho</i>		XVIII	417
22	82 n111	XIX	420
<i>Fragments</i>		<i>De Christo et Antichristo</i> (De Christo)	
64	313–314	7–14	394, 423
<i>Homilia in Lazarum</i>		9	401
63	218, 224	10	413
	n63	12	419
213–222	314	13	420, 435
George Cedrenus		<i>Fragments in Genesis</i>	
<i>Annales</i> (ed. Bekker)		Ad Gen 49:11	413 n131
19	172 n74	Ad Gen 49:21–26	336 n45
George Syncellus		<i>Homelies paschales</i>	
<i>Chronography</i> (ed. Dindorf)		(ed. P. Nautin), 177	309
7ff.	65 n67	<i>Refutatio omnium haeresium</i> (Ref.)	
8	66	7.24	219
14	71	7.36	231
15–17	139 n131	Ignatius of Antioch	
15	123 n80	<i>Epistle to the Magnesians</i>	
17	123 n80, 172	10	312 n73
	n74	<i>Epistle to the Ephesians</i>	
26	172 n74	9.1	312 n73
Gennadius of Constantinople		<i>Epistle to the Philadelphians</i>	
<i>Fragments on Genesis</i>		IX	399
PG 85:1641	123 n79, 182	Irenaeus of Lyons	
	n101	<i>Adversus omnes haereses</i> (Adv.haer.)	
PG 85:1649	306	I.30.1	80
PG 85:1659	391	II.20.3	419 n142
PG 85:1660	182 n101, 401	III.11.4	405 n111
	n101, 409	III.23.2	117 n55
	n125, 412	III.23.3	79
	n129, 417	III.23.6	79
Gregory of Nazianzus		III.23.7	80
<i>Orationes</i>		IV.5.4	75 n94
43.7 <sup>1</sup>	303	IV.10.2	412 n129
<i>Second Theological Oratio</i>		IV.16.2	166
VIII	311	IV.18.3	117 n55, n58
Gregory of Nyssa		IV.25.2	118
<i>In Canticum Homiliae</i>		IV.34.4	118
4.2.4	117 n58	IV.36.4	164, 167 n52
<i>Contra Fornicarios</i>		V.14.1	119 n62
PG 46:493f.	339	V.16.1	80
<i>Oratio Catechetica Magna</i>		V.23.2	60
XXIX	176	V.29.2	166
<i>De virginitate</i>		<i>Demonstrations</i>	
23.4.5–13	347	17	119, 137
		18	167 n52
		45	309
		57	410 n126, 416
			n136, 419

<i>Fragment</i>		Jerome	
17	336 n45	<i>Against Jovinianus</i>	
		II.27	303 n45
Isaiah of Sketis		<i>Against John of Jerusalem (Ep. 51)</i>	
<i>Asctetic Discourses</i>		34	418 n140
4	303 n44, 304, 321 n99	<i>Epistles</i>	
		22	306
Ishodad of Merv		22.4	303 n45
<i>Commentary on Genesis (Comm.Gen.)</i>		36.2–9	130 n101, 142 n139
ad Gen 3:8	67–68, 85	46.2	215
ad Gen 3:14	71	46.3	77
ad Gen 3:1	70 n78, n80	46.6	303 n45
ad Gen 3:8	85	73.2	224, 227, 231 n97
ad Gen 4:8	128		
ad Gen 4:10	119	73.3	222, 225, 227, 236 n115
ad Gen 4:15	132, 141		
ad Gen 4:17	124, 139 n131	73.2–3	237 n120
ad Gen 6:1	173 n79	73.6	218, 221, 232
ad Gen 6:3	179 n93	73.7	221, 223, 234
ad Gen 6:10	183 n102	73.9	218
ad Gen 12:15	264, 265 n68, 277	102.2	336 n45
		108.7	303 n45
ad Gen 14:18	217, 231	108.11	78 n106
ad Gen 16:2	262, 263	108.13	313, 320
ad Gen 16:12	287	123.13	273 n84
ad Gen 21:9	71, 268 n74	123.15	303 n45
ad Gen 21:14	267 n72, 271, 274	129.4	273 n84
		<i>Hebrew Questions on Genesis</i>	
ad Gen 22:2	75	(Hebr. Quest.)	
ad Gen 22:9	75, 93	3:8	62
ad Gen 23:9	79	6:3	176, 190 n128
ad Gen 23–24	130 n102	12:15–16	278, 265
ad Gen 28:12–15	315	14:18–19	223
ad Gen 28:18	305, 317	14:18–20	232 n99, 234
ad Gen 28:21	304	16:12	273
ad Gen 37:3	338	21:9	270
ad Gen 37:36	348 n81	22:2	74
ad Gen 38:36	337	23:2	78, 95
ad Gen 41:45	351 n87	25:16	272
ad Gen 49:8	393, 397	37:36	349
ad Gen 49:9	397, 422	43:45	350, 356
ad Gen 49:10	411	49:8–9	392, 396
ad Gen 49:11–12	416–417, 420	49:8–9	396
ad Gen 49:22	340, 353	49:11	415
		49:22–26	340, 353
Jacob of Edessa		<i>Commentary on the Ephesians</i>	
<i>Hexaemeron</i>		ad Eph 5:14	77 n105, 78
15	308	<i>Commentary on Ezekiel</i>	
		Lib II.21 ad Ezek 21:30–32	409
Jacob of Serugh		<i>Commentary on Hosea</i>	
<i>Homilies</i>		I.3.4.5	404, 429
80	75 n95	I.4.	406 n112
135	310 n67	<i>Commentary on Isaiah</i>	
166	310 n67	4.11–13	394 n83

<i>Commentary on Matthew</i> (Comm.Matt.)		<i>Homilies on Galatians</i>	
3-9	312 n73	IV.22-23	260
4	77, 95	IV.28	261, 268, 280
15-25	414 n132	<i>Homilies on Genesis</i> (Hom.Gen.)	
21.4-5	413 n131	16.3	69, 87
21.42	312 n73	18.15	121 n71
26.16	409	19.5	127 n94
	n124	19.11	120 n56
<i>Commentary on Romans</i> (Comm.Rom.)		19.13-14	118 n59
LXX	406 n112	20.3	123, 138 n127,
<i>Commentary on Zechariah</i>			139
2.9-9-10	413 n131	21.18	178
<i>Contra Luciferanos</i>		22.2	77, 173 n77
23 (PL 23:1978)	409 n124	22.4	178
		22.7	171, 172
<i>Homilies on Psalms</i>		22.12	178
7	418 n140	23.5	180, 193
<i>Tractatus de Psalmo</i>		24.4	182, 194
CXXXII.3	168	24.7	176
<i>De viris illustribus</i>		25.5	176
54	357 n95	25.6	178
		25.8	178-179
John of Antioch		26.4	127 n91
<i>Fragments</i>		32.17	267
IV	224 n56	32.18	266 n70
		32.21	278
John Chrysostom		32.22	265, 278
<i>Ad Stagirium</i>		35.15	215, 216 n54
II.12	341, 349	35.16	185 n112
	n83	38.3	264
<i>Against Marcionites</i>		38.4	262
2-3	85	38.5	262
3	395 n88	39.18	267 n73
<i>Contra eos qui apud se habent</i>		46.2	267, 280, 283
<i>subintroductas virgins</i>		46.2-3	270
13	347 n80	54.17-18	303 n44
<i>Contra Judaeos et Gentiles</i>		54.23	221, 304
PG 48:817	406 n113	62:16	338-339
<i>Epistulae ad Olympiadem</i>		62.19	413 n131
III.11	340	63.17	350, 355
III.12	341	66.1	413 n131
<i>Homilies on the Colossians</i>		67.4-5	390
V	308	67.8	390
<i>Homilies on 1 Corinthians</i>		67.9	414
XIX.5	341	67.10	417 n139
<i>Homilies on the Ephesians</i>		69.9	413 n131
XX	271, 285	<i>Homily on Martyrs</i>	
<i>Homilies on Hebrews</i>		5	303
XII-XIII	216 n54	93-7	305 n55
XII.4	221, 234	<i>Homilies on Matthew</i>	
	n107	XII.2	118 n59
XIII.3	228, 237	XIII	63 n60
	n120	LIX	67 n72
XIII.4	220	LXXXIV.4	337 n48, 341



<i>Homilies on John</i>		Julius Africanus	
57	402	<i>Chronography</i>	
66.1	413 n131, 414 n132	IV	169, 178, 181, 191
76.4	406 n115	Justin Martyr	
84	303 n44	<i>Apology</i>	
85	73	I. 28	69
<i>Homilies on Statues</i> (De statutis hom.)		I.32	401 n103, 404, 412 n129
20.8	180 n95, 193 n135	I.55	165 n48
<i>Homilies on 1 Thessalonians</i>		II.5	167 n52
VIII.2	178 n90, 180 n95, 193 n135	V.2	168 n60
VIII.18	193	<i>Dialogue with the Jew Tryphon</i> (Dial.)	
<i>De Joseph et de castitate</i>		XII.2	406 n115
PG 56:587–590	24 n90, 343 n66, 352	XIV.3	406 n115
<i>De resurrectione mortuorum</i>		XVI	227
VIII (PG 50:430–431)	119 n64	XIX	117, 227, 237 n120
<i>Non esse desperandum</i>		XXX	227
4	260 n59	XXXIII	227
(Pseudo-) John Chrysostom		XXXIV	311 n71
<i>In Genesim Sermo</i>		XXXVI	311 n71
III	71 n81	XLIII	412 n129
(Pseudo-) John Chrysostom		XLVI	166, 352
<i>On Melchizedek</i> (De Melch.)		LII	402, 404, 408, 428, 431
PG 56:262	237	LIII	412, 413
John Climacus		LIV	416
<i>Scala Paradisi</i>		LVIII	308, 311
PG 88:841A; 1160C; 1132B	303	LXXIX	168
John of Damascus		LXXXI	168, 320
<i>De Haeresibus</i>		LXXXVI	61 n57
101	276	LXXXVI.2–3	311
<i>Hom. Dormit. B.V. Mariae</i>		XCI.1–3	336 n45
8 (PG 96:712A)	304	CXIII	311 n71
<i>De fide orthodoxa</i>		CXIV	87, 311 n71
IV.13	225	CXX	308, 319, 400
IV.24	183	CXXIV	69
John Malalas		CXXVI.1	336 n45
<i>Chronography</i> (ed. Dindorf)		CXXXVIII	165
3	126 n83	<i>On the Resurrection</i>	
4	130 n100	4.1	82 n111
1.3, 83	172 n74	Marcus Eremita	
1.6	123 n80, 139 n131	<i>De Melchisedech</i>	
John of Nikiu		PG 65:1117–1140	219, 231
<i>Chronicle</i>		PG 65:1121B	218 n60
27.4	224 n80	Maximus the Confessor	
		<i>Quaestiones</i>	
		7	215
		88	303 n49
		181	178
		Melito of Sardis	
		<i>Fragments</i>	
		247	336 n45

<i>Peri Pascha</i>		V.14	82 n111
59.69	118	V.52–55	168
72	73, 93	VI.21.9	303
		VIII.19	317 n90
Methodius of Olympus		<i>De principiis</i> (De Princ.)	
<i>Banquet</i>		II.1	69
III.3	81	II.10.8	82 n111
X.3	180, 193 n135	II.11.12	82 n111
XI	118	III.2.1	88
<i>Oration on Palms</i>		III.6.5	82, 97
2	412	IV.1.3	404–405, 429, 430
<i>De Resurrectione</i>		<i>Epistle to Julius Africanus</i>	
1.4	81	5	12
29–33	82 n111	6	437
<i>Pseudo-Methodius, Apocalypse</i>		10	390
XI	257–258	<i>Exhortation to Martyrdom</i>	
		50	119
Michael the Syrian		<i>Homilies on Genesis</i> (Gen.Hom.)	
<i>Chronicle</i> (ed. Chabot)		V.4.39–46	414 n132
4	168 n58	XV	336, 339 n56
		XVII.7	413 n131
Narsai of Edessa		<i>Homilies on Leviticus</i>	
<i>Homilies on Creation</i> (Hom.Creat.)		4.6	185 n112
I.245–46	70 n78, n79	8.5	417 n138
IV.342	120 n65	9.2.3	81
IV. 380–385	118 n59	16.6.41–45	414 n132
V	75 n95	<i>Homilies on Numbers</i>	
(Pseudo-) Nilus of Ancyra		23.3	185 n112
<i>Peristeria seu tractatus de virtutibus excolendis et vitiis fugendis</i>		<i>On Prayer</i>	
XI.6	265 n68	29.18	117
		<i>Homilies on Psalms</i>	
Origen		36 (IV.3)	306, 315
<i>Commentary on Matthew</i>		<i>Selecta in Genesis</i>	
10.21	405 n111	6:11f.	182
10.23	405	41:45	351 n88, 356
27.32	72	Procopius of Gaza	
81.9–11	408	<i>Commentary on Genesis</i>	
<i>Commentary on Jeremiah</i>		PG 87:196	63, 85
9 ad Jer 11:2	317 n90	PG 87:233	121, 137
<i>Commentary on John</i>		PG 87:252	118, 119–120, 135
I.23	401	PG 87:256ff.	130 n101, 142 n139
VI.56 [291]	418–419	PG 87:261	173
VI.56 [292]	396 n92	PG 87:265	171 n72
X.155	412	PG 87:280	182, 197
X.179	412	PG 87:326	278
XIII.13	317 n90	PG 87:329	226 n70
<i>Commentary on Romans</i>		PG 87:333–334	218, 221, 222
VII	395		n70, 231
<i>Contra Celsum</i> (Contr.Cels.)			n96, 234
I.53	405		n110, 235
IV.44	260		n112
IV.57	82 n111		

- |                                       |                   |  |                    |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--|--------------------|
| PG 87:35of.                           | 260               | Theodoret of Cyrrhus                       |                    |
| PG 87:35f.                            | 262               | <i>Dialogue between an Orthodox and a</i>  |                    |
| PG 87:384                             | 264 n73, 268 n75  | <i>Heretic (an Erred)</i>                  |                    |
| PG 87:385f.                           | 271               | I  | 401, 428           |
| PG 87:389f.                           | 74                | <i>Haereticarum fabularum compendium</i>   |                    |
| PG 87:426f.                           | 303, 314          | (Haer.fab.comp.)                           |                    |
| PG 87:427-428                         | 312 n75           | I.11                                       | 121 n70, 135       |
| PG 87:428                             | 305 n57           | <i>Historia Religiosa</i>                  |                    |
| PG 87:429                             | 304               | 26   | 274 n86            |
| PG 87:469-470                         | 336 n45           | <i>Interpretatio in Psalmos</i>            |                    |
| PG 87:473-474                         | 341               | 110  | 225                |
| PG 87:475-76                          | 341               | <i>On the Incarnation of the Lord</i>      |                    |
| PG 87:475                             | 337 n48, 349      | 6.1  | 81                 |
| PG 87:475-476                         | 336 n45, 337, 341 | <i>Questions on Genesis (Quaest.)</i>      |                    |
| PG 87:475-477                         | 347               | XXXII                                      | 70 n78             |
| PG 87:479                             | 338 n53           | XXXVIII                                    | 81                 |
| PG 87:497f.                           | 329 n80           | XLIII                                      | 123, 139           |
| PG 87:499f.                           | 417               | XLIV                                       | 130, 140, 143      |
|                                       |                   | LXV  | 215                |
|                                       |                   | XLVI                                       | 172, 187 n19       |
|                                       |                   | XLVII                                      | 170 n66, 171 n69,  |
|                                       |                   |  | 186 n17            |
|                                       |                   | LXIII                                      | 265, 278           |
|                                       |                   | LXVIII                                     | 262                |
|                                       |                   | LXXIII                                     | 271, 285           |
|                                       |                   | LXXXIV                                     | 306, 315 n82       |
|                                       |                   | LXXXV                                      | 305, 315 n82       |
|                                       |                   | C  | 347                |
|                                       |                   | CVIII                                      | 401 n101           |
|                                       |                   | CXII                                       | 392                |
|                                       |                   | CXII.2                                     | 395                |
|                                       |                   | CXII.3                                     | 405 n112, 433      |
|                                       |                   | CXII.4                                     | 417 n137, n138,    |
|                                       |                   |  | 419-420            |
|                                       |                   | <i>Questions on Exodus (Quaest.Ex.)</i>    |                    |
|                                       |                   | LXXII                                      | 66 n70             |
|                                       |                   |  |                    |
|                                       |                   | Theophilus of Antioch                      |                    |
|                                       |                   | <i>Ad Autolyicum (Ad Autolyc.)</i>         |                    |
|                                       |                   | II.24                                      | 80                 |
|                                       |                   | II.26                                      | 80                 |
|                                       |                   | II.29                                      | 118 n59 n60, 119,  |
|                                       |                   |  | 139                |
|                                       |                   | II.31                                      | 221, 234 n110      |
|                                       |                   | III.19                                     | 180, 182, 193, 194 |
|                                       |                   |  | n136, n138         |
|                                       |                   |  |                    |
|                                       |                   | Zacharias Rhetor                           |                    |
|                                       |                   | <i>Historia Ecclesiastica (Hist.Eccl.)</i> |                    |
|                                       |                   | I.13                                       | 219                |
| PG 87:35of.                           | 260               |  |                    |
| PG 87:35f.                            | 262               |  |                    |
| PG 87:384                             | 264 n73, 268 n75  |  |                    |
| PG 87:385f.                           | 271               |  |                    |
| PG 87:389f.                           | 74                |  |                    |
| PG 87:426f.                           | 303, 314          |  |                    |
| PG 87:427-428                         | 312 n75           |  |                    |
| PG 87:428                             | 305 n57           |  |                    |
| PG 87:429                             | 304               |  |                    |
| PG 87:469-470                         | 336 n45           |  |                    |
| PG 87:473-474                         | 341               |  |                    |
| PG 87:475-76                          | 341               |  |                    |
| PG 87:475                             | 337 n48, 349      |  |                    |
| PG 87:475-476                         | 336 n45, 337, 341 |  |                    |
| PG 87:475-477                         | 347               |  |                    |
| PG 87:479                             | 338 n53           |  |                    |
| PG 87:497f.                           | 329 n80           |  |                    |
| PG 87:499f.                           | 417               |  |                    |
| Sebeos                                |                   |  |                    |
| <i>Armenian History</i>               |                   |  |                    |
| 30                                    | 275 n87           |  |                    |
| 32                                    | 275 n89           |  |                    |
| 34                                    | 275 n89           |  |                    |
| Severian of Gabala                    |                   |  |                    |
| <i>On the Creation of the World</i>   |                   |  |                    |
| (Creat. Mundi)                        |                   |  |                    |
| 6.2                                   | 70, 87            |  |                    |
| Severus of Antioch                    |                   |  |                    |
| <i>Homelies cathedrales</i>           |                   |  |                    |
| LXIII                                 | 394 n88           |  |                    |
| XCI                                   | 260, 345 n73      |  |                    |
| Sozomenus                             |                   |  |                    |
| <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i>         |                   |  |                    |
| VI.38                                 | 274 n86           |  |                    |
| Theodore bar Koni                     |                   |  |                    |
| <i>Liber Scholiorum</i>               |                   |  |                    |
| I.83-84                               | 70 n78            |  |                    |
| II.124                                | 217, 230 n91      |  |                    |
| II.78                                 | 88 n125           |  |                    |
| Theodore of Mopsuestia                |                   |  |                    |
| <i>Fragments on Genesis</i>           |                   |  |                    |
| PG 66:644                             | 305 n57           |  |                    |
| <i>Commentary on John (Comm.John)</i> |                   |  |                    |
| 7.19.14                               | 66 n68            |  |                    |

## SUBJECT, BIBLICAL AND ANCIENT NAMES INDEX

- Aaron 199 n2, 212, 218, 220, 223, 232, 334  
n38, 395
- Aaronite 220, 223, 227
- Abel 92 n133, 99–114, 117–128, 132–141, 145,  
173 n80, 175, 217, 227–228, 440–441, 444
- Abram/Abraham 17, 38, 52–53, 74, 78,  
95, 106 n24, 199–218, 220–238, 239–246,  
249–272, 276–286, 289, 296–298, 309, 311  
n73, 341 n61, 348, 406, 440
- Abrahamic 291 n13, 296–298, 315, 319
- Abstinent/abstinence 181–185, 184n110,  
185, 349
- Achan 366
- Adam 16–17, 38, 39–97, 100–103, 105, 107,  
111, 115, 119, 120 n65, n69, 121–126, 133,  
136–138, 149, 162–163, 165, 170 n64, 202,  
204, 214, 223, 227, 235, 293 n18, 308, 342,  
441, 443
- Adisha 246 n26
- 'Adversus Judaeos' 3–5, 25, 118 n60
- Ai 366
- Altar 52 n88, 75, 92, 185, 203 n14, 223, 251,  
297, 304, 408
- Amon 245
- Angel(s)/angelic 40–41, 45–49, 62–63,  
69–70, 87–89, 100–102, 115, 119, 121  
n70, 133–136, 144, 150–151, 167–173, 175,  
186–188, 190, 195, 212, 219, 227, 242–243,  
248, 263 n64, 272, 274, 276, 286, 289–290  
298, 301–303, 305–307, 310–311, 315, 335,  
343, 391, 418 n140
- Animals 40, 45, 66–69, 147, 150, 154,  
163–164, 180, 182, 184, 190, 196–197, 273  
n84, 276, 372 n29, 414
- Anoint/anointment 212 n43, 300–301,  
304–305, 310–314, 316, 318, 320–321, 348,  
375, 407–408, 432, 439
- Anthropomorphic 155 n26
- Antichrist 166, 275–276, 288
- Antioch *see* School of Antioch
- Apocalyptic 5, 56, 57 n52, 134, 246–249,  
254, 272–273, 275–276, 287–288, 302 n41,  
423, 432 n170, 440
- Apocrypha/Apocryphal 63 n64, 76, 168,  
351, 356
- Apologetic 3, 31, 37, 63 n64, 194 n137, 321,  
425, 437
- Apostle(s) 77, 221, 282, 337, 391, 412,  
414–416, 420
- Aquila 13 n52, 31, 62, 272 n81, 273 n84,  
396, 398 n96
- Arabs 83, 245–246, 272–273, 273 n83,  
274–276, 287–288, 430 n167
- Aramaic 8 n29, 12, 14, 105n22, 277, 432
- Archer 244, 246 n28, 281
- Archontics 120, 121 n70, 126, 135, 140 n134
- Ark 147, 152, 154, 156–160, 163–165, 167  
n55, 175, 177–185, 190–193, 195–197, 227,  
317 n87
- Arpachshad 201
- Ascent 303, 369
- Asenath/Aseneth 53 n89, 332–337, 338  
n52, 349, 351, 354, 356
- Ashkelon 408
- Ass *see* donkey
- Azariah 363–364, 369
- Babylonia 9, 372, 374
- Beauty/beautiful 71 n84, 80, 110–111, 125,  
140, 167 n54, 172, 186 n115, 242, 264–266,  
300, 323–329, 337–340, 343 n65, 349,  
352–355, 418 n140
- Beersheba 272 n80
- Bethel 289, 293, 301, 303, 304 n54, 305,  
307–314, 316–317
- Bethlehem 92 n122, 306
- Bilhah 297, 318 n91
- Birthright 254 n45, 256, 280
- Blessing 38, 41, 173 n78, 175, 202,  
205–206, 208–209, 211, 220–221, 225,  
234, 295 n22, 297 n26, 301, 326, 339–340,  
353, 361, 363 n8, 364, 366–368, 370, 373  
n32, n33, 374, 376, 387–388, 383 n59,  
387, 389–390, 392–394, 399, 401, 406,  
409–410, 412 n129, 420–421, 424, 428,  
433, 439
- Blood 77, 113 n42, 118–119, 127, 177, 220  
n66, 225–226, 236, 251, 276, 361, 381, 384,  
385 n64, 386–387, 409, 416–420, 434
- Body 40, 42, 52–54, 57 n52, 59, 71–72, 75,  
81–82, 94, 96–97, 103, 113, 206 n25, 207,  
225, 304, 317, 337 n49, 339, 344, 409, 417,  
420
- Bones 52, 54, 76, 95

- Bread 51 n35, 54, 56, 58, 199, 211–213, 223, 225–226, 235–236, 256, 271, 419–420
- Breath 40, 42, 53, 147
- Bride 265 n67, 338, 354, 356
- Burial site/ground 50, 51, 53–54, 59, 72, 76–79, 91–95, 390, 441
- Byzantium 275, 347 n78
- Cain 38, 99–144, 148–151, 166, 169–170, 172–174, 183, 185–188, 198, 440–443
- Calendar 43, 66 n69
- Calendrical calculations 41, 46, 66–67, 84, 86, 177, 191, 201, 229, 231
- Calvary *see* Golgotha
- Canaan 222, 224, 231, 277, 290
- Cave of Machpelah 50–54, 78–79, 91, 93–95
- Chariot 328
- Chastity 59, 124, 147, 160–161, 163–165, 181–185, 193–197, 265–266, 278, 339, 342, 345, 440
- Chiliasm 61
- Chrism *see* anoint/anointment 304 n53, 310
- Church 6–10, 22, 35, 63, 67, 70 n80, 76–77, 83, 129 n97, 165, 168, 172, 175, 184–185, 194, 194 n136, 196–197, 215, 220 n67, 225–226, 237 n121, 261, 304–305, 309–312, 321, 337–338, 347, 349, 354, 357, 399–340, 403 n107, 407 n117, 414–416, 433
- Circumcision 117, 166, 206–207, 213–214, 226–228, 237–238, 260, 267, 413, 439
- City 52–53, 73–74, 77–78, 92 n133, 95, 209–210, 221–222, 234, 260, 273 n82, 333, 351 n87, 381–382, 385, 415, 433
- Clothes *see* robe(s) 182 n100, 337, 342, 384, 418
- Commandments 39–40, 42, 45, 47, 59, 61, 63–64, 67–68, 79, 85, 105–107, 125, 162–163, 182–183, 206 n25, 213, 237, 250 n37, 251, 262
- Communities 1, 3–5, 8–9, 13, 14–15, 29–30, 68, 287, 295, 344, 374, 376 n41
- Concubine 241 n3, 254, 261–263, 269, 272, 282, 285–586
- Confession 129, 362–365
- Conflict 4, 100, 110, 124, 126 n88 n90, 140, 158, 253 n43, 281
- Constantine emperor 73, 93 n137, 261 n61
- Controversy/controversial 67, 175, 188, 190, 219, 231, 278, 321, 409, 427–429, 435
- Cook 330, 346, 349, 355–356
- Coptic 291, 293, 298, 312–313, 319–320
- Cornerstone 291, 293, 298, 312–313, 319–320
- Covenant 122, 147–148, 183, 185, 206 n25, 207, 212–213, 226, 237, 260, 295, 305, 317 n87, 378 n47, 426
- Creation 24, 39–46, 51–54, 59–68, 70, 84–88, 91–92, 94, 103, 107, 110, 175, 177, 179, 184, 210–211, 292–293, 307
- Creator 81, 88 n125, 121 n70, 199, 205
- Crime 116, 147, 249 n34, 253
- Cross 62–65, 74 n90, 75, 77, 94, 165, 305, 308–310, 313, 321, 390–391, 396, 417, 439
- Crown 64, 373, 375
- Crucifixion 61, 64, 66, 73–75, 79, 85, 337
- Curse 47, 80, 115, 208 n32, 295 n22
- Darius 407
- David 64, 74 n93, 214, 227, 253, 268, 298–299, 317, 319, 366–367, 369–372, 377–378, 392, 394, 398, 409–411, 415, 421, 428
- Damnation 71 n84, 73, 90
- Death 39–40, 44, 46–48, 50, 52, 55, 57–63, 65, 73, 79, 80–81, 83, 85, 88, 95–97, 108, 113, 109 n30, 115, 119, 121, 123 n80, 128–130, 132, 138, 141–142, 144, 154–155, 158 n30, 163, 177, 194 n137, 253, 258, 272, 285–286, 312, 337, 342 n61, 363–364, 368, 395–398, 404–405, 417, 419
- Eden 246
- Deluge *see* Flood
- Demon(s) 48 n24, 71, 88, 103, 134, 149 n11, 167 n54, 168, 170–171, 177 n89, 343, 344 n70
- Desert 67 n73, 134, 244, 271–276, 287
- Devil 64, 68–71, 87–90, 100–101, 117–121, 133–134, 170 n64, 174, 341–343
- Dinah 335–336, 354
- Dispute 20 n74, 32, 100, 109–111, 123, 140, 239, 243, 251 n39, 255–256, 279, 386
- Divine Economy 83, 308 n61, 395
- Divorce 242 n10, 246 n26, 254, 258, 285
- Docetists 83
- Donkey 240 n2, 243–245, 264, 269, 271, 272 n81, 273–274, 276, 286, 381–384, 412–414, 433
- Dragon 87
- Dream 289, 291, 293, 308, 317, 324, 382 n58
- Dust 40, 42, 51, 54–58, 64–65, 68, 73–77, 79–81, 91–94, 96
- Earth 42, 44 n14, 51, 54–58, 65, 68, 73–77, 79–81, 91–94, 97, 101, 115, 126 n88, 129 n97, 147, 150–151, 154, 155 n26, 159, 163, 169, 177, 186 n115, 188, 190, 197, 199, 205, 208, 220, 231, 276, 289, 291–293, 297, 301, 303–304, 306–309, 394, 410, 418 n140

- Edom 249 n34, 418
- Egypt/Egyptian 209 n37, 212–213, 219, 226, 236, 240–243, 245–246, 264–265, 272, 277, 323–324, 327, 329, 331–332, 335, 339–340, 343–344, 346–347, 350 n87, 383, 392
- Election 16, 177–178, 183, 295–297, 314–317, 318, 321, 439–440
- Elijah 202 n10, 203 n17, 377 n45, 405 n111
- Elioenai 298
- Elul 40–41, 86 n118
- Encounter 1, n1, 28, 11–12, 21–22, 26–31, 36–38, 84, 87, 90–91, 97, 132–133, 136–137, 139, 141–142, 144, 145 n146, 185, 188, 192–193, 196, 198 n148, 215, 225, 228, 231–232, 234, 236, 238–239, 277–279, 280–281, 284, 286, 287, 314–316, 318–319, 320–321, 325, 338, 344, 351, 353, 356, 362, 421–423, 428, 430, 433–434, 435, 437–440, 442, 444
- Enemy/enemies 153, 249 n34, 343 n65, 199, 205, 221, 243 n17, 245, 249, 287, 336, 341, 361–362, 365–367, 370–371, 385 n64, 386, 390–393, 418, 421, 434
- Enoch/Enochic 91, 125, 167, 170, 172 n174, 175 n84, 177 n89, 184 n105, 214, 217, 227–228
- Envy 80, 87, 88 n124, n18, 121, 124, 125 n85, 126, 140, 269
- Ephraim 328, 332 n31, 367 n16
- Esau 104 n19, 204, 216, 218, 245, 249 n34, 290, 296
- Eschatology/eschatological 16, 82–83, 134, 166, 203 n17, 219–220, 231, 247–249, 287–288, 295, 313, 316, 361–362, 378–379, 383–385, 387, 388 n72, 389, 403 n107, 409, 411, 417, 418 n140, 434
- Eucharist 225, 236, 420
- Eunuch 182, 194 n138, 329–334, 336, 345–350, 354–356
- Euphrates 393
- Eve 39, 40, 45–53, 59, 61–66, 67–71, 87–89, 99–105, 107–109, n11, n15, n19–n21, 124, 125–127, 137–138, 149 n11, 182 n11
- Evil 39, 42, 47–48, 59, 62, 69, 79, 81, 84, 88, 91, 100–101, 104, 109 n30, n12, n17, n19–n20, 125, 129 n98, 133, 135–136, 150, 153 n24, 159–160, 170, 174, 178, 180–181, 183, 190, 194 n137, 195 n140, 257, 263, 268, 271–272, 280–283, 326 n18, 327 n22, 328 n26, 337, 340, 343, 351, 364, 432 n170
- Exile 100, n14 n46, n15, n18, 404
- Expulsion 40, 41, 44–46, 50–51, 62–63, 67–68, 76, 80, 84–86, 239, 249, 252–254, 256–258, 263, 279–280, 284–285
- Faith 117, 160 n33, 180, 190, 195, 209 n37, 226, 269, 271, 284, 301, 313, 324, 340, 343, 349, 399, 401, 413
- Fall 48 n23, 53 n40, 59–60, 62, 68–70, 73, 87, 89, 91, 167, 172 n74, 247, 290, 306
- Famine 40, 164, 277, 324, 332 n31, 339
- Fast/fasting 67 n73, 342
- Fatima 246 n26
- Fight 109 n30, n11–n12, 126, 128 n96, 139–140, 253 n44, 268, 283, 323, 357, 370–371
- Fire 241, 343, 363
- Firstborn n11, n21, n40, n204, n206 n24, n229, n232, n251, n254 n45, n255–n256, n269–n270, n279, n280
- Flood 75, n14, n26, n28–n29, n141–n142, n148–n162, n165–n166, n169, n176–n187, n189–n198, n442–n443
- Foal 361, 381–384, 412–416, 418 n140, 433
- Food 54, 63, 68, 213, 222 n73, 225, 419–420
- Forgiveness 41, 43–44, 46, 86, 100, n116 n52, n132, n156, n345 n74
- Fruit 55, 65, 382
- Furnace 241
- Gabriel 45 n18, 330–331
- Garden of Eden 39–41, 42, 48 n23, 50–51, 56, 91, 101 n10, 173
- Garments 204, 384, 386, 418, 434
- Garments of skin 68
- Gate of Heaven 293–294, 301, 308, n311, n314
- Gehenna/Gehinnom 44, 56, 343 n65, 365
- Generation(s) 28 n110, 29, 39, 42–44, 59, n112, n114–n116, n128–n130, n132, n141–n143, n148–n155, n157, n161 n36, n165, n169–n170, n172–n173, n175–n177, n183–n184, n186, n188–n195, n198, n316, n320, n378 n47, n394, n407, n442
- Gentiles 194 n137, n215, n225, n311–n312, n314, n318, n321, n338, n379 n50, n386, n399–n401, n403, n406, n410–n417, n425
- Giants 150 n13, n167 n55, n169, n177
- Gift(s) 213, n220 n73, n240–n242, n264–n265, n266 n70, n277–n279, n285 n99, n305, n323 n3, n345 n74, n353 n89, n374 n34, n378, n419, n442
- Glory 46 n19, n55 n45, n64, n82, n296 n24, n373, n418
- Gnostic(s) 22, n36 n124, n83, n88 n125, n120–n121, n126, n135–n136, n140 n134, n168, n219, n231 n98, n340
- Golden Calf 251, n280
- Golem 42
- Golgotha 72–74, n76 n101, n79, n92–n94, n177–n178, n223, n235
- Gospel(s) 65, n73, n261, n399, n405, n412, n433

- Graeco-Roman 32 n116  
 Grape 361, 381, 384, 386–387, 416–418, 434  
 Grave *see* tomb  
 Great Church 22, 33, 67, 83  
 Greek 13–14, 26, 62–63, 66, 183, 188,  
 191–192, 197, 231, 268, 272–273, 276–277,  
 283–284, 302, 321 n98, 338, 346–351,  
 355–358, 392, 398, 404, 429–430, 437,  
 443  
 Hadrian 74 n90, 237 n121  
 Hagar 38, 239–243, 246–254, 256–281,  
 285–286, 440, 442  
 Haggadic 8, 17, 19, 99, 143 n144  
 Halakhic 17–19, 246, 384  
 Hamor 335  
 Hananiah 363–364, 369  
 Haninah 377  
 Havilah 272 n80  
 Heathen *see* idolatry 337, 353–354, 368  
 n18  
 Heaven 40, 44 n14, 47–51, 64, 68–69,  
 73, 80–82, 88–90, 101–102, 128, 147, 150,  
 157, 159, 169, 181, 186 n115, 188, 199, 205,  
 208, 219–220, 229, 276, 289–294, 299,  
 301–304, 306–309, 311, 314, 347, 391, 401,  
 409, 418  
 Heavenly court 41 n5  
 Hebrew 7–8, 13, 26, 31, 53, 62, 66, 74,  
 78, 95, 99, 106, 111, 113, 136, 140, 150, 153,  
 155 n26 163, 169 n61, 172, 189, 201–202,  
 207–208, 232, 241 n8, 257, 268–273, 277,  
 280, 286, 301–302, 340, 346–351, 353,  
 356–357, 359, 362, 373 n31, 376–377, 379,  
 381, 383 n60, 392 n80, 393 n81, 396–398,  
 402–403, 415, 421–422, 424, n148, 427,  
 433, 437, 443  
 Hebrew Bible 12, 15, 38, 55 n46, 133, 199,  
 201 n6, 203 n14, 210–211, 218, 312 n76,  
 329, 332, 361 n3, 366, 381–382, 401, 421,  
 424, 442  
 Hebron 52–54, 77–78, 91, 93, 95  
 Helena, mother of Constantine 74 n90  
 Hellenistic 7, 13, 23, 42 n5, 80, 83, 89, 191,  
 338–339, 347, 354, 424, 440–441  
 Heretical 83, 121, 175  
 Herod 405, 407–411, 430–432  
 Herodian period 376, 407 n117  
 Hexaemeron 24  
 High Priest 207, 220, 225, 231–232,  
 349–350, 356, 405–407, 410–411  
 Hillel 373 n32, 374, 378  
 Hivite 335 n40  
 Holy Ghost/Spirit 219, 308, 323, 390, 394,  
 416  
 Homosexual 331, 346 n77, 350  
 Hospitality 212–213, 236  
 House of God 292–294, 301, 304, 305, 310,  
 314–318, 321  
 Household 206, 240, 243, 252, 256,  
 263–264, 268, 271–272, 279–280, 285,  
 307, 336, 347 n83, 351  
 Humanity/humankind 16, 39–41, 43 n9,  
 47, 59–60, 62–63, 68–69, 70–71, 73, 76,  
 81, 84–85, 87–88, 97, 103, 108, 111, 116, 120,  
 132, 142, 147, 149, 150, 152–156, 159, 163,  
 165–166, 170, 176–180, 183, 307–309, 390,  
 413, 417, 419, 440  
 Hyrcanus 406–407  
 Idolatry/idolatrous 52, 54, 95, 168, 174  
 n81, 250–253, 256–257, 270, 279–281, 284,  
 332–333, 343, 387, 414 n132  
 Ignorance 12 n48, 62  
 Immoral/immorality 99, 123 n78, 147–148,  
 150–152, 183, 186–187, 250, 253 n42, 256,  
 279 n283, 326  
 Immortality 55, 79–80, 83  
 Incarnation 401, 407 n117  
 Incense 54 n44, 212  
 Incest 105, 123, 125, 139–140, 187  
 Inheritance 67–68, 204, 239, 250–251,  
 253–256, 260, 270, 279–281, 290,  
 327–328, 365 n11, 397, 403 n107, 422  
 Intercalation 204  
 Irad 149  
 Isaac 11, 52–53, 74–75, 78, 95, 207–208,  
 210, 223, 232, 235, 239, 244, 247–248,  
 250 n37, n38, 251–257, 266, 269–270,  
 279–281, 283–284, 285 n99, 296–297,  
 325, 348, 399  
 Ishmael 38, 239–260, 264–288, 296, 440  
 Islam 240, 245–246, 254, 275–276, 287,  
 345, 440  
 Israel 16, 39–40, 46–48, 94, 103, 118, 194  
 n137, 200, 205, 207–208, 211, 213–224,  
 226, 229, 233, 237, 239, 242 n12,  
 244–245, 247, 249, 251, 254, 272,  
 281, 287, 290, 293–298, 300, 303,  
 316, 318–319, 321, 323, 325, 328 n26,  
 335, 361, 353, 370–371, 373 n32,  
 374–376, 381–386, 387 n70, 388 n73,  
 409, 414–415, 425–426, 432–435,  
 438–439  
 Israelite 16, 39–40, 46–48, 94, 103,  
 118, 194 n137, 200, 205, 207–208, 211,  
 213–224, 226, 229, 231, 235–236, 238,  
 254 n45, 290, 333, 335–336, 346 n77, 354,  
 411, 442  
 Israelites 103, 209 n37, 251, 372 n29

- Jacob 40, 52-53, 78, 95, 107 n19, 202,  
208, 214, 216, 218, 289-321, 325-326,  
328 n26, 335, 341 n61, 348, 361, 364-365,  
369-370, 390-391, 395, 399, 405-413, 415,  
418, 439
- Jealousy 47, 64, 88-89, 109 n30, 110, 140,  
250 n37
- Jeconias 410
- Jerusalem 293-240, 316 n86, 317 n87,  
380-387, 404, 407-410, 412-413, 415-416,  
430, 433
- Jesse 380, 386, 394
- Jesus 3, 23, 60-61, 63-67, 71-77, 79,  
82-87, 92 n133, 93, 118, 120, 170, 218-219,  
229 n89, 231-233, 237 n121, 266 n71, 301,  
303, 305-314, 337-339, 341-343, 345, 352,  
354, 393-396, 398-421, 423, 425-426,  
428, 430-435, 438-439,
- Jethro 202 n10
- Jewish-Christians 8, 22
- Jewish-Christian relations 1, 2, 5, 11, 435
- Jireh 210, 235
- John the Baptist 405 n111
- Jordan 52, 308, 416
- Joseph 16, 38, 214, 244-245, 274, 286,  
323-356, 363-365, 392, 397, 421-422, 440
- Joseph the Carpenter 120 n69
- Josiah 247-248
- Judaea 76, 410
- Judaeo-Christian 429
- Judah 38, 319, 329, 361-376, 378-379,  
383-394, 395-398, 401-411, 415, 420-431,  
439
- Judaizers 22, 259, 282-283
- Judgement 41, 44-46, 56, 58, 63, 85, 87,  
96, 110, 114, 149, 153, 155, 159-160, 250  
n37, 268, 369  
Day of 41, 43, 56, 57-58, 86, 95-96 328
- Justice 59, 110 n33, 116, 156, 184, 189, 210,  
329, 339
- Kedar 246
- Keturah 246, 258 n56, 271-272, 285-286
- King 74, 199, 204, 207 n29, 208 n31,  
210-211, 213-218, 222-224, 228, 233 n106,  
234-236, 243, 265, 310-311, 333 n34, 338,  
340-341, 344-345, 365, 368, 370, 373 n32,  
376-379, 392, 394 n82, 404, 409-418,  
430-432
- Kingdom 275-276, 368, 375-379, 393,  
395, 397, 403-404, 406, 409-418,  
428-429
- Kingdom of Heaven 81
- Kiriath/Kiriat Arba 52 n39, 53-54, 78-79,  
95
- Ladder 32, 289-290, 301-310, 313, 315-316,  
321, 439
- Lamech 113-116, 128-132, 141-144
- Late Antiquity 1-2, 5, 7, 10, 11, 13, 15-17,  
22, 26-27, 30, 90, 97, 182 n99, 187, 287,  
344, 352, 437-438, 440, 444
- Law 40, 106, 123, 132, 166, 209, 220, 226,  
228, 237, 254 n45, 259, 261, 263, 280,  
282, 289 n2, 327, 330, 346 n77, 372-374,  
385, 387, 389, 412-414, 416, 424-425, 430  
n167, 434
- Lawgiver 373-374, 403, 406, 415, 424-425
- Leah 52-53, 297, 318 n91, 335 n40
- Legislator *see* lawgiver
- Levi 212 n43, 264, 364-365
- Levitical 203 n16, 216, 221, 230, 232
- Libations 211-212, 236
- Life 16, 39-40, 42, 50, 55-57, 59, 67, 76,  
79, 80-81, 96, 119, 129, 147, 151, 161, 176,  
182-183, 185, 189, 192-194, 218, 223, 225,  
227, 239, 244, 257 n54, 262, 274, 286, 303,  
305, 311, 327, 339, 347 n78, 349, 352-353,  
356-357, 364, 392, 421-422
- Lifeless 40, 42, 44 n14
- Likeness 48, 101, 103, 115, 144, 149 n11, 415
- Lion 341, 361, 367-371, 392-398, 423
- Lot 208 n31, 227
- Luminaries 55
- Magic 169-170
- Maid/handmaid 179, 187, 241, 243, 245,  
251, 258, 260, 262, 264, 266-268, 270,  
273-274, 277, 279, 285, 340
- Mamre 52-54, 95
- Manasseh 327-328, 332 n31, 367 n16
- Mankind *see* humanity 87, 97 n143, 148,  
191 n131, 309
- Marriage 45 n18, 105-106, 107 n26, 123,  
125, 137-138, 161, 163 n40, 183, 195, 241 n7,  
242, 262, 265, 267 n72, 330, 332, 334-335,  
337, 352, 353-354, 391, 440
- Martyr(s) 119, 303, 305
- Material culture 1, 5
- Mediterranean 393
- Mehujael 149
- Melchizedek 38, 199-238, 442
- Menahem 377 n45
- Mercy 276, 58-59, 96-97, 127, 176, 191, 193
- Messiah 57n52, 175, 203 n17, 204 n17, 275,  
298-300, 312 n76, 313 n80, 319, 323, 337,  
364, 369-389, 405-406, 408, 411-412,  
423-429, 433-435, 438-439
- Messianic 194 n137, 219, 247, 298-300,  
302 n41, 310 n70, 314, 319-320, 361-365,  
371-389, 394 n83, 395, 400, 402-403,



- 409, 412, 416, 418, 421, 423, 425-429,  
432-435
- Mesopotamia 1, 6, 14, 90, 275, 306, 308,  
315 n83
- Methuselah 154-155, 158 n30, 162 n39, 190
- Methushael 149
- Michael 45 n18, 69 n77, 335
- Midianites 275 n92, 329
- Milk 387-389, 419-420, 435
- Millennial 82 n113
- Minim 2, 41 n5, 45 n16
- Mishael 363-364, 369
- Moab 245
- Monastic 25, 63, 303, 343
- Moses 160 n33, 167 n54, 214, 247, 248 n32,  
298, 268, 395, 316, 327, 334 n38, 402, 406,  
408 n120, 424-425
- Mortality 24, 54-56, 58-59, 79-81, 83,  
95-97, 220 n67
- Mount Hermon 168, 172 n74
- Mount Moriah 51-52, 54, 74-75, 79, 91,  
93-94, 210, 293 n19
- Mourning 62-63, 154-155, 190, 198 n148
- Muhammad 246 n26, 275 n87
- Muslim(s) 246-249, 272, 274-276,  
287-288, 344 n72
- Nations 194 n137, 215-216, 220, 225, 241,  
245, 247-248, 254, 273, 281 285, 290,  
311-312, 318, 368, 372, 378-381, 386, 393,  
398-399, 401-404, 406, 410-415, 425-426
- Nebuchadnezzar 166 n51, 248, 409
- Nehirah 377
- Nephilim 149
- New Testament 13 n53, 22, 26, 61, 63, 65,  
73, 83, 85, 119, 165-166, 176, 180-181, 215,  
237 n121, 301, 312 n76, 317 n89, 318-319,  
402, 434
- New Year's Day 41, 43-44, 46, 86
- Nissan 66, 86
- Noah 76, 114 n44, 129n97, 147-198,  
220 n66, 227, 229, 232
- Officer 323, 329-330, 334 n38, 350
- Oil 291-292, 300-301, 304-305, 310, 312,  
314, 321
- Ontology 83
- Oracle 246, 371 n28, 408, 412 n129
- Oral (transmission) 27-28, 30-31, 90,  
258, 441
- Orthodoxy 27-28, 30-31, 90, 358, 441
- Palestine 5, 19, 18 n68, 25 n102, 26, 74  
n90, 94, 135 n117, 169 n61, 215, 226, 236,  
357, 372, 374, 428 n160
- Paradise 39-42, 59-71, 76, 79-82, 84-89,  
92, 107, 117, 173, 187 n120
- Paran 244, 246 n26, 272
- Pardon *see* forgiveness
- Parting *see* separation
- Passion of Jesus 60, 62-66, 71, 73-74, 76,  
85f, 118, 308 n61, 396, 416-419, 430, 434
- Passover 82, 260
- Patriarch(s) 16, 53, 95, 106, 169, 203, 208,  
220-221, 232, 254, 261-262, 263, 271, 285,  
289, 293, 296, 298, 306, 308, 323, 328  
n26, 334, 353, 374, 399, 404 n117, 410,  
412-413, 428, 439-440
- Perez 363-364, 369-370
- Persecution 136, 158 n30, 192, 194, 269, 283
- Persia/Persian Empire 6, 25, 125 n86,  
275-276, 440
- Peshitta 9, 10 n42, 12, 14 n57, 31, 269, 276  
n92, 281, 340, 348 n81, 350, 353 n89, 392,  
397, 403-404, 420, 442
- Petephres *see* Potiphar
- Pharaoh 240-243, 264-266, 277-279, 323,  
329-333, 338, 340-341, 345-346, 348 n81,  
350, 354, 442
- Pharisees 207 n29, 233 n106
- Philistines 254, 366
- Phinehas 202 n10
- Piety 303, 328, 339, 413 n131
- Pilate Pontius 66 n68, 405
- Pilgrim(s)/pilgrimage 76, 95, 223
- Pillar 291-293, 300-301, 310-311, 314, 318  
n93
- Plague(s) 129 n98, 241
- Planet 303
- Plato 303
- Polemic(s) 2, 4-6, 31, 34, 41 n5, 43-45, 118,  
166, 171-172, 207 n29, 216 n56, 218-219,  
223, 226, 228-230, 233-235, 237, 261 287,  
425 n153, 437, 439, 443
- Potiphar/Potiphara 38, 323-326, 328-359
- Praise 164 n42, 262, 264, 326, 338-339,  
342, 344, 353-355, 361-363, 388 n73,  
390-393, 421
- Prayer 16, 40, 63, 120 n69, 125, 217, 225  
n81, n 82, 289 n2, 311, 361, 371 n29, 373  
n33  
House of Prayer 75 n96, 304 n54,  
316n85
- Prefiguration 165, 184-185, 263 n64, 336  
n45, 415, 419
- Pre-emptive exegesis 3 n6, 321
- Priest/priesthood 185, 199-209, 211-218,  
220-226, 228-238, 304-306, 311, 317,  
331-333, 349-350, 353-356, 405, 410,  
430-431, 439, 442

- Prince/princess 48–49, 69, 88, 174, 242  
 n12, 290, 302 n41, 327, 402, 405, 408–411,  
 424 n147, 431
- Prison 164 n42, 330 n29, 337, 341 n60, 342
- Procreation 59, 102 n21, 105–106, 107 n26,  
 108, 138–140, 161–165, 183, 194, 196–197,  
 262
- Progeny 124, 126, 257, 328
- Promise 59, 71, 73, 80, 82–83, 87, 96–97,  
 207, 244, 260, 269, 271, 295, 297–298, 301,  
 308, 319, 384, 393 n81, 438
- Promised Land 263, 290 n6, 397, 422
- Proselyte(s) 42 n5, 336 n44
- Proof text 44 n14, 45–46, 55, 153, 196, 253,  
 280, 294, 297, 299–300, 320, 331, 353, 361,  
 370–371, 375–376, 380–384, 389, 394 n83,  
 396, 399–400, 402, 410 n126, 416, 418, 421,  
 433–434
- Propagation *see* procreation
- Prophecy 102 n13, 124, 245, 247, 275,  
 281, 286, 295, 308, 323 n3, 361, 390–396,  
 398–401, 404–411, 416, 418 n140, 421, 425,  
 428, 430–431
- Prophet(s) 118, 193, 227, 295, 311 n71, 391,  
 404–411, 413, 415, 419, 430
- Protoplasts 59, 63, 65, 67–68, 84
- Prostitute 150, 370
- Providence 405, 285, 306–307, 345 n73
- Pseudepigrapha 30, 35–36, 133, 175 n84,  
 188, 440–441
- Punishment 44–47, 54–56, 58–59, 61, 71,  
 79–81, 83, 89–90, 96–97, 110, 113–114, 129  
 n97, 130, 132, 141, 143, 147, 152–153, 155,  
 157–160, 162, 176–180, 193, 248, 263, 278,  
 287, 331, 334, 352, 369, 375, 417
- Purity 134, 175, 183 n103, 185, 242, 328, 339,  
 342, 388, 420, 435
- Putiel 202 n10
- Qumran 34, 133, 238 n123, 312 n73,  
 425–426, 441
- Rachel 297, 318 n91, 325, 328 n26
- Rebekah 52–53, 205 n23, 230 n94
- Rebellion 49, 151
- Redemption 27, 32, 42, 47, 56, 59, 71, 81,  
 86–87, 97, 226, 295, 298, 310, 323, 379,  
 389, 438
- Repentance 59, 110, 110, 114 n46, 132,  
 152–156, 175–176, 178–181, 185, 189–192,  
 345, 362
- Rest day of *see* Shabbat
- Restoration 80, 46 n20, 247, 289–291, 293,  
 295, 298, 300, 316–317, 321, 407, 439
- Resurrection 39, 41–42, 54–58, 73, 79–83,  
 95–97, 119, 312, 317, 390, 395–396, 398,  
 417–418, 434, 441
- Retribution 154–155, 159
- Revelation 252, 301, 310, 438
- Reward 46, 56, 82, 209, 240–242, 257, 277,  
 328, 351, 368
- Righteous/righteousness 58, 80, 109,  
 117–119, 124, 135, 141, 147–148, 150–151,  
 154–158, 160–163, 165–166, 169–170,  
 172–175, 177, 180, 183–185, 194–197, 202,  
 204, 209 n37, 210, 213–214, 227–229,  
 233–234, 237, 244 n19, 248–249, 251, 253,  
 256–257, 284–285, 289–290, 296 n24, 299,  
 307, 319 n94, 323–324, 330, 336–337, 339,  
 344 n71, 345, 353–354, 364, 378, 383 n60,  
 385, 394–395, 401, 412 n129, 425–426, 440
- Ritual 113, 185 n12, 212, 326
- Robber/robbery 147, 245, 258, 285, 388
- Robe(s) 361, 381, 384–385, 387, 405,  
 416–418
- Rome/Romans 12, 48 n24, 249 n34, 372  
 n29
- Roman Empire 63, 249 n34, 346 n75, 349  
 n83, 406–411, 430
- Sacrament/sacramental 1, 6, 25, 63, 168,  
 347 n78 n79, 430, 440
- Sacrifice 11, 73–77, 79, 93, 99, 109–110, 113,  
 114 n43, 117–118, 126 n90, 164 n42, 185, 203  
 n14, 207, 210, 212 n43, 217 n56, 223, 225,  
 227, 235–236, 250 n37, 255 n49, 260, 297,  
 323 n1, 408, 419–420
- Sadducees 83
- Salathiel 410
- Salem 199, 209–211, 213, 215, 217 n57, 218,  
 221–223, 228, 234–235
- Sam(m)ael 47–50, 88–90, 100–104,  
 133–135, 149 n11
- Sanctuary 294, 316, 415
- Saracens 273–274, 276
- Sarah 52–53, 239–243, 249–271, 273,  
 276–2–282, 284–286, 440
- Satan 48 n24, 50 n32, 63, 67–71, 87–88, 90  
 n128, 118, 120, 128 n96, 174, 342
- Saul 253, 268, 282
- Saviour 62, 169–170, 190, 225, 336–337,  
 395, 409 n125
- Sceptre 361, 371–376, 378–379, 395, 398,  
 403, 410–411, 424
- School of Alexandria 23
- School of Antioch 23, 268, 283, 313 n78,  
 392, 397, 410, 417 n139, 422
- Scribe(s) 372–373, 400 n99, 424–426

- Scripture/Scriptural 1, 12 n49, 31, 36–37, 48, 52, 87, 123, 128, 159, 172, 191, 196–197, 215–216, 227, 234 n108, 260, 266, 268, 280, 307, 310, 313 n78, 338–339, 342, 345, 348–350, 353, 377 n45, 390, 393, 395, 399–400, 403 n106, 407, 413, 419–420, 434, 437–440, 443
- Second Temple 92, 217 n56, 295
- Seduction 48 n23, 59, 68–69, 89 n128, 90, 120, 167, 174, 343
- Seed 96, 121, 151 n17, 170, 183, 196, 206, 263
- Semen 103, 394 n86
- Semitic 14, 31, 265, 443
- Separation 1, 6–7, 149, 151, 163–164, 170, 184, 186, 234 n7
- Septuagint 12, 31, 42, 62, 69, 167, 169, 171, 218, 231, 234, 267–268, 270, 272, 276 n92, 281–282, 283–285, 302, 340, 345–346, 353, 355, 390, 392–393, 397–398, 400, 424 n147, 426–427
- Seraphim 48
- Serpent 39, 47–50, 59, 68–71, 79, 87–90, 101, 103–104, 120–121, 134
- Servant 205, 211, 229, 241 n4, 243, 251, 258, 261, 263, 269, 285, 345, 348 n81, 408
- Seth 102–101, 108 n28, 114 n44, 115, 121, 122 n74, 123 n80, 124, 133, 136 n121, 137–138, 142 n138, 143, 148–152, 166–175, 185–188, 195 n140, 198, 214, 217, 442
- Shabbat 44, 49, 212
- Shechem 335, 354
- Shepherd 109, 118, 132
- Shewbread 212
- Shiloh 361, 372, 373 n32, 376–379, 398, 402 n105, 427–429
- Shrine 305
- Shur 272 n80
- Siblings 105–108, 123–128, 139, 440
- Sichem 222
- Sidon 224
- Siloam 402, 427
- Simeon 364–365, 372 n29
- Sin 29, 40, 43 n8, 44–46, 49–50, 59–60, 65, 73, 79–81, 83, 85, 107 n26, 114 n46, 129 n97, 130, 142, 151, 181, 183, 190, 192–193, 308, 389, 418
- Sinai 46, 103, 106 n24, 260–261
- Skull 72–73, 75–77, 79, 93–94
- Slave 259–260, 262–263, 269, 274, 325–326, 331, 338, 341–342, 349 n83, 350, 352, 408, 432 n172
- Slaughter 113, 127, 276, 326, 349, 386
- Solomon 75, 77, 247–248
- Son of Man 166, 299, 301–302
- Soul 42, 57 n52, 59, 81–83, 113, 164 n42, 303, 305, 328 n26, 338–339
- Spirit 42, 48, 52, 59, 62, 119, 135, 153, 158, 169, 176, 260–261, 268, 282, 294, 304, 323, 328 n26, 412–413, 419
- Staff 112–113, 127, 361, 372–376, 395, 398, 411, 424, 426
- Star(s) 169, 371 n28
- Stone(s) 110, 112–113, 127–130, 132, 141, 289, 291–301, 310–314, 316, 318–321, 374, 380, 439
- Sword 40, 127, 251
- Symmachus 13 n52, 31, 62, 272, 396
- Synagogue 28 n109, 261, 413, 415, 432
- Tabernacle 212 n43, 292 n16, 304 n53, 305, 316–317
- Talmudic 3, 19, 35 n112, 90 n131, 94, 378  
Post-Talmudic 28
- Tamar 329, 362–365, 367–370, 397, 421–422
- Tanis 333–336, 354
- Tema 246
- Temple 46, 50–52, 54, 73–77, 79, 91–95, 110–111, 120 n69, 194 n137, 208, 210–212, 222–224, 229, 235–236, 238, 248–249, 287, 290–295, 314–318, 321, 374, 383 n60, 385, 405–407, 411, 415, 430, 439
- Temptation 151, 323–324, 327, 340–343, 345, 387
- Test 242, 255, 284, 345
- Testimonia* 22, 302, 311, 390, 393, 398, 400, 421
- Theodotion 13 n52, 62, 272 n81
- Theophany/theophanic 301, 307–308, 309–310
- Thief/theft 62, 244–246, 345, 286
- Tishri 40–41, 43, 86
- Tithe 200, 207–209, 220–221, 231, 233–234, 289 n2
- Tomb 51–54, 58, 73–76, 78–79, 91–95, 235, 314, 337, 443
- Torah 11, 15 n59, 16, 27 n108, 46 n20, 229, 327, 374, 383 n60, 385–389, 424, 434  
Oral 47–50, 51, 57–58, 104, 106, 245, 300 n37  
Written 149 n10, 204, 208, 211–213, 258, 319 n95
- Transgression 39, 46–48, 50, 54–55, 58–60, 64–65, 68, 79–80, 84–85, 87, 125, 140, 308, 387
- Transmission 61, 63–65

- Tree of Knowledge 42, 45, 55 n45, 59  
 Tree of Life 64, 67, 79  
 Tribe 129, 206 n24, 224, 361, 367–369,  
 371–374, 376, 378 n47, 381 n54, 387,  
 392–394, 405–407, 410, 422–424, 431  
 Trumpet 41  
 Typology/typological 22, 52, 74, 118,  
 124, 166, 259–261, 276 n92, 307, 310, 312,  
 320–321, 334, 338  
 Tyre 246  
  
 Vanity 6, 32, 324, 329, 352  
 Vessel(s) 69, 80, 88 n124, 301  
 Violence 128, 180, 254, 256, 268, 282  
 Virgin 120 n69, 124, 394  
 Virginity 59, 183 n102, 184  
 Virtue 80, 190, 202, 204, 207–208, 233–234,  
 260, 323, 327–328, 338–340, 343, 345  
 Vision 155 n26, 290, 294–295, 301–310,  
 313–316  
 Vulgate 31, 78, 403  
  
 War 78, 124, 208, 253, 343 n65, 344, 385  
 Warrior 323 n1, 385, 418, 434  
 Wine 199, 211–213, 223, 225–226, 235–236,  
 361, 381–382, 384–389, 414 n133, 416–420  
 Wordplay 153, 164 n42, 213, 241–242, 244,  
 248, 253–254, 277, 287, 294, 348, 366, 378,  
 380, 382, 387, 389, 433  
 World to come/future world 54, 110,  
 148 n7, 194 n137, 212 n43, 295, 307, 328,  
 363–364, 385, 388  
 Worship 63, 75 n96, 213, 236, 251–252, 280,  
 391, 406  
  
 Zechariah 307  
 Zedekiah 364, 370–371, 409  
 Zelophehad 327  
 Zerah 363–364, 369  
 Zerubbabel 211, 214, 298–299, 410–411  
 Zion 210, 312, 325, 337, 395, 413  
 Zilpah 297, 318 n91

