Edited by
Lee Martin McDonald
and James H. Charlesworth

"Non-canonical" Religious Texts in Early Judaism and Early Christianity

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JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN TEXTS
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LEE MARTIN MCDONALD
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Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AJSL	*American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature*
ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt*
BZNT	*Biblische Zeitschrift für das Neue Testament* Journal
CRINT	Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten and Neuen Testaments
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HUCA	*Hebrew Union College Annual*
ICC	International Critical Commentary
JECS	*Journal of Early Christian Studies*
JJS	*Journal for Jewish Studies*
JPS	Jewish Publication Society
JR	*Journal of Religion*
JSHRZ	Jiidische Schriften aus hellenistisch-romischer Zeit
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism*
JSJSup	Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplement
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement
JSP	*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
MTS	*Marburger Theologische Studien*
NICNT	*New International Commentary on the New Testament*
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NovTSup	Supplements to *Novum Testamentum*
OTP	*Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. James H. Charlesworth: 2 vols.; Garden City, NY: 1983, 1985)
PG	*Patrologia cursus completus: Series graeca* (ed. J.-P. Migne; 162 vols.; Paris: J.-R. Migne, 1857–86)
PL	*Patrologia cursus completus: Series latina* (ed. J.-P. Migne; 217 vols.; Paris: J.-P Migne, 1844–64)
RB	*Revue biblique*
RevQ	*Revue de Qumran*

SBLEJL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and Its Literature
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SNTS	Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas/Society for New Testament Studies
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
STDJ	*Studies of the Texts of the Desert of Judah*
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigraphica
TDOT	*Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (ed. G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren; trans. J. T. Willis, G. W. Bromiley, and D. E. Green; 8 vols.; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974–)
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TWNT	*Theologisches Worterbuch zum Neuen Testament* (ed. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1932–79)
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
VC	*Vigiliae christianae*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Alten und Neuen Testament
ZNW	*Zeitschrift fur die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*

Introduction

"Non-canonical" Religious Texts in Early Judaism and Early Christianity

Lee M. McDonald and James H. Charlesworth

For decades biblical scholars have focused attention on the expanding collection of the so-called "extra-canonical" documents that several early Jewish and Christian communities initially acknowledged as inspired by God. Most of these scholars are well aware of the fluidity of the early Jewish and Christian scripture collections in antiquity. Eventually, most of these sacred texts ceased to have a continuing authoritative role in either Judaism or Christianity. Some of these texts that are now identified as "apocryphal" by Protestant Christians or "deutero-canonical" by Roman Catholics continue to have widespread acceptance as sacred scriptures in both Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches today. In the case of the *Books of Enoch* (= *1 Enoch*), they considerably influenced early Christianity until the third century CE and the Essene community at Qumran in the first centuries BCE and CE. Today, the *Books of Enoch* continues as a part of the sacred scripture collection of many Ethiopians.

Scholars of ancient biblical literature (broadly defined) almost universally recognize that the rejected ancient religious sources are critically important for understanding the context of Early Judaism as well as Early Christianity. They are certainly requisite study for careful biblical interpretation. These writings are also fundamental for understanding the developments of both the Jewish and Christian biblical canons. Many of these ancient documents are now given careful attention in various academies and even in some churches. For example, the *Odes of Solomon* has received considerable attention recently in critical investigations and commentaries as well as recent translations. Most likely this collection of forty-two hymns is one of the oldest collections of Christian hymns that we have, dating from around the end of the first century CE or early second century, and they have recently been put to contemporary music for churches (see the *Odes Project*).

The process of recognizing the extended importance of these documents involves re-evaluating their historical importance, even though most were judged by the ancient rabbis and church leaders to be "non-canonical" and therefore could no longer be determinative for faith, historical inquiry, or theological studies. Biblical and text critical scholars especially have seen

the importance of reconsidering the function of these ancient documents within the ancient communities. This research requires not only a sociological analysis of ancient groups and societies, but also a re-examination of the canonical processes that led to the current fixed (and closed) scriptural traditions in Judaism and Christianity. A sociological study (although reflected only sparingly in this present collection) will improve considerably our sensitivity to the phenomena that was earlier judged by scholars to be of marginal importance. Such investigative research includes a perception of the sociology of knowledge and the sociology of authority. Now, suffice it to state that what was once considered the background of biblical texts is perceived by more and more scholars as the foreground.

Scholars more recently have begun to agree that the shaping of the biblical canons of Judaism and Christianity was not completed or closed within the first centuries BCE and CE as was largely accepted a generation ago. Indeed, it is obvious that within Judaism and Christianity such canons were in a considerable state of fluidity for several centuries after the time of Hillel and Jesus. It has become clear to scholars that the biblical canons of Judaism and Christianity were still taking shape well into the medieval periods when both various Jewish and Christian communities were still citing these supposed "extra-canonical" texts as scripture in various forms. Consequently, some biblical scholars have sensed the need to move beyond focusing on "apocryphal" (or "spurious") texts, to exploring the importance of the sociological setting of those writings for biblical studies and, at the same time, re-examining the evolution of the biblical canons. All three disciplines (textual, biblical, and sociological) have unfortunately and far too frequently been isolated from each other in modern research. It is our contention that they need to be brought together in the search for a better understanding of how, and in what ways, ancient texts functioned in early Jewish and Christian societies.

Many old questions now appear in a new light as a result of recent discoveries and research. Some of these include the following:

- Why did many of the so-called apocryphal or pseudepigraphical works cease to function authoritatively in ancient religious communities?
- How had they once functioned in those communities and what led to a change in their function?
- Why were such writings eventually branded as "extra-canonical" and what did that mean then and what does it mean now?
- Further, to what extent did Jews and Christians continue to use the so-called extra-canonical documents as authoritative even though they ostensibly were judged to be outside the biblical canons?
- How extensively did the decisions about authoritative sacred texts by both rabbis and church leaders influence the institutions they represented?

- What are the sociological and theological ramifications of the observation that for centuries after church councils began making lists of authoritative scriptures, numerous ancient biblical codices were organized so as to include ancient books that the councils had earlier determined to be outside of the recognized sacred collections of the church?

Focusing on the hundreds of Dead Sea Scrolls, as well as numerous other manuscripts recovered over the last two centuries, scholars are rightly raising many questions about their functions in their original and even later settings. It is no longer possible to conclude that such texts were initially judged in antiquity to be outside of a fixed and closed biblical canon. Such canons were not yet defined either by Jews or by Christians when these religious texts emerged and functioned in a sacred fashion in the communities that welcomed, read, and transmitted them. We might also ask, by way of example, why is it that only in Ethiopia do *1 Enoch* and *Jubilees*, as well as other so-called non-canonical texts, continue to function as scripture? Who decided and why that the scriptures of both Judaism and Christianity were limited to a finite set of ancient sacred texts? Why did the Greek Orthodox Church not admit the Apocalypse of John to their biblical canon until roughly 1000 CE and why has the Syrian Orthodox Church *not* included many books, like the Apocalypse of John, within its canon? Will such questions help us understand better the *later* need expressed by both Jews and Christians for a fixed biblical authority?

One of the problems that biblical scholars regularly encounter when answering the above questions is the misleading nomenclature in our disciplines. It is difficult to finding appropriate terms to describe ancient religious texts and the social phenomena surrounding the shaping and formation of the Bible. Terms like "Bible," "biblical," "non-biblical," "canonical," "non-canonical," "apocryphal," "pseudepigraphical," "deutero-canonical," and "de-canonization" are all anachronistic terms that did not exist in the formative stages of either Judaism or Christianity. Should we continue to use them in reference to ancient religious literature when describing their initial history and reception in subsequent centuries? It may be convenient to use these terms today since they identify specifically the classes of literature that we are discussing, but it is difficult nowadays to find adequate language to identify this literature. As a result, we continue to use these designations but with awareness of their limitations, namely that they are prejudicial for contemporary research since they did not have those designations in their early history and the designations often misrepresent both Early Judaism and Early Christianity.

This is the second volume in a series that will draw attention to these ancient religious texts, especially the so-called "non-canonical" texts, by focusing on how they were used or functioned in Early Judaism and

Early Christianity. The contributors to the present volume are biblical scholars who have chosen one or more Jewish or Christian apocryphal or pseudepigraphical texts, with the aim of describing their ancient functions in their emerging social settings.

The first of these papers is by Gerbern S. Oegema of McGill University who examines the challenging subject "Early Judaism and Modern Culture" and explores the literature and theology of Early Judaism (300 BCE–200 CE) from a hermeneutical point of view and identifies its relevance for today. He looks first at what scholars have said about the relevance of the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Dead Sea Scrolls, Philo, and Josephus. He differentiates four phases of reflection on the non-canonical writings: the early church, the Reformation, the nineteenth and twentieth century, and recent scholarship. Additionally, he asks what theologically can be said about the contents of these writings. How do the ancient authors treat topics such as the authority of the Bible, the importance of philosophy, the quest for religious identity, the relevance of the literary world, gender, ethics, the inter-religious dialogue, and politics? Then he discusses the importance of the early Jewish literature for today. Few scholars have focused on the relevance of this literature for the church, the synagogue, or society as a whole. Can these writings still play a role in modern-day reflections on culture and biblical theology? And how do they relate to the authority of the canonical Bible? These are critical questions for this rest of this volume, as we will see below.

Craig A. Evans of Acadia Divinity College, in his paper on Christian literature found at Oxyrhynchus, focuses on the early church's familiarity with non-canonical writings. He makes several important points from his survey of all of the Christian literature thus far found and published from that location, including the Apostolic Fathers and New Testament Pseudepigrapha, the Jewish Scriptures (including the Old Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha), and also the Christian letters, ecclesiastical letters, homilies, and business papers, prayers, and magical texts. His aim is to identify the nature and range of literature to which Christians in and around ancient Oxyrhynchus had access, as well as to infer what writings Christians at Oxyrhynchus regarded as sacred and authoritative. He also broaches how these works on the fringes of canon may help us better to comprehend Christian piety, worship, and daily life.

Thirdly, in her paper, "The Reception of the Pseudepigrapha in Syriac Traditions: The Case of *2 Baruch*," Liv Ingeborg Lied of the University of Bergen discusses the interpretations and functions of pseudepigraphical writings in the Syriac traditions. Of particular interest is the reception history of the first- to second-century-CE Jewish work *2 Baruch* in Western Syriac Christianity, with a special regard for the relationship *2 Baruch* had with Syriac scripture and liturgical texts. Parts of *2 Baruch* (44.9–15; 72.1–73.2) are attested in three Syriac lectionary manuscripts and Lied discusses how *2 Baruch* may have been understood and used

by Syriac-speaking Christians. Issues related to the apparent inclusion of *2 Baruch*, along with *4 Ezra*, and Josephus' *Jewish War* book 6 in the Syriac Bible in the sixth to seventh century are also discussed. She asks whether *2 Baruch* was perceived as a non-scriptural, Jewish work, or as a more or less integrated part of the Christian Old Testament at that time. Since two sections of *2 Baruch* have been found in lectionary manuscripts, it is likely that these sections of the work may have once been part of the liturgy of the Syriac Church.

Next, Martin Heide of Munich University, in his perceptive study of "The Coptic, Arabic, and Ethiopic Versions of the *Testament of Abraham* and the Emergence of the *Testaments of Isaac and Jacob*," focuses on *The Testament of Abraham*, one of the most important writings of the *Testaments of the Three Patriarchs*, written about 150 BCE in Greek. It is an important witness of a "universal" Judaism that favours general virtues such as hospitality and charity, as well as the avoidance of sinful attitudes. This paper includes insights into the Arabic and Ethiopic manuscripts that preserve the book and offers a preliminary study that will lead to a critical edition of the Arabic and Ethiopic versions of the *Testament of Abraham*.

Danny Zacharias of Acadia Divinity College presents an engaging chapter on "The Son of David in *Psalms of Solomon* 17." He has observed that the *Psalms of Solomon* 17 provides an extensive Jewish portrait of messianic expectation and constitutes the earliest example of the title "son of David" for the coming messiah. Though this text is the dominant psalm of the collection in which it is found, it is often overlooked that the portrait of this anticipated messiah is a culmination of the hopes expressed in the previous psalms. Zacharias argues that *Psalms of Solomon* 17 is a vital text for understanding pre-Christian messianic hopes. Zacharias draws attention to the similarities and differences between this and other messianic texts at the turn of the era, and suggests possible connections with various New Testament texts.

Eric Christopher Rowe of the University of Notre Dame focuses his paper on the many scriptures cited by the author of the *Epistle of Barnabas*. In his "The Enochic Library of the Author of the *Epistle of Barnabas*," he describes how the *Epistle of Barnabas* contains more scriptural quotations than any other book of either the Apostolic Fathers or the New Testament. The corpus of Jewish literature from which these quotations are drawn, he claims, includes a number of books that lie outside of what is now considered the Hebrew Bible, especially the Enoch writings. This paper surveys these quotations and reveals that the author of the *Epistle of Barnabas* utilized a "scriptural corpus" similar to what would have been used within the Enoch and Essene branches of Judaism (and not unlike that which is evidenced in the Dead Sea Scrolls).

James Charlesworth begins our section of the New Testament apocrypha and pseudepigrapha with a study of one of the oldest

Christian hymnals entitled the *Odes of Solomon*. He asks who would bring together the following texts and for what reason:

Nativity of Mary (V),
Jude 1–25 (VII),
1–2 Peter (VIII),
Psalms 33–34 (IX),
3 Corinthians (X),
Ode of Solomon 11 (XI),
a liturgical fragment (XII),
Melito of Sardis' *Peri Pascha* (XIII),
and the *Apology of Phileas* (XX).

Charlesworth asks what was common to all these texts, if anything? Who brought them together? What functions did they serve? He concludes by asking about the functions of such texts for the early Christians.

James Edwards has an intriguing chapter of pivotal importance on the influence of the *Gospel of the Hebrews*, or the "Hebrew Gospel" in Early Christianity and shows its use by the Ebionites. He argues that there was no separate "Gospel of the Ebionites," but rather that the gospel they used was the *Hebrew Gospel*. It may also be identical to the ancient "Gospel of Matthew," which is not a Greek version of the canonical Gospel of Matthew, but has strong affinities with the canonical Gospel of Luke. To be taken seriously for further discussion is his claim that it is likely that Luke's Special Source was the *Hebrew Gospel*. In the prologue to Luke, the author indicates that he knew many narratives. What are they? The reader will find Edwards' thesis intriguing and well supported. This chapter is one of the strongest arguments to date on the significance and influence of this non-canonical text in Early Christianity.

Caleb Webster of Claremont Graduate University, in his chapter on "Trapped in a Forgerer's Rhetoric," argues that the author of *3 Corinthians* "semi-successfully" passed off his work as Pauline, and so it enjoyed a long life of "canonicity" in the East, and somewhat in the West. *3 Corinthians* includes a letter from Corinthian Christians to Paul that tells him about heretical teachings going on in that church and Paul's response to those teachings. What was the heresy behind the text and what was the church's response? Webster rightly argues that scholarship on *3 Corinthians* and similar documents should strive to transcend the insider versus outsider, and orthodoxy versus heresy, polemic of these texts.

David Nielsen of Brigham Young University clarifies the acceptance of *The Shepherd of Hermas* in Early Christianity. This writing was one of the most popular non-canonical books in early Christianity that was not accepted into the later church's biblical canon. The work also appears in some codices that indicate its formative influence.

George Themelis Zervos of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington focuses on a very important early Christian apocryphon that he

contends needs considerable re-evaluation by biblical scholars today. In "The *Protevangelium of James* and the Composition of the Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex: Chronology, Theology, and Liturgy," he introduces recent critical evaluations of this second-century book and moves away from the earlier pessimistic assessment of the third-century copy of the *Protevangelium* in the Bodmer Papyrus V that has become known as the "Bodmer Codex Miscellanea" and concludes that it held a place of primacy in that codex and also in many early Christian churches. This new understanding of Papyrus Bodmer V, and of the "Bodmer Codex Miscellanea," he shows provides us with a rare glimpse into the interaction between scripture, canon, theology, and liturgy as they developed in the formative Christian centuries.

Continuing a focus on the same early Christian work, Mary F. Foskett of Wake Forest University examines the "The Child Mary in the *Protevangelium of James*." She claims that the narrative's early chapters, which tell the story of Mary and her childhood in terms that stand quite apart from canonical portrayals of Jesus' mother, can be read as rhetorical recasting aimed at elevating Mary above criticism and bestowing upon her even greater praise and honor. However, when read in the context of ancient constructions of childhood and Greco-Roman biographical depiction of the early lives of its famous subjects, the *Protevangelium of James* 1–7 emerges not only as the idealization of Mary's childhood, but as a representation of ancient ambivalence about children and the relationship between childhood and adulthood.

Lily Vuong of McMaster University continues the focus on this same document in her "Purity, Piety, and the Purposes of the *Protevangelium of James*." She recognizes that in modern research, non-canonical gospels, acts, letters, and apocalypses have been understood primarily in terms of their relationships to the New Testament writings and so treated as secondary in their significance for our understanding of Christian history. However, she praises the work of scholars such as Stephen Shoemaker, who have investigated the diversity of Marian apocrypha and their use in medieval Christian communities. In this paper, she considers the significance of Marian apocrypha in the *Protevangelium of James* and focuses on its genre and concern for ritual purity. She concludes that, like the similar Greco-Roman encomium genre, its overarching concern is to elevate Mary as an exemplar accessible to other women. When approached from this perspective, the *Protevangelium of James* provides important evidence for the complex relationships between "canonical" and "non-canonical" gospel traditions as they relate to early Christian views of gender and piety.

Brian P. Sowers of the University of Cincinnati writes about the legendary figure Thecla, popular for several centuries in the early church. In his "Thecla Desexualized: The Saint Justina Legend and the Reception of the Christian Apocrypha in Late Antiquity," he claims that this legend had a profound impact on the role of women in early Christian literature. Central to Thecla's influence was her unusual use of masculine dress and hairstyle to join Paul's missionary team. Subsequent female protagonists in early Christian literature

sometimes followed similar and sometimes bizarre sexual ambiguities to such an extent that some scholars have seen in Thecla the beginning of a transvestite motif. This dissemination of the Thecla persona was primarily a literate one; namely, women read the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* while on pilgrimage and this had a significant effect on the spread of the Thecla cult to the edges of the Roman Empire. Sowers' paper explores how this story and text spread through the Roman Empire and variously impacted narratives about female saints. Later narratives influenced by the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* often manipulated the Thecla legend to maintain the social mores of fourth-century urban Christianity.

The above papers show the fluidity of the notion of scripture in the early centuries of the Church and in Judaism of late antiquity, but they also show the value of examining the ancient religious texts that were not included in the Jewish or Christian biblical canons. As the above scholars who offered their papers for this publication show, there is much that can be learned from examining and comparing these ancient texts with the canonical literature and evaluating them in their social context. None of the ancient writings happened in a vacuum and the non-canonical writings not only aid in our interpretation of many canonical writings, but, as noted above, they also shed considerable light on the context of both Early Judaism and Early Christianity.

The editors especially want to express appreciation to Dr. Kenneth Penner, Associate Professor of Old Testament Studies at St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia, Canada, for his capable and valued assistance in receiving as well as doing the initial editing and formatting of the papers in this volume. He has ably served as secretary for the Society of Biblical Literature section on *The Function of Non-Canonical Writings in Early Judaism and Early Christianity* from its beginning in 2007 and has made many valuable contributions to the text of the papers in this volume. We also want to express appreciation to Mr. Art Boulet for his considerable help in getting this manuscript prepared for the editors at T&T Clark.

30 May 2011

Chapter 1

Early Judaism and Modern Culture: Reflections on the Theological Relevance of Early Jewish Literature[1]

Gerbern S. Oegema

Early Judaism can, to a large extent, be defined by its literary production which, besides the canonical scriptures, includes the so-called non-canonical books. Non-canonical books can be defined as those writings which originate from antiquity, are Jewish and/or Christian, and have not been included in the canons of either classic Christianity[2] or Rabbinic Judaism. These writings include all of the Pseudepigrapha as well as the Apocrypha (although the latter have been included in the canons of the Septuagint and the Vulgate), the non-biblical writings found in Qumran, and the books of Philo and Josephus.

In other words, one of the most important common features of these non-canonical writings is that they all originate from the period of Early Judaism during the Greco-Roman period (300 BCE to 200 CE), a period decisive for the formation of Judaism and Christianity as we now know them,[3] even though during this period there were a number of other competing Jewish and Christian groups with different biblical canons and hermeneutics as well.[4]

1 Paper read at the program unit "Function of Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphal Writings in Early Judaism and Early Christianity" of the Society of Biblical Literature in Boston, November 2008. The paper has been considerably expanded for publication in this volume. See also my forthcoming book *Early Judaism and Modern Culture: Essays on Early Jewish Literature and Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, forthcoming). I thank Jim Charlesworth and Lee McDonald for inviting me to both the seminar and the book publication.

2 With a few notable exceptions, such as *1 Enoch*, in certain canons.

3 For the Pseudepigrapha in English translation with introductions, see James H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols.; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983–85). For an introduction to the Jewish writings from the Greco-Roman period, i.e., Philo, Josephus, the Qumran writings, the Apocrypha, and the Pseudepigrapha, see Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ: Revised and Edited by Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Martin Goodman* (Vol. 1–3.2; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1973–87).

4 In the case of Judaism, "Hellenistic Judaism" knew of more and other canonical writings than nascent "Rabbinic Judaism," and so did "Enochic Judaism"—if we

1.1. Research on Literature on Early Judaism

If one looks at the period covered by Emil Schürer's first printing of his *History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, and Kraft and Nickelsburg's *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters*, it is obvious that the study of Early Christianity within its historical context, as it was practiced during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, has seen a kind of pendulum swing between interest in the Jewish context and the Hellenistic context. Very roughly speaking and limiting oneself to the twentieth century, one could say that in the first decades the Hellenistic context prevailed, while after the Second World War there was a shift to the Jewish context (a shift in which the Holocaust and its aftermath were undoubtedly influential). At the end of the century, one can perceive a renewed interest in the Hellenistic context, sometimes in a very one-sided form, as for instance in efforts to interpret entire New Testament books solely from the perspective of resistance against Roman imperial ideology.[5] Through all this, there has always been interest in "Hellenistic" or Early Judaism as a mediating factor.

And still, in all of these views, there seems to be hardly any willingness to accept the fact that for several decades Early Judaism has been an independent field that no longer needs the legitimization of Biblical Studies, Jewish Studies, or New Testament Studies. One could even argue that these fields are all, at least to some degree, *dependent on* the field of Early Judaism, as, chronologically speaking, important parts of the Hebrew Bible and the Septuagint as well as the New Testament can demonstrably be said to have originated in the period of Early Judaism. It will therefore be of the utmost importance to address the issue of the necessity of an independency of the field of Early Judaism, reach clarity on its methodology, and reflect on the hermeneutical implications it has for the neighboring fields.

Examples of the most recent introductions to the field as a whole, which at the same time are the very few key works we have, include Cohen's *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*, Evans' *Noncanonical Writings and New Testament Interpretation*, Nickelsburg's *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah*, deSilva's *Introducing*

allow ourselves to employ these three umbrella titles as arbitrary references to certain contemporary currents and specific socio-religious settings during those days—whereas the group behind the manuscript finds at Qumran possibly had (in some cases) totally different authoritative writings from all three. In Christianity, one may observe a similar diversity. One need only mention—apart from the various traditions found within the New Testament itself, of which some are clearly pseudepigraphic—the early gnostic writings (the Nag Hammadi Library, for example), early Christian apocrypha (including the non-canonical gospels), the apostolic writings, and the various letters, documents, and inscriptions from the first two centuries of the Common Era.

5 This has especially been the case with the Revelation of John.

the Apocrypha, and VanderKam's *An Introduction to Early Judaism*.[6] While these do assume the field to be an independent area of research and distinguish it from Biblical, New Testament, Jewish, and Religious Studies, they clearly fail to establish its place within their context. None gives sufficient attention to the history of research in the field itself, each highlighting instead only one aspect or approach, whether the literary, political, religious, historical, or sometimes hermeneutical dimension of the literature and how it fits into the history of Judaism and Christianity from 300 BCE to 200 CE.[7]

None of these introductions reflects on the emergence of the field itself, the adaptation of methodology from the neighboring fields, the cross-fertilization with these neighboring fields, or the implications that the study of Early Judaism has for the other fields. There is no concise history of research for the field as a whole, but one finds only articles on specific aspects of it.[8] There is no chronological outline of the major scholars and findings and there is no systematic overview of all the hermeneutical, methodological, and theological consequences to which all these introductions relate.[9]

Most, if not all, of the publications from the past 150 years, including the past 20 years up to 2006 not covered by Kraft and Nickelsburg, can be found in DiTommaso's *A Bibliography of Pseudepigrapha Research* and in Lehnardt's *Bibliographie zu den jüdischen Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit*.[10] It goes beyond the present scope even to try to do justice to the nearly 10,000 publications that have appeared on the Pseudepigrapha alone, the vast majority since 1975. Qumran studies, Septuagint studies, Philo, Josephus, and archaeology, to mention just a few related fields that have been considered to be relevant to the study of

6 See below for more details.

7 For a history of Early Judaism research up to 1985 one can still refer to R. Kraft and G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars, 1986). It will suffice here to refer to the entries, fields, and topics covered by the contributors to this book, as it shows the areas in which the study of Early Judaism progressed most in the second half of the twentieth century. Of particular note here are the subfields of the Qumran scrolls, the Pseudepigrapha, Philo, Josephus, Jewish mysticism, and Jewish gnosis, as well as more systematic topics such as temple, Torah, and angelology/demonology.

8 See Lorenzo DiTommaso, *A Bibliography of Pseudepigrapha Research 1850–1999* (JSPSup 39; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 105–25.

9 There are now extensive text editions and translations of all the major manuscripts of the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and Qumran writings (James Charlesworth, Emanuel Tov et al.), and several bibliographies (e.g., Lorenzo DiTommaso, *Bibliography*; Andreas Lehnardt, *Bibliographie zu den jüdischen Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit* [JSHRZ Supplementa 6/2; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1999]), as well as some fine introductions (John Collins, Shaye Cohen, Craig Evans, George Nickelsburg, James VanderKam et al.), and new commentary series (such as *Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha* and *Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature*).

10 DiTommaso, *Bibliography*; Lehnardt, *Bibliographie*.

Early Judaism, would add at least another 10,000. However, given the fact that there is no overview yet of what research has actually achieved, which methods have been used, and how the results have been made relevant and fruitful for Biblical, Classical, and Jewish Studies, such a study is a real desideratum.[11] Some brief introductory comments should therefore suffice here.

1.2. Introductions to Early Judaism

Even in the planned reprint of *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters* edited by Kraft and Nickelsburg, the contributors give only very brief general introductions to the history of research, and then concentrate on the literary and historical aspects of the early Jewish writings from the period between 300 BCE and 200 CE. Thus, they do define the field as an independent research field and distinguish it from Old and New Testament Studies, but clearly fail to legitimate its place within the context of these fields. This publication as well as other introductions (see A. M. Dénis and the JSHRZ) often follow Emil Schürer's *History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, which between 1973 and 1987 has been extensively revised and updated in an English edition by Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Martin Goodman, but, as such, remains a handbook going back to a nineteenth-century German concept of scholarship, first published in 1885. Those who criticized Schürer's approach or who have offered alternatives include, for example, G. Alon, G. Boccaccini, L. L. Grabbe, J. Neusner et al., M. E. Stone, as well as the *Cambridge History of Judaism*.

11 It will suffice here to mention just some of the more important works on Early Judaism: W. Burkert, *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985); W. D. Davies, *Christian Origins and Judaism* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1962); Troels Engberg-Pedersen (ed.), *Paul Beyond the Judaism/Hellenism Divide* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2001); L. H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993). See now also his *Judaism and Hellenism Reconsidered* (Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 107; Leiden: Brill, 2006); Lester L. Grabbe, *Judaic Religion in the Second Temple Period: Belief and Practice from the Exile to Yavneh* (London: Routledge, 2000); Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period* (trans. John Bowden; London: SCM, 1974), trans. of *Judentum und Hellenismus, Studien zu ihrer Begegnung unter besonderer Berücksichtigung Palästinas bis zur Mitte des 2 Jh.s v.Chr.* (2nd edn.; WUNT 10; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1973); R. Kraft and G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *Early Judaism*; and P. Schäfer, *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture* (3 vols.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998).

Most, if not all, introductions to Early Judaism give only very brief general introductions to the history of scholarship, and then concentrate on one or more of the literary and historical aspects of the writings from the period between 300 BCE and 200 CE. Thus, they do accept the field to be an independent research field and distinguish it from Biblical, New Testament, Jewish and Religious Studies. Yet they clearly fail to methodologically establish its place within the context of these fields. Examples of the most recent introductions to the field as a whole, which at the same time are the few key works we have, are:

Alon, G., *Jews, Judaism, and the Classical World* (Jerusalem, 1977).
Boccaccini, G., *Middle Judaism: Jewish Thought, 300 BCE to 200 CE* (Minneapolis, 1991).
Cohen, Shaye J. D., *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah* (Philadelphia, 1987; paperback 1989), as well as *Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Berkeley, 1999).
The Cambridge History of Judaism (from 200 BCE to 200 CE) (Cambridge, 1984).
Grabbe, L. L., *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian* (Minneapolis, 1992).
Kraft, R. and G. W. E.Nickelsburg, *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters* (Atlanta, 1986; reprint 2008).
Nickelsburg, George W. E., *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah* (Philadelphia, 1981; 2nd print 1987; revised and expanded, 2005).
Sanders, E. P., *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia, 1977), as well as *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63 BCE–66 CE* (Philadelphia, 1992).
Stone, M. E., *Scriptures, Sects, and Visions: A Profile of Judaism from Ezra to the Jewish Revolts* (1980), as well as *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period* (Assen and Philadelphia, 1984).
VanderKam, James C., *An Introduction to Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids, 2001).

All of these, as well as other introductions, do not give sufficient attention to the history of research on the field itself. They only highlight mainly one aspect or approach, whether the literary, political, religious, historical, or sometimes hermeneutical dimension of the early Jewish literature and how it fits into the history of Judaism and Christianity from 300 BCE to 200 CE. However, none of these introductions reflects on the emergence of the field as such, the adaptation of methodologies from the neighboring fields, the cross-fertilization with these neighboring fields, or the implications the study of Early Judaism has for the other fields. For the field as a whole, there is no concise history of research, but only articles on specific aspects of it (see DiTommaso, *Bibliography*, pp. 105–25); there is no chronological outline of the most important scholars and findings; and there is no systematic overview of all the hermeneutical, methodological, and theological consequences to which all these introductions relate. In all, such a critical history of research on Early Judaism is a real desideratum.

1.3. Context of Current Scholarship

One of the most important publications of the past thirty years has been Hengel's *Judaism and Hellenism*.[12] Whether the paradigms set in this impressive work will define the discussion for another thirty years is difficult to say but thus far they surely have done so. In the following, an attempt has been made to list and distinguish between some approving voices who carry on his work, and critical ones who disagree with (or ignore) him.[13]

Among the pro-Hengel scholars (or at least scholars whose work builds upon or results from Hengel's scholarship), I include the following incomplete list, arranged alphabetically:

John Barclay's *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora* not only follows in Hengel's footsteps, but critiques much more forcefully than Hengel the use of terms like "orthodox," "deviant," and "apostate" when it comes to scholarly visions of so-called normative Palestinian Judaism versus so-called Hellenistic Diaspora Judaisms.[14] Barclay lays a solid, explicit, and practical methodological foundation for the study of Early Judaism from this point forward.

Borgen's *Bread from Heaven*[15] and *Philo, John and Paul*[16] also argue against a sharp distinction between "normative Judaism" and "Hellenistic Judaism."

Daniel Boyarin's work (too prolific to list here) is part of a recent, and perhaps most profoundly indicative, example of Hengel's success—the growing number of scholars who self-identify as practicing Jews and specialize in New Testament texts (see also A. Reinhartz, below).

J. J. Collins (in various publications) continues in Hengel's historical-critical vein, working in the texts of the Hellenistic/Second Temple Era, often addressing the question of "Palestinian"[17] versus "Diaspora" Judaism.[18]

G. Delling argues against a sharp distinction between "normative" and "Hellenistic" Judaisms.[19]

T. Engberg-Pedersen is known for his work on Paul and Stoicism, but he also edited the proceedings of a conference on Paul and Hellenism in

12 Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*.

13 For the following observations, I thank my research assistant Sara Parks-Ricker.

14 John M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan* (Berkeley: University of California, 1996).

15 P. Borgen, *Bread from Heaven* (Leiden: Brill, 1965).

16 P. Borgen, *Philo, John and Paul* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars, 1987).

17 E.g., *Hellenism in the Land of Israel* (ed. with G. E. Sterling; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 2001).

18 It should be noted that Collins does not always reach Hengel's conclusions on the Palestinian/Diaspora matter, at times positing greater differentiation.

19 G. Delling, "Perspektiven der Erforschung des hellenistischen Judentums," *HUCA* 45 (1974): 133–76.

Copenhagen (June, 1991), pertinent to our purpose here.[20] As Pedersen writes in the introduction, an important outcome of the conference was a shift from looking at "Paul and his Hellenistic *background*" to "Paul in his Hellenistic *context*." He writes, "the last two decades . . . have seen some notable advances, which may end up by overcoming altogether the almost endemic presupposition that there is a Hellenistic Paul to be played out against a Jewish Paul or vice versa."[21] He also laments that scholars "have been slow to shake off completely the old prejudices tied to the very terms Judaism and Hellenism, particularly in the area of specifically religious motifs."[22] Following this conference came a second one in which the methodological categories of "Judaism" and "Hellenism" *vis-à-vis* Paul were further hammered out.[23]

E. D. Freed, in *The Morality of Paul's Converts*, calls into question what he calls the "vague doctrine of justification by faith," in light of Paul's Jewish identity.[24] Freed argues that Paul's continuing Jewish identity determined his message for the Gentiles, namely, a message of "faithfulness toward God"[25] and "moral probity,"[26] subjecting his language to Jesus as "Lord" to his greater purpose of winning Gentile converts to "faithfulness toward God and moral probity."[27] Freed's emphasis on Paul's post-"conversion" Jewishness results in a drastic reinterpretation of Paul's "primary message."

A. Gerdmar's *Rethinking the Judaism–Hellenism Dichotomy*[28] is relevant here as well. The very existence of the word "dichotomy" in the title, despite publication in 2001, shows the ongoing and unsettled nature of Hengel's questions in *Judaism and Hellenism*, as does the title of L. I. Levine's *Judaism and Hellenism in Antiquity: Conflict or Confluence?*[29]

J. Ma, in *Antiochos III and the Cities of Western Asia Minor*, follows Hengel on breaking down the Hellenism-versus-Judaism dichotomy, and on Jewish *involvement* in "Hellenism" (including in persecuting other Jews), but takes this much further in elaborating on Jewish *influence on* Hellenism.[30]

20 T. Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul in his Hellenistic Context* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1995).

21 Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul*, xvi.

22 Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul*, xviii.

23 T. Engberg-Pedersen (ed.), *Paul Beyond the Judaism/Hellenism Divide* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2001).

24 E. D. Freed, *The Morality of Paul's Converts* (London: Equinox, 2005).

25 Freed, *Morality*.

26 Freed, *Morality*.

27 Freed, *Morality*.

28 A. Gerdmar, *Rethinking the Judaism–Hellenism Dichotomy: A Historiographical Study of Second Peter and Jude* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2001).

29 L. I. Levine, *Judaism and Hellenism in Antiquity: Conflict or Confluence?* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1998).

30 J. Ma, *Antiochos III and the Cities of Western Asia Minor* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). On this matter, see also A. R. R. Sheppard, "Pagan Cults of Angels in Roman Asia Minor," *Talanta* (1980–81): 12–13, 77–101.

H. Marshall argues against a sharp distinction between "normative Judaism/Jewish Christianity" and "Hellenistic Judaism/Hellenistic Christianity,"[31] just as R. Meyer argues against a sharp distinction between "normative Judaism" and "Hellenistic Judaism."[32]

Said's *Orientalism*[33] must not be overlooked here; this classic (or infamous) work, which criticized Western scholarship (and, indeed, Western culture at large) for "orientalizing" (i.e. ostracizing the "other" either via idealization or vilification) represents one logical conclusion of Hengel's work in the ancient world: that stereotypes do not take seriously the peoples/texts under consideration.

For a feminist twist on Hengel's groundwork, see L. Schottroff, who takes into account the self-identification of many of the female "converts" in Paul's letters as Torah-abiding Jews, proselytes, and God-fearers, attempting to remedy anti-Judaic interpretation, especially the "myth" of "Law-free Gentile Christianity" (*Gesetzesfreies Heidenchristentum*).[34]

Finally, A. Reinhartz (in various publications) is heiress to Hengel's legacy in that she, like Boyarin and a growing number of other Jewish scholars, practices Judaism and specializes in Christianity, John's Gospel being one of her chief research areas.

On the other hand, many scholars are working either against or without Hengel (either by disputing or ignriong his findings, or simply reworking them using newer data and methods). Among these are the following:

Babut's argument[35] that philosophical scepticism was not necessarily over and against religion (although not seemingly a mainstream view at this time) may necessitate important modification of Hengel's conclusions about the role of "Hellenistic" Jews in the persecution of "traditional" Jews. Feldman continues to compartmentalize to an alarming degree, even as he claims to tackle the boundaries of "Judaism," "Hellenism," "paganism," and "Palestinian/Hellenistic Judaism" head-on. He also discusses smaller points of Hengel's on which he differs.[36]

31 H. Marshall, "Palestinian and Hellenistic Christianity: Some Critical Comments," *NTS* 19 (1973): 217–75.

32 R. Meyer, *Hellenistisches in der rabbinischen Anthropologie* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1973).

33 E. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978).

34 L. Schottroff, "'Law-Free Gentile-Christianity' – What about the Women? Feminist Analyses and Alternatives," in *A Feminist Companion to Paul* (ed. A.-J. Levine with M. Blickenstaff; Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim, 2004), 183–94.

35 D. Babut, *La religion des philosophes grecs: De Thales aux stoiciens* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1974).

36 E.g.: "Hengel's Judaism and Hellenism in Retrospect," *JBL* 96 (1977): 371–82; "How Much Hellenism in Jewish Palestine?" *HUCA* 57 (1986): 83–111; *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 1993); and "How Much Hellenism in the Land of Israel?" *JSJ* 33 (2002): 290–313.

Goodenough writes as though "Hellenistic Judaism" is distinctive and separable from "normal" Judaism.[37]

Moore likewise champions "normative" Judaism.[38]

About Price's *Religions of the Ancient Greeks*,[39] it can only be noted that sociology as it exists today was not at Hengel's disposal when *Judaism and Hellenism* was written, so Price's sociological focus, if applied to Hengel's data, *might* simply enhance and support Hengel's conclusions. On the other hand, it might challenge them.

Finally, Stern, in a less than altogether positive review, lists numerous aspects in Hengel's work that he considers worth disputing.[40]

In conclusion, the aforementioned introductions to Early Judaism have not given sufficient attention to the history of the field, nor have in-depth studies given the necessary attention to the theological dimension of Early Judaism and its literature, with present scholarship focusing mainly on whether they agree or disagree with M. Hengel's *opus magnum*. The following paragraph explicitly deals with the question of how theological scholarship has dealt with the non-canonical writings. Has Biblical Theology confronted Early Jewish writings with religiously or theologically relevant questions, which are normally reserved for "canonical" texts, and if yes, how?

2.1. Theological Approaches to Early Judaism

Theological scholarship on Early Judaism in the past one hundred years has been marked by a radical paradigm shift: away from a purely theological approach dealing with the period as a mere "background" of the New Testament and characterized as a period of inferiority and decline between biblical Israel and Early Christianity, to an attempt at a less biased study of Early Judaism as an independent period in history preceding both Early Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism and at the same time defining both new religions (see on this L. Brown, L. L. Grabbe, G. F. Moore, J. Neusner and E. P. Sanders). Since the Enlightenment, it has become common practice to study and to interpret the various biblical books as documents of the past, in the same ways and with the same methods as other non-biblical documents of the past are studied and interpreted.

In this view, for example, the books of the New Testament are situated in the context of Early Judaism and Hellenism, and Early Christianity is seen as

37 E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (New York: Pantheon, 1953).

38 G. F. Moore, *Judaism* (3 vols.; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927–30).

39 S. R. F. Price, *Religions of the Ancient Greeks* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

40 M. S. Stern, "Review of Hengel, Judentum und Hellenismus," *KS* 46 (1970–71): 94–99.

one of the religious movements that arose and developed in the early Roman Empire. However, the newly discovered early Jewish writings all point to a much greater importance of the period of 300 BCE to 200 CE in Jewish history than previously thought, and thus they question many accepted views by asking whether Early Judaism has not been the actual cradle for many religious traditions and philosophical thoughts as they have later developed in Western society (see, e.g., G. Boccaccini and E. P. Sanders). However, what is most needed is a synthesis of our knowledge, a better understanding, and above all a historical and critical assessment of this new emerging research field. This assessment should clearly situate the field in the wider academic context of Biblical and related Studies, and go beyond the book *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters* edited by Robert Kraft and George Nickelsburg twenty years ago.

2.2. An Unclaimed Legacy: Neglect in Biblical Theology

As for the expression "non-canonical," it clearly derives from the existence of canonical literature. Both terms reveal a rather complex and partly artificial divide between canonical and "non-canonical," official and "sectarian," accepted and "rejected" collections of books throughout a history of more than two thousand years. Behind these literatures we may assume socio-religious groups, developments, conflicts, in which the divisions and definitions were relevant and made sense. Canonical criticism, which can be seen as a child of Biblical Theology, deals with the aforementioned issues. Let us therefore begin with Biblical Theology and its view—or lack thereof—on non-canonical literature and Early Judaism.

Biblical Theology can be defined as the effort of modern critical biblical scholarship since the sixteenth century to analyze the Old and New (or First and Second) Testaments as a unity. It seeks to reflect upon them in a theological way by searching for the theologies of individual books and for the theology of the whole Bible or parts of its various canons from a systematic-theological point of view. Biblical Theology as a discipline has only been differentiated into Old Testament and New Testament theology since the nineteenth century. Until then, it was *theologia biblica*, which was considered a unity and oriented towards the doctrinal exegesis of scripture. The name "Biblical Theology" itself dates to the seventeenth century.[41]

Due to its nature, Biblical Theology is, first of all, a systematic and theological discipline, and for this very reason shows only a secondary interest in historical questions. As a 1970 overview and discussion by Kraus demonstrates, biblical theologians have had little interest in the

41 See Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Die Biblische Theologie. Ihre Geschichte und Problematik* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1970).

origin and historical context of the different biblical books in general and the history and literary production of the so-called "intertestamental" period, with the exceptions of the history of biblical Israel and, for pedagogical purposes, the Apocrypha. However, this started to change at the end of the eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth century, when authors like Semler, Lessing, and many others began to differentiate between the words of the Bible and the "word of God" and between theology and religion.[42] This trend culminated in two different approaches to the biblical literature: the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule* and the rise of interest in non-canonical literature, and Barth's dialectic theology of the Word, with its emphasis on the theological unity of both testaments.[43]

If we are permitted to have one more look into German scholarship before we broaden our view, we should give attention to the first and especially the third issue of the *Annual of Biblical Theology* (*Jahrbuch für Biblische Theologie*) (1986 and 1988), which deal with the problems of Biblical Theology and the biblical canon.[44] In the first thematic collection of essays, we find a number of modern approaches to Biblical Theology, but the non-canonical writings are nowhere an issue.[45] The second gives attention to the historical context of the process of canonization, as well as to extra-canonical sources, although the focus as a whole is still on canonized texts. In this latter, however, it is admitted that recent scholarship has been promoted substantially through the discussion on canon and canonical criticism in North America.[46]

For this reason, it is useful to consult an article by Miller[47] to see whether the interest in the relationship between non-canonical writings and Biblical Theology has also been growing. Miller highlights four important publications between 1958 and 1988: those of Albert C. Sundberg, Shnayer Z. Leiman, James A. Sanders, and Brevard S. Childs.[48] Sundberg and Leiman,

42 See Kraus, *Theologie*, 196ff.

43 For the former, *inter alia*, see Carsten Colpe, *Die religionsgeschichtliche Schule* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1961); for the latter, see Kraus, *Theologie*, 282ff.

44 Günter Stemberger and Ingo Baldermann, *Zum Problem des biblischen Kanons* (Jahrbuchs für Biblische Theologie 3; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1988).

45 One may also look into Manfred Oeming, *Gesamtbiblische Theologien der Gegenwart* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1985).

46 Manfred Oeming, "Text - Kontext - Kanon: Ein neuer Weg alttestamentlicher Theologie? Zu einem neuen Buch von Brevard S. Childs," in Stemberger and Baldermann, *Zum Problem des biblischen Kanons*, 241–51.

47 Patrick D. Miller, "Der Kanon in der gegenwärtigen amerikanischen Diskussion," in Stemberger and Baldermann, *Zum Problem des biblischen Kanons*, 217–39.

48 See Albert C. Sundberg, Jr., *The Old Testament of the Early Church* (New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1969); Shnayer Z. Leiman, "The Canonization of Hebrew Scripture: The Talmudic and Midrashic Evidence," *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences* 47 (1976): 7–234; James A. Sanders, *Torah and Canon* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1978); Brevard S. Childs, *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1986); see also Caroline Schröder-Field, "Der Kanonbegriff

especially, discuss the relevance of patristic and Talmudic literature, as far as the reconstruction of the history of the canonization is concerned. Sanders and Childs also take into account the hermeneutical questions of when, how, and why the canon came into being, thus paving the way for canon criticism.[49] It is necessary to emphasize the importance of these studies for establishing the relevance of non-canonical writings for Biblical Theology, since they try to reconstruct both the biblical canon and the hermeneutic of canonical reflection in antiquity. From a present-day point of view, it is clear that our reconstruction of the canons and the canonical theories in antiquity have changed to the degree that we now speak of "canons" in plural and of canonical theories that differ from those of a post-Reformation context.[50]

The canons of the pre-Masoretic Text, the Septuagint, the Qumran library, the early Christian authors, and Rabbinic Judaism differ in order, contents, and wording—in some cases considerably. One has only to mention the different versions of Jeremiah, the different treatment of the Apocrypha, the rabbinic discussion about Daniel, Song of Songs, and Qoheleth, the high esteem afforded some of the Pseudepigrapha in the Ethiopic and Slavic churches, and the absence of the book of Revelation from the canon in some Eastern churches, to become fully aware of the importance of the origin and development of our canons.[51] In some of the more recent biblical theologies, one does find reflections upon the relevance of the non-canonical writings to Biblical Studies,[52] but so far there has been no systematic effort to reflect upon these writings in a theological way.

It is only after some time since the Reformation that the differentiation between the Hebrew Bible and the Apocrypha (until then part of the canon of the Vulgate) has had far-reaching consequences. Apart from the question of whether this is due to the so-called Alexandrian hypothesis, a thesis

in Biblischer Theologie und evangelischer Dogmatik," in *Die Einheit der Schrift und die Vielfalt des Kanons: The Unity of Scripture and the Diversity of the Canon* (*BZNT* 118; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003), 195–238. Schröder-Field gives little attention to the question of the place and relevance of non-canonical writings in Biblical Theology.

49 This may be seen as paralleled by the religion-historical introductions to the New Testament by James Robinson and Helmut Koester and their introduction of the expression of different "trajectories" in the transmission of early Christian thought. See Helmut Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: de Gruyter, 1982).

50 See the collection of essays in Lee Martin McDonald and James A. Sanders (eds.), *The Canon Debate: On the Origins and Formation of the Bible* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002). At a later point, we will also have to speak about the most recent efforts to incorporate Qumran and Septuagint Studies in the reconstruction of the text of the biblical books and their possible impact on Canonical Criticism.

51 This problem has always interested me, even in my first book: *De bijbel van toen: een boek voor nu? Een inleiding in de geschiedenis van de bijbel* (Baarn: Ten Have, 1990).

52 Especially Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993); and Peter Stuhlmacher, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (2 vols.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992–2002).

which itself originates from the time of the Reformation, it is clear that the move away from the Vulgate to the text of the Hebrew Bible led to a separation of the Apocrypha from the biblical canon. The Apocrypha could now either be added to the end of Bible editions, as in Martin Luther's 1534 translation, or removed from them altogether, as often happened later.[53] However, from a Reformed theological point of view, Judaism and its ancient literature still did have a relevance, even more, a *theological* relevance, because the apocryphal literature was considered *somehow important*, and because Judaism and its history were considered to be *meaningful* for the church, though neither was considered as important or meaningful as the canonical books of the Hebrew Bible itself.

According to John Calvin, the apocryphal literature has an *edifying* function,[54] which means that Calvin gave it a pedagogical as well as some sort of theological relevance. However, as we nowadays know of more literature than only the apocryphal writings, it is justifiable to ask whether one should not consider *all* writings from the so-called intertestamental period in the same way. Furthermore, according to virtually all the Reformers,[55] both Israel and its history, especially the "history of biblical Israel," have always played a role in Christian theology, namely to vindicate and lend credibility to the Christian faith.

Here two questions arise: whether one should not also look at the theological relevance of *post-biblical* Jewish history (including Greco-Roman and Rabbinic Judaism), and whether one should not look for models of explanation in which Judaism is not automatically opposed to Christianity. How do modern biblical theologies treat the question of the relevance of biblical and post-biblical Israelite and Jewish history for Christian theology, specifically when referring to non-canonical Jewish sources? These and other questions can only be answered after a full theological interpretation of non-canonical literature has been developed and after the period of Early Judaism has received treatment equal to the periods of biblical Israel and the Early Church (or, for that matter, including Rabbinic Judaism). For this we need to look into the history of research on Early Judaism.

It is only rather recently that non-canonical writings have received attention in commentary series—notably the "Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature"—and there is as yet no such thing as a theological commentary on, for instance, *1 Enoch*. So far, only issues relevant for the historical reconstruction of the religious worldview of such writings are ever discussed in an introduction to a translation or commentary. One never finds a paragraph on "the theology" of such a writing itself. One gets the impression that non-canonical writings mainly serve as part of the religion-

53 See Sundberg, *The Old Testament of the Early Church*, 7–24.

54 See G. S. Oegema, *Für Israel und die Völker: Studien zum alttestamentlich-judischen Hintergrund der paulinischen Theologie* (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

55 See Oegema, *Für Israel*, 9–23.

historical background of a reconstruction of the parameters in which the theologies of one or both testaments came into existence.[56]

One of the main advocates of a theoretical—that is, both hermeneutical and theological—reflection on the (use of the) Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha in Biblical Studies, especially New Testament Studies, is the retired professor of Leiden University, Marinus de Jonge. For him, most of the Pseudepigrapha are clearly Christian writings, as they have come into being in the early Christian Church, even though they make use of Jewish material. Therefore, their use in Biblical Studies is clear: they elucidate the early tradition history of Christian thought. However, representatives of the Tübingen School, in which I count myself, think foremost of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha as Jewish writings, which in later times have been Christianized, and find the use of these writings in New Testament Studies to be somewhat problematic. A need for further reflection is evident, all the more because, in a recent publication, Marinus de Jonge heavily criticizes the Tübingen School on exactly this point.[57]

De Jonge's contribution is a significant one, not so much for the abovementioned reason (although also for that reason), but because it underlines the importance of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha for the history of Early Christianity, and, therefore, implicitly also for Biblical Theology. Although the bulk of the book argues for the Christian character not only of the transmission, but also of the origin of much of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, and is apologetic in its critique of those scholars who claim the Jewish origin of the Pseudepigrapha, it also tries to explain why these writings were so important for the first Christians.

They were important, first, because all of the "Old Testament scriptures" were held in high esteem, and, second, because the canonization of the Christian Old Testament had not yet come to a close. The Christians themselves had a decisive voice in the canonization of "their" Old Testament, which they did not simply adopt from "Hellenistic" Judaism, but which they themselves defined.[58] Although de Jonge then continues with case studies to argue for his approach, notably the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* and the *Life of Adam and Eve*, his argument also implies not only that the non-canonical writings are relevant for Biblical Theology, as they were relevant for the first Christian theologians, but also that this has consequences for what we define as "Jewish" and "Christian".

56 Joseph A. Fitzmyer's *Tobit* (Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003) gives a mere list of references in a canon list from the MT and LXX to the Church Fathers (pp. 55–57), but no discussion of the canonicity of Tobit.

57 M. J. de Jonge, *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament as Part of Christian Literature* (SVTP 18; Leiden: Brill, 2003).

58 See my *Zwischen Hoffnung und Gericht: Untersuchungen zur Rezeption der Apokalyptik im frühen Christentum und Judentum* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1999).

The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha force us to rethink the Jewish and/or Christian character not only of much of the so-called intertestamental literature, but also of the books we call Hebrew Bible/Septuagint/Old Testament. The non-canonical literature addresses the question of religious identity, not only in antiquity, but also in our own day, a question which two thousand years ago led to the creation and development of alternative religious traditions, and which is still of vital relevance today.

3.1. Early Judaism and Modern Culture

In order to promote the investigation of the relevance of non-canonical writings for modern culture, we must now formulate the questions to be asked. It is high time to reflect on these questions, given the advancement of the academic study of non-canonical writings in recent decades. Though it would make sense to have the questions defined by the theologies of the non-canonical writings, for the sake of argument we shall focus on what present-day theology would like to ask the non-canonical writings. We shall do this in a theoretical and systematic way rather than by taking one particular theology as our starting point. The questions to be asked refer to issues of the word of God and canon, its relation to both testaments and the relation between both testaments, the dynamics between scripture and tradition, the relevance of historical theology, the impact on Christology, its consequences for religious ethics, its influences on politics, and ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue. For the sake of the argument and brevity of this paper, I shall concentrate only on the first examples.[59]

Before being more explicit about the questions I consider to be relevant to the present discussion, it is worth referring to Daniel Harrington's classification of the relevance of the Apocrypha in three categories. These are: (1) literary contributions, comprising narrative, instruction, discourse, and apocalypse; (2) historical contributions relating to the return from exile and the Maccabean revolt; and (3) theological contributions concerning God, suffering, and wisdom.[60] As in recent years sufficient attention has been given to the literary contributions of the Apocrypha (and most other deutero- or extra-canonical writings), the time has come to do the same with their theological contributions. We will expand Harrington's three sub-categories in the following, with several more.

59 For the other examples, see my forthcoming book *Early Judaism and Modern Culture*.

60 Harrington, "The Old Testament Apocrypha," in McDonald and Sanders, *The Canon Debate*, 206–10.

3.2. Early Judaism and the Bible

To start with the most important question for Biblical Theology in the setting of modern culture: do the non-canonical writings contain the word of God? If yes, then why don't they belong to the canon? The answers of the rabbis and Church Fathers to the latter question were that these books were not inspired, prophecy had ceased at the time of their composition, they had not been written by a prophet, apostle, or otherwise inspired or authorized person, they were not old or authentic enough, etc., in short, they lacked the criteria for canonicity. However, in defense of the non-canonical writings, one could say that these main characteristics of holy writings are not always found in the canonical writings either, as for instance in 1–2 Kings and 1–2 Chronicles, or Hebrews and Jude, to give but a few examples.[61]

As far as the word of God is concerned, can it really be argued that it is found in every character of the books of the biblical canon? Why could one not also find the word of God outside of the canon? What about oral traditions? Might one not also find the word of God in the apocryphal Psalms 151–55, in the *Hodayot*, in the Wisdom literature, in the works of Philo of Alexandria, etc.?

To limit ourselves to just one example, the *Gospel of Thomas*—does it not sometimes contain words of Jesus in their most authentic form? At least it does in the reconstructions of the trajectories in which the words of Jesus are most likely to have been transmitted from oral utterances to oral tradition to written traditions. We work with these assumptions, but we do not dare to say that the *Gospel of Thomas* contains some of the authentic words of Jesus—or some glimpses of the word of God—and call them canonical.

In most hermeneutics, the Old Testament, whether the Septuagint or the Hebrew Bible and whether interpreted in a Christian or Jewish way, cannot be understood without knowledge of the traditions following the biblical period. The New Testament, according to most hermeneutics, whether Roman Catholic, Orthodox, or Protestant, cannot be understood without the preceding biblical traditions, the culture, writings, and religious traditions of the period in between, formerly known as the intertestamental period, now generally called the Second Temple period, Greco-Roman antiquity, or Early Judaism. Yet, despite these facts, this crucial period hardly plays a role in Biblical Theology.

This is historically incorrect and hermeneutically misleading. Even more, Protestant theology (more than Catholic theology), which is responsible for turning away from this period in its focus on the Hebrew Bible, is wrong in

61 For a full discussion of the criteria for canonicity see Lee M. McDonald, *The Biblical Canon: Its Origin, Transmission, and Authority* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007); Bruce M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987); Peter Pilhofer, *Presbyteron kreitton: der Altersbeweis, der, jüdischen und christlichen Apologeten, und seine Vorgeschichte* (Tübingen : J. C. B. Mohr, 1990).

its neglect of the traditions of mainly Greek-speaking Judaism, which were so important for the early Church Fathers. Biblical Theology has long existed against the background of historical-critical scholarship, and historical-critical scholarship also involves research into the historical, cultural, and political context and pre- and post-history of the biblical writings, with which it is engaged in a constant theological dialogue.

Are we now in a situation wherein we have to change our theological thinking? In my estimation, we are in such a situation. At least we have to integrate scholarship on Greco-Roman antiquity—and its enormous progress in the past twenty years—in order to rethink biblical-theological questions. To give an example, in the past twenty-five years, New Testament theology has been rethinking the teachings of Jesus in conversation with historical Jesus research, against the background of the cultural and religious milieu in which Jesus lived and taught, and by using apocryphal writings to recover the original wordings of Jesus and the sociological setting of his earliest followers. Does this now mean that the archaeology of Galilee in the time of Jesus Christ and the studies into the *Gospel of Thomas* or into textual criticism, to give but three recent examples, are mere auxiliary or even ancillary sciences? If so, should we not then also interpret Galilee and the *Gospel of Thomas* in a theological way?

If we would give a theological meaning to the Jewish and Christian traditions before, after, and outside of the biblical canon, our approach to the Old and New Testaments would dramatically change. We would have to take into consideration that God could also have been revealed outside of what would only later receive canonical authority. We would have a completely different approach to "scripture," perhaps no longer looking upon it as something static. We might well be forced to extend the interpretation of "scripture" considerably and include many of the pre-, post- and extra-biblical writings.

Furthermore, we would have to redefine "scripture" by giving it a more dynamic character. We would have to take into account the importance of tradition and the many forms it takes by looking upon it as an additional locus of divine revelation apart from "scripture" (which, in the days of old, was itself also tradition, albeit an already-fixed literary tradition). Finally, we would have to change our evaluation of the relationship between scripture and tradition as something principally very dynamic. In short, we would have to create a space in our theological thinking for the conceptual universe of the non-canonical religious world of Early Judaism. By doing so, we might also change our view on the canon itself.

Chapter 2

Christians in Egypt: A Preliminary Survey of Christian Literature found in Oxyrhynchus

Craig A. Evans

The present paper is part of a larger project in which is surveyed all of the thus-far published Christian literature found in Oxyrhynchus, Egypt, a city some two hundred miles south of the much better-known Alexandria. This survey includes Jewish Scripture (including the so-called Old Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha), Christian Scripture (including the so-called Apostolic Fathers and New Testament Pseudepigrapha), Christian letters, ecclesiastical letters, homilies, liturgical texts, lectionaries, business papers, prayers, and magical texts. The purposes of this survey are several: (1) to identify the nature and range of literature to which Christians in and around ancient Oxyrhynchus had access; (2) to infer from the sample of documents thus far published what Christians of Oxyrhynchus regarded as sacred and authoritative; and (3) to infer from these materials aspects of Christian piety, worship, and daily life. This preliminary survey, which may grow into a monograph, welcomes criticism and suggestions. The present study will focus on five fragmentary apocryphal books of Acts.

Twenty-five years ago E. A. Judge remarked that the "papyri offer us the most direct access we have to the experience of ordinary people in antiquity."[1] In his 2003 Society of Biblical Literature presidential address, Eldon Jay Epp applied this insight to the papyri of Oxyrhynchus, inquiring what we might learn about Christians in that Egyptian city in the second through fourth centuries.[2] The data assembled and the plausible inferences drawn from them are truly fascinating.[3] We gain insight into the function of Christian writings, their use in study, preaching, and propagation of the

1 E. A. Judge, *Rank and Status in the World of the Caesars and St. Paul* (Christchurch, NZ: University of Canterbury, 1982), 7.

2 E. J. Epp, "The Oxyrhynchus New Testament Papyri: 'Not without honor except in their hometown'?" *JBL* 123 (2004): 5–55.

3 See also E. J. Epp, "The Jews and the Jewish Community in Oxyrhynchus: Socio-Religious Context for the New Testament Papyri," in T. J. Kraus and T. Nicklas (eds.), *New Testament Manuscripts: Their Texts and Their World* (Texts and Editions for New Testament Study 2; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 13–52.

faith, and ideas about emerging understandings of authority and canonicity. In a sense, we are able to glimpse into the study and library, so to speak, of the ante-Nicene Egyptian church, to see what books were read, how they were read (and made), and how they circulated.[4]

Several important studies have appeared recently. First to come to mind is William Johnson's *Bookrolls and Scribes in Oxyrhynchus*, which was published in 2004.[5] Johnson recounts how the 1895 British-led excavation revealed little in the way of buildings and other cultural artifacts, but instead yielded a huge random mass of everyday papyri, piled thirty feet deep, including private letters and shopping lists, government circulars, and copies of ancient literature. The surviving bookrolls—the papyrus rolls with literary texts—have provided a great deal of information on ancient books, ancient readers, and ancient reading. Johnson has analyzed over 400 bookrolls to understand the production, use, and aesthetics of the ancient book. His learned analysis of formal and conventional features of the bookrolls not only provides detailed information on the bookroll industry—manufacture, design, and format—but also, in turn, raises intriguing questions and offers provisional answers about the ways in which the use and function of the bookroll among ancient readers may differ from modern or medieval practice.

In 2007, A. K. Bowman and several colleagues assembled and introduced a series of studies devoted to the excavations at Oxyrhynchus and the papyrological treasures unearthed there.[6] These essays survey and assess the material culture and art objects, including sculpture and draftsmanship, against the backdrop of the papyrus texts. There is also study of the site itself (city plan, topography, monuments, art and architecture).

I might also briefly mention the highly specialized study by Alexander Jones, who investigates the astronomical papyri from Oxyrhynchus.[7] Jones treats some 200 astronomical texts and horoscopes, providing readers with an appreciation of the range of astronomical activity, chiefly in the service of astrology, during the Roman Empire. The astronomy of this period turns out to have been much more varied than we previously thought, with

4 Especially delightful is the Christian letter (P.Oxy. 4365) that mentions reciprocity in the borrowing and lending of books. The author says, "To my dearest lady sister, greetings in the Lord. Lend the Ezra, since I lent you the little Genesis [χρῆσον τὸν Ἔσδραν, ἐπεὶ ἔχρησά σοι τὴν λεπτὴν Γένεσιν]. Farewell in God from us." "Little Genesis" could be *Jubilees*. On the value of the artifactual evidence of books and writings from late antiquity, see L. W. Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscript and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006).

5 W. A. Johnson, *Bookrolls and Scribes in Oxyrhynchus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004).

6 A. K. Bowman et al., *Oxyrhynchus: A City and Its Texts* (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 2007).

7 A. Jones, *Astronomical Papyri from Oxyrhynchus (P.Oxy. 4133–4300a)* (Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society 233; Philadelphia, PA: American Philosophical Society, 1999).

Babylonian arithmetical methods of prediction coexisting with tables based on geometrical models of orbits.

In my view, however, the most exciting publication in our topic is a book that has just appeared. AnneMarie Luijendijk's *Greetings in the Lord* carries the discussion forward in many important ways.[8] She tries to show how Christians lived in this city in different contexts and situations. The book comprises three major components. In the first part, Luijendijk creates an image of the city's marketplace functions, in order to address questions of Christian identity in the public sphere. The second part features a man called Sotas, bishop of Oxyrhynchus in the third century, as he is busy communicating with other Christian communities, involved in teaching, book production, and fund-raising. The third part focuses on evidence of the persecution of Christians, revealing the far-reaching power and pervasiveness of Roman bureaucracy. We learn, among other things, that Christians negotiated their identity through small acts of resistance against the imperial decrees. The papyrus letters and documents discussed in Luijendijk's book offer sometimes surprising insights into the everyday lives of Christians in the third and early fourth century and nuance our understanding of Christianity in this period. I must agree with Luijendijk that it is the mundane aspects of everyday life that make these papyrus documents so fascinating.

On this occasion the question at hand asks what Christians at Oxyrhynchus read and heard read. I have reviewed the contents of the more than seventy volumes thus far published in Egypt Exploration Society series (and that, of course, does not include all Oxyrhynchus papyri that have been published). These documents include sacred scripture, commentaries, letters, homilies, prayers, lectionaries, liturgical texts, magical texts, amulets, and ecclesiastical documents. I think we even should include fragments of Philo's writings (P.Oxy. 1173,[9] 1356, 2158, PSI 1207, P.Haun. 8),[10] for they too were read by Christians. (For a provisional catalogue of Christian literature and reference to Christians at Oxyrhynchus, see the Appendix.)

The Sacred Books Read by Christians in Oxyrhynchus

To narrow the question somewhat, we may inquire into what scripture and scripture-like writings the Christians of Oxyrhynchus had in their posses-

8 AnneMarie Luijendijk, *Greetings in the Lord: Christian Identity and the Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009). I thank Dr. Luijendijk for making her manuscript available to me before its publication.

9 Unless otherwise noted, the MS numbers refer to Oxyrhynchus. I acknowledge my indebtedness to and express my appreciation for the Leuven Database of Ancient Books (LDAB). This excellent online resource is very helpful.

10 All of these manuscripts (i.e., 1173, 1356, 2158, PSI 1207, P.Haun. 8), though discovered on separate occasions, were part of a single codex.

sion.[11] A number of Old Testament manuscripts have been found. With regard to the Law, Genesis is well represented (P.Oxy. 656,[12] 1007, 1073 [Latin], 1166, and 1167), with about half of these papyri dated to the third century CE.[13] Three third-century texts (1074, 1075, 4442) and a fourth-century text of Exodus (P.Milan 22) are represented. There are two texts of Leviticus (1225, 1351), both from the fourth century. The prophets are surprisingly under-represented, with one text of Joshua (1168) from the fourth century, one text of Judges (PSI 127) from the fifth century, and one of Amos (846) from the sixth century. The absence of the book of Isaiah is quite surprising, given its popularity in early Christianity and in Judaism of late antiquity.

There are several texts representing portions of the Psalter (845, 1226, 1352, 1779, 2065, 2386, P.Harris 31), ranging from the third to sixth centuries, plus two amulets containing LXX Ps 90 (1928, P.Ryl. Gr. 3);[14] two of Job, one dating to the first century (P.Oxy. 3522), the other to the fourth century (PSI 1163); one of Esther (4443), perhaps dating as early as the late first century; and one of Qohelet (2066), dating from the late fifth century. We have two versions of Tobit, one from the third century (1594) and the other from the sixth century (1076). Both texts are noticeably different from the standard text of the Old Greek. We have one fourth-century manuscript of the Wisdom of Solomon (4444) and another text that could be called the *Judgment of Solomon* (2944). We also have a text preserving the opening verses of Sirach (1595); a few portions of *2 Baruch* 12–14 (403),[15] dating to the late fourth or early fifth century, and what appear to be fourth-century

11 At this point, I am not specifically addressing the question of canon; rather, my interest is more one of "library," that is, what Christians read, however authoritative they may have understood the materials. For an interesting study on the papyri as evidence of the process of canonization, see D. S. Ben Ezra, "Canonization – A Non-Linear Process? Observing the Process of Canonization through the Christian (and Jewish) Papyri from Egypt," *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 12 (2008) 229–50.

12 For catalogues of the manuscripts, complete with bibliography and descriptions, see K. Aland (ed.), *Repertorium der griechischen christlichen Papyri. I. Biblische Papyri: Altes Testament, Neues Testament, Varia, Apokryphen* (Patristische Texte und Studien 18; Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1976); P. W. Comfort and D. P. Barrett (eds.), *The Text of the Earliest New Testament Greek Manuscripts* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2001). One should bear in mind that there are many manuscripts from Egypt whose place of discovery is unknown. No doubt some of these manuscripts (which have not been included in my survey) came from Oxyrhynchus.

13 In one of the letters from Sotas (2785) there is reference to one Anos, a "catechumen in Genesis" (καθηχούμενον ἐν τῇ Γενέσει), implying that Anos is engaged in the study of the book of Genesis. See Luijendijk, *Greetings in the Lord*, 115–16, 121–22.

14 LXX Psalm 90 (MT Psalm 91), which promises protection against evil, was understood in terms of demonology and was often employed in exorcism and in charms and incantations.

15 See P. Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch* (Sources chrétiennes 144; Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1969), 40–43.

fragments of *1 Enoch* (2069), though this is disputed.[16] The reference to "little Genesis" (4365) suggests that a copy of *Jubilees* circulated in Oxyrhynchus in the fourth century.

In all, we have some eleven copies of books of the Law, three copies of books of the Prophets, eleven copies of the Writings (not counting the two amulets),[17] and, if we count everything, we have some seven copies of books that, in time, came to be thought of as the Old Testament Apocrypha and related literature. Added up, we have some thirty-two copies of books Christians would eventually regard as belonging to the Old Testament and related literature.[18]

Christian scripture is very well represented, as we would expect. Oxyrhynchus has yielded copies of all four New Testament Gospels, including several texts of Matthew (2, 401 [= uncial 071], 1169 [= uncial 0170], 1170, 1227, 2384, 2385, 2683, 4401, 4402, 4403, 4404, 4405, 4406, 4494, PSI 1), one small, late fragment of Mark (3 [= uncial 069]), two fragments of Luke (2383, 4495),[19] and several fragments of John (208, 847 [= uncial 0162], 1228, 1596, 1780, 1781, 3523, 4445, 4446, 4447, 4448, 4803, 4804, 4805, 4806, PSI 3, and possibly P.Ryl. Gr. 457).[20] The large number of Matthean and Johannine manuscripts, in sharp contrast to Markan and Lukan manuscripts, is striking.[21] We have three manuscripts of Acts (1597, 4496, PSI 1165) and several apocryphal versions of Acts. I will return to this interesting feature shortly.

Paul's letters are not that well attested, with only five manuscripts of Romans (209, 1354, 1355, 4497, PSI 4 [= uncial 0172]), two of 1 Corinthians

16 See J. T. Milik, "Fragments grecs du livre d'Henoch (P Oxy XVII 2069)," *Chronique d'Egypte* 46 (1971), 321–43. It has been observed that the fragment resembles at points, and may even allude to, the *Apocalypse of Paul* 43.

17 Perhaps we could say "twelve," if we count the "Ezra" book mentioned in P.Oxy. 4365. However, this book could well be *4 Ezra*. See the commentary on this letter in Luijendijk, *Greetings in the Lord*, 70–74.

18 Luijendijk (*Greetings in the Lord*, 20, n. 95) identifies the following manuscripts as probably copied by Christian scribes: Genesis (1166), Exodus (1074, 1075, 4442), Leviticus (1351), Judges (PSI 127), Tobit (1594), Esther (4443), and Psalms (1226, 1779). Even if we agree that most of the other biblical manuscripts were copied by Jews, not Christians, we should still assume that Greek-speaking Christians knew of them and could have had access to them.

19 Luke 1.46–47, part of the Magnificat, is alluded to in 1592 ("I was much exalted and I rejoiced"), a Christian letter.

20 P.Ryl. Gr. 457 is the famous P^{52}, the fragment of John 18 that dates to the early second century.

21 In his letter to "brother Paul" (PSI 1041), Sotas refers to one "Leo, a catechumen in the beginning of the gospel" (Λέωνα καθηχούμενον ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου). Luijendijk (*Greetings in the Lord*, 116–17) rightly doubts that this is a reference to the Gospel of Mark, which begins with the words, ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου. After all, only one manuscript of Mark, dating to the late fifth century, perhaps early sixth century, has been found at Oxyrhynchus. Luijendijk wonders if the reference is to the study of Matthew or perhaps *Thomas*. I suspect what is in mind is either the beginning of the gospel story, or the beginning elements of Christian teaching.

(1008, 4844), one of 2 Corinthians (4845), three of Galatians (2157, PSI 118 [= uncial 0174], PSI 251 [= uncial 0176]), one of Philippians (1009), one of 1–2 Thessalonians (1598), and one of Titus (P.Ryl. Gr. 5).[22]

We also have three manuscripts of Hebrews (657 [+ PSI 1292], 1078, 4498), four of James (1171 [+ P.Princ. 15], 1229, 4449, PSI 5 [= uncial 0173]), one of 1 Peter (1353 [= uncial 0206]), one of 1 John (402), one of Jude (2684), and six of Revelation (848 [= uncial 0163], 1079, 1080 [= uncial 0169], 1230, 4499,[23] 4500 [= uncial 0308]).

In all, Oxyrhynchus has yielded up some thirty-six copies of the New Testament Gospels, almost half of which are of the Gospel of John. We have three copies of the books of Acts, fourteen copies of the letters of Paul (including Titus), and ten copies of the General Letters, almost half of which—quite surprisingly—are of the letter of James. Finally, we have six copies of the book of Revelation. Added up, we have some sixty-nine New Testament manuscripts (counting vellum as well as papyri) from Oxyrhynchus, more than twice the number of Old Testament manuscripts and related writings.[24]

Some of the so-called Apostolic Fathers and related writings are also attested at Oxyrhynchus. These include the *Didache* (1782) and a surprising number of copies of the *Shepherd of Hermas*, including portions of all three major sections of this work, the *Visions*, *Mandates*, and *Similitudes* (404, 1172, 1599, 1783, 1828, 3526, 3527, 3528, 4705, 4706, 4707).[25]

Several other well-known works of Christian fiction are attested at Oxyrhynchus. These include the *Letter of Abgar to Jesus*, though only in the form of an amulet (4469), the *Protevangelium of James* (3524), the *Acts of Paul* (1602), the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* (6), the *Acts of Peter* (849), and the *Acts of John* (850). There is also a small fragment of an unknown Acts (851).

We have three fragments of the *Gospel of Thomas* (1, 654, 655), whose full text is preserved in Coptic in the Nag Hammadi find (NHC II, *2*),[26] and two fragments of the *Gospel of Mary* (3525, P.Ryl. Gr. 463).[27] We may also

22 It is surmised, but not certain, that P.Ryl. Gr. 5 came from Oxyrhynchus.

23 On this important text, see D. C. Parker, "A New Oxyrhynchus Papyrus of Revelation: P^{115} (P.Oxy. 4449)," *NTS* 46 (2000) 159–74.

24 Epp ("Oxyrhynchus New Testament Papyri," 12) calculates that about 42 percent of all extant Greek New Testament papyri come from Oxyrhynchus. Of the early papyri, that is, dating from the second to the fourth centuries, some 57 percent have been found in Oxyrhynchus. Seventeen of the twenty-seven books that would eventually constitute the New Testament canon of scripture have been found at Oxyrhynchus. See also E. J. Epp, "New Testament Papyri and the Transmission of the New Testament," in Bowman et al., *Oxyrhynchus*, 315–31. I am given to understand that it is estimated that all, or almost all, of the New Testament papyri from Oxyrhynchus have been published.

25 *Hermas* is well represented in other Egyptian cities.

26 There is, apparently, another papyrus fragment of *Thomas*, used as an amulet, and dating to the fifth or sixth century, that is in private hands in Paris. See H.-Ch. Puech, "Un logion de Jesus sur bandelette funéraire," *Revue d'histoire des religions* 147 (1955): 126–29.

27 See also BG 8502, *1*.

have one or two small fragments of the *Gospel of Peter* (2949, 4009), though this identification is fraught with difficulties.[28] Besides these two gospels, we have four fragments of gospels or gospel-like works, one that may have Gnostic overtones (1081),[29] another that recounts an angry exchange between Jesus and a priest over the question of ritual purity (840), a third in which Jesus discusses what is good and in what sense he is the image of God (210), and a fourth in which Jesus appears in a vision (1224). Long ago, J. V. Bartlet wondered if this last text, or at least part of it, might belong to the *Gospel of Peter*.[30] Egerton Papyrus 2 should also be mentioned, for it may also have been found at Oxyrhynchus.[31]

We also have examples of Christian apocalypses. We have a small portion of *6 Ezra* (1010), a Christian supplement that adds two concluding chapters to the older Jewish work *4 Ezra*. And, we also have a page of a fifth-century copy of the *Apocalypse of Peter* (P.Vind. G. 39756 [= van Haelst no. 0619]).

Compared to the number of other scriptural books, the number of extra-canonical gospels and gospel-like texts is, at first blush, surprising. Whereas we only have one copy of Mark and two copies of Luke, we have at least ten copies of extra-canonical gospels, even if half of them cannot be identified. So, also, in the case of the various books of Acts. We have three copies of canonical Acts and at least five copies of various extra-canonical books of Acts. Indeed, the extra-canonical gospels, Acts, and other writings (such as the *Didache* and *Hermas*) add up to some twenty-eight copies, nearly the total count for the books of the Old Testament.

All of this suggests that the authority that eventually would be conferred on the writings that make up the Old and New Testaments was hardly at play

28 P. Foster, "Are there any Early Fragments of the So-Called *Gospel of Peter*?" *NTS* 52 (2006): 1–28. Foster raises serious doubts about the identification of the Akhmîm gospel fragment with the *Gospel of Peter*, condemned by Bishop Serapion in the early third century. In my opinion, Foster ("The Disputed Early Fragments of the So-Called *Gospel of Peter*—Once Again," *NovT* 49 [2007]: 402–06) convincingly rebuts the objections against his study raised by D. Lührmann, in "Kann es wirklich keine frühe Handschrift des Petrusevangeliums geben? Corrigenda zu einem Aufsatz von Paul Foster," *NovT* 48 (2006): 379–83. Epp ("Oxyrhynchus New Testament Papyri," 15) avers that P.Oxy. 2949 and 4009 are "doubtless of the *Gospel of Peter*." Alas, this identification is doubtful.

29 It is thought to be a fourth-century fragment of the *Sophia of Jesus Christ* (cf. NHC III, *4*; BG 8502, *3*).

30 As noted in B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt (eds.), *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri:* Part X (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1914), 4. I am skeptical of this suggestion.

31 H. I. Bell and T. C. Skeat, *Fragments of an Unknown Gospel and Other Early Christian Papyri* (London: British Museum, 1935). For transcriptions and plates of the Greek extra-canonical Gospels, see D. Lürhmann, with E. Schlarb, *Fragmente apokryph gewordener Evangelien in griechischer und lateinischer Sprache* (*MTS 59*; Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 2000); A. E. Bernhard, *Other Early Christian Gospels: A Critical Edition of the Surviving Greek Manuscripts* (LNTS 315; London and New York: T&T Clark International, 2006).

in the first four or five centuries of Christian life in the city of Oxyrhynchus.[32] Negatively, this is seen in the case of the Old Testament writings, in that the small number of extant manuscripts suggests that they were not widely copied, collected, and read. On the other hand, the surprising number of writings that in time would not be recognized as canonical suggests that Christians in Oxyrhynchus read widely and inclusively, valuing works such as the *Gospel of Thomas* and the *Shepherd of Hermas*, apparently more than they did the Gospels of Mark and Luke. They also valued the extra-canonical books of Acts as much as or even more than they did the canonical book of Acts. To these writings we now turn.

A Review of the Extra-Canonical Acts of the Apostles at Oxyrhynchus

Of particular interest on this occasion are the five apocryphal Acts that have been found in Oxyrhynchus: the *Acts of Paul* (1602) and the related *Acts of Paul and Thecla* (6), the *Acts of Peter* (849), the *Acts of John* (850), and the unidentified fragment of another apocryphal book of Acts (851). I offer brief introductions, translations, and a few comments.[33] I shall begin with the *Acts of Peter*.

Acts of Peter *(P.Oxy. 849)*

The *Acts of Peter* was originally composed in Greek. The Greek text today is extant only in the *Martyrdom*, as preserved in the ninth-century Patmos MS and the tenth- to eleventh-century Mount Athos MS, and in the small Oxyrhynchus fragment under consideration. A large portion of the text survives in Latin translation in Codex Vercellensis 158, which dates to the late sixth or early seventh century, and in the Coptic Berlin Codex 8502, as well as other MSS in Coptic, Syriac, Arabic, Armenian, Ethiopic, and Georgian. The Oxyrhynchus text, which dates to the early fourth century,[34] and corresponds to §25 and §26 of the *Actus Vercellenses* codex, which dates to the sixth or seventh century, is therefore an important witness to the Greek form of the text.[35]

32 Epp ("Oxyrhynchus New Testament Papyri," 17–18) makes this point.

33 For a very helpful overview of the extra-canonical Acts of the Apostles, see H.-J. Klauck, *The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008). Mention should also be made of the several volumes on the extra-canonical books of Acts, ed. Jan Bremmer, in the Studies on Early Christian Apocrypha series (published by Peeters).

34 For the editio princeps, see B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt (eds.), *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, Part VI (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1908), 6–12.

35 For concise introductions, see W. Schneemelcher, "The Acts of Peter," in W. Schneemelcher (ed.), *New Testament Apocrypha; Volume Two – Writings Relating to the Apostles: Apocalypses and Related Subjects* (rev. edn., Cambridge, UK: James Clarke;

The earliest historical reference to the *Acts of Peter* is found in Eusebius, who claims that no scholar of the Church (ἐκκλησιαστικὸς συγγραφεύς) has made any use of it, or other writings attributed to Peter, such as the *Gospel of Peter*, the *Preaching of Peter*, and the *Apocalypse of Peter* (*Hist. Eccl.* 3.3.2). Although not mentioned by name, Eusebius probably has in mind the *Acts of Peter* when he later refers to spurious writings put forward by heretics in the names of apostles (*Hist. Eccl.* 3.25.6).

Much of the scholarly discussion is quite old, dating to the early twentieth century, though in recent years some excellent work has been published.[36] At one time, scholars believed that the *Acts of Peter* was dependent upon the *Acts of John*. Few hold to this view today.[37] The *Acts of Peter* was probably composed no later than 250 (and perhaps as early as 200). In any case, it has made use of earlier legends about Peter.[38]

The story recounted here, in the *Acts of Peter*, involves reviving a young man, whom Simon Magus slew. To put Peter to the test, resuscitation must take place in the very presence of a Roman city prefect named Agrippa.[39] Simon Magus is commanded to kill the man, who is a servant of the prefect. Peter is commanded to revive him. Magus whispers something into the ear of the servant and the servant drops dead. Now it is Peter's turn. But before he can act, a widow comes forward, lamenting the death of her only son and her only support (cf. Lk. 7.12).

Peter has young men fetch the body of the widow's son. They examine the corpse's nose, to see if the lad is truly dead. It is at this point that the story is taken up by the Greek text of P.Oxy. 849:

> . . . whether he was really dead, and seeing that he was truly dead, comforted the old woman, saying, "If indeed you wish, mother, and trust in the God of

Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 271–321; J. K. Elliott (ed.), *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation based on M. R. James* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 390–96; and H.-J. Klauck, *The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*, 81–112.

36 For a selection of current critical works, see G. Poupon, "Les 'Actes de Pierre' et leur remaniement," *ANRW* II.25.6 (1990) 4363–83; J. N. Bremmer (ed.), *The Apocryphal Acts of Peter: Magic, Miracles and Gnosticism* (Studies on the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles 3; Leuven: Peeters, 1998). In this collection, see P. J. Lalleman, "Bibliography of *Acts of Peter*," 200–02. Also see C. M. Thomas, *The Acts of Peter, Gospel Literature, and the Ancient Novel: Rewriting the Past* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); M. C. Baldwin, *Whose Acts of Peter? Text and Historical Context of the Actus Vercellenses* (WUNT 2/196; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005); F. Lapham, *Peter, the Myth, the Man, and the Writings: A Study of Early Petrine Text and Tradition* (JSNTSup 239; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 34–70.

37 For discussion of this point, see P. J. Lalleman, "The Relation between the *Acts of John* and the *Acts of Peter*," in Bremmer (ed.), *The Apocryphal Acts of Peter*, 161–77.

38 Klauck, *The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*, 82–84.

39 The fictional city prefect Agrippa has been inspired by Agrippa I and Agrippa II of the canonical book of Acts. On this point, see I. Karasszon, "Agrippa, King and Prefect," in Bremmer (ed.), *The Apocryphal Acts of Peter*, 21–28.

> Peter, we will lift him up and carry him there, in order that Peter may raise him and restore him to you." While they were thus speaking, the prefect looking intently at Peter (said), "My servant lies dead, who is a favorite of the king, and I did not spare him although I have with me other youths; but because I desired to try you and the God whom you (preach), whether you are indeed true, I wished him to die." And Peter said, "God is not to be put to the test or examined, Agrippa, but when he is loved and entreated he gives ear to those who are worthy. But since now . . ."

The Greek text breaks off. The Latin continues the story, telling us that Peter empowers Agrippa to raise the slave and then Peter himself revives the widow's son: "Young man, arise" (cf. Lk. 7.14). The crowd cries out: "There is only one God, the God of Peter [*Unus Deus, unus Deus Petri*]!"[40]

I offer a few comments. The Greek text of P.Oxy. 849 is of poor quality. There are several grammatical and syntactical errors that in some cases obscure the sense (which the Latin text usually remedies—though the Latin text too sometimes has problems). The Greek ὁ πραίφεκτος (lines 12–13) transliterates *praefectus*, as the rank normally is given in Latin. But in line 16, the Greek reads ὁ βασιλεύς, which is an equivalent, but not a transliteration of the Latin's *imperator*. In lines 20–22 the Greek has the prefect say, "I desired to try you [σε . . . πειράσαι θέλων] and the God whom you (preach), whether you are indeed true." The Latin misunderstands the Greek, rendering "I trusted in you [*confidens in te*] and in your Lord whom you proclaim, if indeed you are sure and truthful." The latter part of this statement, "if indeed you are sure and truthful," does not square with the first part, "I trusted in you and in your Lord." Again, the Greek's "but when he is loved and entreated [ἀλλὰ φιλούμενος καὶ παρακαλούμενος]" (lines 26–27) makes better sense than the Latin's "but he is to be revered with the soul by those he loves [*sed dilectissimus ex animo colendus*]." As poor as the Greek is, it seems clear that Greek was the original language of the *Acts of Peter*.[41] The sloppy Greek text also suggests that P.Oxy. 849 was not the work of a well-trained, professional scribe. This popular writing evidently was produced by a scribe of modest skill.

Acts of John (P.Oxy. 850)

Some think the *Acts of John* originated in the second century, but there is no certain evidence of its circulation until Eusebius, who mentions heretical writings published under the names of apostles, including various gospels "or Acts, such as those of Andrew and John and the other apostles" (*Hist. Eccl.* 3.25.6). According to Epiphanius, the *Acts of John* and other books of

40 For English translation of the Latin text (numbered 25–26), see Elliott, *Apocryphal New Testament*, 417–18.

41 Grenfell and Hunt (eds.), *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri,* Part VI, 8: "That our fragment represents the Greek text from which the Codex Vercellensis was translated admits of little doubt."

Acts were used by Encratite groups (*Haer*. 2.47.1).[42] Augustine also knew of the work, alluding to a hymn from *Acts of John* 94–96 (cf. *Ep*. 237.5–9).

The entire text of the *Acts of John* probably approximated that of the Gospel of Matthew. Today about two-thirds of the text is extant, surviving in Greek, Syriac, Coptic, and several other languages. It is surmised that the text has not survived fully because of its heretical tendencies. The *Acts of John* probably originated in Syria.[43]

The extant Greek fragment from Oxyrhynchus does not overlap with the rest of the extant MS tradition of the *Acts of John*.[44] What makes us think that P.Oxy. 850 is part of the missing one-third is the reference to Andronicus, who in the more extensive extant materials is identified as a captain, and makes many appearances (cf. *Acts of John* 31, 46, 59, 61, 62, 72, 73, 74, 76, 79, 105). At the very least, P.Oxy. 850 is important because it preserves a fragment of an otherwise lost portion of the *Acts of John*.

In the fragmentary text from Oxyrhynchus, parts of two remarkable tales are preserved. In the first (the verso), John saves the life of a man who attempted to hang himself. In the second (the recto), John crosses a bridge and encounters a demon in the form of a soldier, who challenges the apostle to combat. The text reads as follows:

Verso
. . . for him [
] groanings and [
] but John [spoke (?)
to Zeuxis having arisen and taken [
] who compelled me [
] thinking to strangle himself, who the desperate
] converts to yourself; you who to no man are known
] makes known; who weeps for the oppressed
] who raises up the dead [
] of the helpless: Jesus the comforter [
] we praise you and worship and give
thanks for all your gifts and for your present dispensation
] and service. And to Zeuxis only at the eucharist

42 For recent critical study, see J. N. Bremmer (ed.), *The Apocryphal Acts of John* (Studies on the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles 1; Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1995); P. J. Lalleman, *The Acts of John: A Two-Stage Initiation into Johannine Gnosticism* (Studies on the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles 4; Leuven: Peeters, 1998); E. Plümacher, *Geschichte und Geschichten: Aufsätze zur Apostelgeschichte und zu den Johannesakten* (ed. J. Schröter and R. Brucker; WUNT 170; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004). For bibliography, see P. J. Lalleman, "Bibliography of Acts of John," in Bremmer (ed.), *The Apocryphal Acts of John*, 231–35.

43 For introduction and survey of contents, see Klauck, *The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*, 15–45. Klauck (p. 18) proposes a date of 150–60. For commentary on P.Oxy. 850, see p. 39.

44 For editio princeps, see Grenfell and Hunt (eds.), *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, Part VI, 12–18.

] he gave to those who wished to receive [
] looking on him they did not dare, but the proconsul [
] the midst of the congregation to John
] said, "Servant of the unnameable [
] has brought letters from Caes[ar
] and with . . .
Recto
. . . departure [
] Andronicus and his [wife:
When a few [days] had passed, [John
went] with many brothers to [
] pass over a bridge under which a river ran [
] John went to the brothers [
] one came to him in soldier's clothing
and stood in his presence and said, "John if [
my hands you shall shortly come." And John [
said, "The Lord shall quench your threatening and your wrath and
transgression." And behold, the man vanished. When John came
to those he was visiting and found
them gathered together, he said, "Rise up, my brothers,
and let us bow our knees to the Lord who the great
enemy's unseen activity has brought to nothing
] bowed their knees together with them
] God . . .

The narratives recounted in the *verso* and *recto* are unrelated. The *verso* preserves the conclusion of a story concerning one Zeuxis, the prevention of an attempted suicide, the celebration of the eucharist, a proconsul, and reference to letters from Caesar. The impression one gains is that John and his testimony to Christ have been vindicated in the eyes of Roman officials. The *recto* preserves the beginning of a new story featuring Andronicus and the Apostle John, who are confronted by an enemy.

The "soldier" who opposed John on the bridge should be understood as an evil spirit, demon, or Satan himself.[45] This is probable, not only because he "vanished" from view (*recto*, line 30), but because of the close parallel with the *Martyrium Matthaei*. In the Oxyrhynchus fragment (line 26), the threatening being came to John "in soldier's clothing" (σχήματι στρατιωτικῷ). In the *Martyrium Matthaei* we read: "Now the demon was seen in a soldier's form [ὁ δὲ δαίμων ὁ ἐν τῷ στρατιωτικῷ σχήματι]."[46] In John's prayer, we are told that "the Lord has brought to nothing the great enemy's unseen activity [τοῦ μεγάλου ἐχθροῦ ἀόρατον ἐνέργημα καταργήσαντα]" (lines 33–34). In one of the parables of the

45 Klauck (*The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*, 39) believes the soldier is Satan, the great adversary of God and his people.

46 M. Bonnet, *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha* (2 vols.; Leipzig: H. Mendelssohn, 1891–1903) 2:232 (lines 15–16).

dominical tradition, the devil is defined as the "enemy" (Matt 13.39: "ὁ δὲ ἐχθρὸς ὁ σπείρας αὐτά ἐστιν ὁ διάβολος"). One thinks of the dominical assurance given the apostles: "Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy [ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ ἐχθροῦ]; and nothing shall hurt you" (Lk. 10.19; cf. Acts 13.10; *T. Dan.* 6:2–4: "the kingdom of the enemy will be brought to an end [συντελεσθήσεται ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ ἐχθροῦ]"; *T. Job* 47:10; *Life of Adam and Eve* [Greek]: 2:4; 7:2; 15:1; 25:4; 28:3; *3 Bar.* 13:2).

Acts of Paul and Thecla *(P.Oxy. 6) and* Acts of Paul *(P.Oxy. 1602)*

Tertullian (*c.* 160–225) referred to the *Acts of Paul*, saying that the man who composed the pseudepigraphal work ("out of love for the apostle") confessed and resigned his office (*de Baptismo* 17.5). Origen (*c.* 185–254) also refers to the *Acts of Paul* by name (*de Principiis* 1.2.3; *Comm. Joh.* 12.12). The full and complete work must have been quite lengthy, probably longer than the canonical book of Acts. Parts of the *Acts of Paul* circulated independently, such as (1) the *Acts of (Paul and) Thecla*, (2) *3 Corinthians*, and (3) the *Martyrdom of Paul*. The sixth-century Coptic Heidelberg papyrus codex, edited by Carl Schmidt,[47] demonstrates that at one time all of these elements made up a single coherent narrative. Portions of the work are extant in Latin,[48] in Greek,[49] in Syriac,[50] and in Ethiopic.[51] The earliest published form of the work probably dates to 180.[52]

Two fragments of the *Acts of Paul* have been found at Oxyrhynchus. P.Oxy. 6 parallels the *Acts of (Paul and) Thecla* 8–9. P.Oxy. 1602, which the editors did not recognize, but dubbed a "Homily to Monks," parallels

47 C. Schmidt (ed.), *Acta Pauli: aus der Heidelberger koptischer Papyrushandschrift* (Veröffentlichungen aus der Heidelberger Papyrus-Sammlung 2; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1904).

48 O. von Gebhardt (ed.), *Passio S. Theclae Virginis: die lateinischen Übersetzungen der Acta Pauli et Theclae* (TU 22/2; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1902).

49 L. Vouaux, *Les Actes de Paul et ses lettres apocryphes: Introduction, texts, traduction et commentaire* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1913); G. Dagron, with M. D. la Tour (eds.), *Vie et miracles de Sainte Thècla: texte grec, traduction et commentaire* (Subsidia hagiographica 62; Brussels: Société des bollandistes, 1978).

50 W. Wright, *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles: Edited from Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum and Other Libraries* (2 vols.; London: Williams and Norgate, 1871; repr. Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1990), 1:128–69 (Syriac text); 2:116–45 (English translation).

51 E. J. Goodspeed (ed.), *Acts of Paul and Thecla* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1901).

52 For introduction, bibliography, and translation, see W. Schneemelcher, "*The Acts of Paul*," in Schneemelcher (ed.), *The New Testament Apocrypha*, Volume Two, 213–70; Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 350–89. For a concise introduction, see Klauck, *The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*, 47–79. For a recently published collection of scholarly studies, see J. N. Bremmer (ed.), *The Apocryphal Acts of Paul and Thecla* (Studies on the *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles* 2; Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1996). For bibliography, see P. J. Lalleman and M. Misset-van de Weg, "Bibliography of *Acts of Paul*," in Bremmer (ed.), *The Apocryphal Acts of Paul and Thecla*, 191–98.

the Hamburg papyrus codex (P.Hamb., p. 8, lines 9–26) and the first part of P.Mich. 1317, that part that narrates Paul's arrival in Italy. The translation below begins with P.Oxy. 6, where Theoclia tells Thamyris (who hopes to marry Thecla) that Thecla has fallen under the influence of the stranger Paul,[53] and then continues with P.Oxy. 1602, where Paul gives his speech to Christians in Italy.[54]

> P.Oxy. 6
> *Recto*
> "Tha]myris, I have a new tale to tell you: For already for three days and three nights Thecla has not risen from this window, either to eat or to drink. (But) gazing intently, as though upon a joyful spectacle, she thus devotes herself to a strange man who teaches spurious and various
> *Verso*
> and empty words, so that I am amazed that such a virgin is so grievously troubled. This man, Thamyris, is stirring up the city of the Iconians, and your Thecla also. For all the women and the young men with them [go to him . . ."

I offer a few comments. θεώρημα (lit. "a sight" or "principle"), which I have translated "tale," is an odd choice of word. One would have expected διήγημα ("narrative" or "story").

The description of Paul's preaching as "spurious . . . and empty [or vain] words [ἀπατηλους . . . καὶ κενους λόγους]" recalls the apostolic warning in Eph. 5.6: "Μηδεὶς ὑμᾶς ἀπατάτω κενοῖς λόγοις [Let no one deceive you with empty words]." One should also compare Col. 2.8: "Βλέπετε μή τις ὑμᾶς ἔσται ὁ συλαγωγῶν διὰ τῆς φιλοσοφίας καὶ κενῆς ἀπάτης κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων [See to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition]."

Thecla does not eat or drink, which reminds us of Paul, when he was converted: "And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank [καὶ ἦν ἡμέρας τρεῖς μὴ βλέπων καὶ οὐκ ἔφαγεν οὐδὲ ἔπιεν]" (Acts 9.9). One is also reminded of the conversion experience of Aseneth: "And behold, for seven days and seven nights I have neither eaten bread nor drunk water [ἑπτὰ ἡμέρας καὶ ἑπτὰ νύκτας οὔτε ἄρτον ἔφαγον οὔτε ὕδωρ ἔπιον]" (*Jos. Asen.* 13:8). We are also told that Thecla was troubled (χαλεπῶς), perhaps in fulfillment of the apostolic utterance: "But understand this, that in the last days there will come troubled times [ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις ἐνστήσονται καιροὶ χαλεποί]" (2 Tim. 3.1).

53 The relevant part will be found in Schneemelcher, "The Acts of Paul," 240 (bottom of the page); Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 366 (top of the page). For the editio princeps, see B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt (eds.), *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, Part I (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1898), 9–10.

54 The relevant part will be found in Schneemelcher, "*The Acts of Paul*," 259 (middle of the page); Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 384 (middle of the page). For the editio princeps, see B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt (eds.), *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, Part XIII (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1919), 23–25.

The accusations that Paul is "disturbing the city of the Iconians" and that "all the women and the young men" go to him, recall stories in Acts. We think of the occasion when Paul and his companions were brought before city magistrates and were accused: "These men are Jews and they are disturbing our city" (Acts 16.20). One also is reminded of the complaint of Demetrius the silversmith: "Men, you know that from this business we have our wealth. And you see and hear that not only at Ephesus but almost throughout all Asia this Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable company of people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods" (Acts 19.25b–26).

P.Oxy. 1602

Recto

Soldiers of Christ, hear how often from the hand of the lawless God rescued Israel. And as long as they kept the things that pertain to the Lord he did not withdraw from him [Israel]. For from the hand of Pharaoh, who is lawless, he saved him [Israel], and from Og, a more unholy king; and from Arad, with those of other tribes. And since they kept the things that pertain to God he still gave to them from the fruit of strength, having promised to them the land of the Canaanites. And he subjected to them those of other tribes; and after these things in the wilderness and waterless places he provisioned [them]. In addition to these things he sent forth prophets to proclaim our Lord

Verso

Christ Jesus, men who according to order, lot, and portion receiving the Spirit of Christ and suffering ills from the people were put to death. They [those who opposed the prophets] were killed because they withdrew from the living Spirit according to their lawless deeds. They lost the eternal inheritance. And now, brothers, remain conquerors. Remain until having endured we attain the entry to the Lord, and receive as natural and as shield of well-pleasing Christ Jesus—him who planted himself on earth on our behalf, [even] as he is; and receive the word, because a spirit of power in the last of the times . . .

Paul's opening words, "Soldiers of Christ [στρατιῶται Χ(ριστο)ῦ]" (*recto*, line 1), is probably modeled after the exhortation in the Pastorals: "Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus [στρατιώτης Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ]" (2 Tim. 2.3). The reminder of deliverance "from the hand of lawless (men) [ἐκ χειρὸς ἀνόμων]" (line 2) probably echoes the language of canonical Acts: "this Jesus . . . you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless (men) [διὰ χειρὸς ἀνόμων]" (Acts 2.23). The speech that follows is reminiscent of Paul's speech at Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13.16b–41).

Paul's judgment that his fellow Jews "lost the eternal inheritance [τῆς κληρονομίας τῆς αἰωνίου]" (*verso*, lines 28–29) is reminiscent of Paul's speech to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20.32 ("I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance [δοῦναι τὴν κληρονομίαν]") and exhortations in his letters (Gal.

3.18; Eph. 1.14, 18; 5.4; Col. 3.24; and Heb. 9.15, which speaks of the "promised eternal inheritance [τῆς αἰωνίου κληρονομίας]," a letter believed by many Christians in antiquity to have been written by Paul).

Paul's exhortation that fellow believers "remain conquerors [μείνατε νικήται]" (line 30) probably echoes the apostle's triumphant assertion: "in all these things we are more than conquerors [ὑπερνικῶμεν]" (Rom. 8.37). The curious phrase "shield of well-pleasing [ὅπλον εὐδοκίας]" (lines 34–35) is reminiscent of Paul's use of the words ὅπλον (Rom. 6.13; 13.12; 2 Cor. 6.7; 10.4) and εὐδοκία (Phil. 2.13; 2 Thess. 1.11). The phrase "a spirit of power [πν[εῦμ]α δυνάμεως]" (line 39) combines words often found together in Paul's letters, though normally in the reverse order "power of the spirit" (e.g., Rom. 1.4; 15.13, 19; 1 Cor. 2.4; 5.4; 12.10; Gal. 3.5; 1 Thess. 1.5; 2 Tim. 1.7).

Finally, the phrase "in the last of times [ἐπ᾽ ἐσχάτῳ τῶν καιρῶν)" also echoes Pauline language, as in "in the last days [ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις) there will come troubled times [καιροὶ χαλεποί)" (2 Tim. 3.1), as well as Petrine language, as in "by God's power . . . through faith . . . to be revealed in the last time [ἐν καιρῷ ἐσχάτῳ)" (2 Pet. 1.5). However, in eschatological contexts, this language is commonplace (cf. *T. Issach.* 6:1: "in the last times your sons will forsake generosity"; *T. Naph.* 8:1: "I have shown to you the last times"; *T. Jos.* 19:10: "these things will come to pass in their time, in the last days"; *Life Adam and Eve* [Greek] 13:2: "in the end of times").

Unidentified Apocryphal Acts (P.Oxy. 851)

Only a few lines survive on two sides of a small papyrus fragment, which at one time was a page in a codex.[55] If this fragment is any indication, we have another apocryphal book of Acts that involves an encounter between a Roman prefect (ἡγεμών) and a Christian apostle, who is initially regarded as little more than a magician (μάγος). The text reads:

> *Recto*
>] said, "Do as you wish." The prefect said to the chief huntsmen, "Bring to me here (?) alive" [
> *Verso*
>] "O Lord prefect, this man is not a magician, but perhaps his god is great" [

"Prefect" translates ἡγεμών (in both *recto*, lines 4–5, and *verso*, line 5), a word used in the New Testament and other literature of this period for either a prefect (such as Pontius Pilate, cf. Mt. 27.2) or a procurator (such as Felix, cf. Acts 23.24). Above, it was noted that the Greek transliteration, πραίφεκτος, appears in the *Acts of Peter*. In the *Acts of John*, ἀνθύπατος is used.

55 For editio princeps, see Grenfell and Hunt (eds.), *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, Part VI, 18–19.

The prefect commands the "chief huntsmen" (ἀρχικυνήγους) to bring to him a living animal (either ζῶνθαν or σῶσαν). This strange request is probably part of a test that will be put to a Christian apostle. In the *verso* (lines 5–6), someone assures the prefect that "this man is not a magician" (οὐκ ἐστὶν μάγος) and that his ability (to defend himself? to defeat a dangerous animal?) was because "his god is great" (ὁ θεὸς αὐτοῦ μέγας ἐστιν). In the *Acts of Paul* the much-maligned apostle is compared to a μάγος (cf. the Thecla section, §20: "He is a sorcerer. Away with him!").

Klauck wonders if P.Oxy. 851 might be a fragment of the *Acts of Andrew*.[56] In section §18 of Gregory of Tours' Epitome of the *Acts of Andrew*,[57] the proconsul has Andrew dragged to the stadium, and orders wild animals to be brought to the stadium. Among the animals was a bull led by "thirty soldiers and incited by two hunters." The Apostle Andrew not only successfully defends himself against the animals and continues to proclaim the gospel; he also raises up the proconsul's son who had been killed by one of the wild animals. The apostle is vindicated and finds it necessary to protect the proconsul from the angry crowd. The coherence between the Epitome and the Greek fragment is quite suggestive. P.Oxy. 851 may well be a page from a copy of the *Acts of Andrew*.

Concluding Comments

I offer a few comments relating to the five fragments of apocryphal books of Acts. First, there is a marked interest in apologetic, chiefly in the form of impressive public demonstrations before Roman officials. This literature, which proliferated during the early centuries of the Christian movement, served Christian apologetic interests in its attempt to show that Christian faith and Christian leaders, if given a fair hearing, can acquit themselves.

Second, I am struck by the emphasis on how closely the miraculous element approaches magic (and, therefore, there is the need to affirm that the apostles are not magicians and sorcerers). No doubt this reflects the popular culture of the time, including its fears of death, demons, and sickness. For a culture seeking protection from illness, and from evil spirits believed to cause most forms of illness, assurance that the Christian faith brought with it a supernatural power that could protect the faithful from malignant forces would go a long way in commending this faith. The widespread use of charms and incantations by Christians (and pagans, too, who invoke the name of Jesus and other Christian elements) is consistent with this observation.

Third, I think early Christians simply enjoyed good stories. Embroidering and embellishing the stories of Jesus, including his infancy and boyhood, and

56 Klauck, *The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*, 120.
57 See Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 277–78.

the stories of the apostles, as they spread the faith, was irresistible. Christians of the first few centuries wanted to hear more, to fill in the gaps, to find answers to questions that the early Christian literature (that is, the literature that in due course would comprise the New Testament), did not address.

Fourth and finally, writers who did not find their views expressed in the older writings of the apostles found it necessary to create new writings, writings that advanced their ideas and did so with apostolic authority. These new literary creations incorporated vocabulary and themes from the older, first-century book of Acts and apostolic letters. Of course, the newer works introduced new ideas. Some of these new ideas evoked charges of heresy and contributed to the need felt by many leaders of the early church to identify and defend a recognized set of writings that would function as the Church's authoritative body of literature, as its holy scripture, from which "orthodox" faith and practice might be derived.

The Christian communities of Oxyrhynchus read widely and eclectically, at least from our much later, post-canonical perspective. The literature that they cast into the dump[58] has given us an unprecedented opportunity to investigate what individuals and congregations read, studied, copied, revised, and collected. Research into the literature of Oxyrhynchus involves much more than merely inquiring into the canonical status of this or that writing; it involves a whole series of investigations into book-collecting, library building, reading habits, storytelling, preaching, worship, prayer, and more.[59]

58 One thinks of J. H. Moulton's aptly titled book *From Egyptian Rubbish Heaps* (London: Charles H. Kelly, 1916), which offers an early survey of the papyri.

59 I thank Ms Courtney Bacon, a doctoral student at Fuller Seminary, for her assistance.

APPENDIX

Christian and Christian-related documents published by the Egypt Exploration Fund/Society:[60]

Vol. 1

1 Sayings of Jesus (= *Gospel of Thomas* §§26–33) C2/C3
2 Mt. 1.1–9, 12, 14–20 (pl. 1) C3
3 Mk 10.50–51; 11.11–12 C5/C6
4 Theological fragment C3/C4
5 Early Christian fragment C3/C4
6 *Acts of Paul and Thecla* C5
43 Document that mentions two churches C4

Vol. 2

208 Jn 1.23–31, 33–41; 20.11–17, 19–25 C3
209 Rom. 1.1–7 "school boy's exercise" (pl. II) C4
210 Early Christian fragment; with an allusion to Phil. 2.6 C3

Vol. 3

401 Mt. 1.21–2.2 C5/C6
402 1 Jn 4.11–17 late C4/C5
403 *Apocalypse of Baruch* (= *2 Baruch*) 12:1–5; 13:1–2, 11–12; 14:1–2 (pl. 1) late C4/C5
404 Hermas, *Similitudes* X.3.3–4.3 (pl. 4) late C3/C4
405 Theological fragment (probably Irenaeus), with quotation of Mt. 3.16–17 (pl.1) C3
406 Theological fragment, with quotations of Mt. 13.15 and Acts 28.27 (pl. 1) C3
407 Christian prayer, with allusion to the long ending of the Lord's Prayer late C3/C4
412 Julius Africanus, *Kestoi* C3

Vol. 4

654 New Sayings of Jesus (= *Gospel of Thomas* Prologue + §§1–7) (pl. 1) C3
655 Fragment of a lost gospel (= *Gospel of Thomas* §24, §§36–39, §77) (pl. 2) C3
656 Gen. 14, 15, 19, 24, 27 (pl. 2) late C2/early C3
657 Heb. 2–5, 10–12 early C4

60 The abbreviation "C" refers to century (e.g., C3 means "third century"). Some of the documents provide dates, which are cited.

Vol. 5

840 Fragment of an extra-canonical gospel C4/C5

Vol. 6

845 Pss. 68.30–37; 70.3–8 late C4/C5
846 Amos 2.6–12 C6
847 Jn 2.11–22 (pl. 6) C4
848 Rev. 16.17–20 (pl. 1) C5
849 *Acts of Peter* (pl. 1) early C4
850 *Acts of John* (pl. 1) C4
851 Apocryphal Acts C5/C6
925 Christian prayer C5/C6

Vol. 7

1007 Gen. 2.7–9, 16–19, 23–27; 3.1, 6–8 late C3
1008 1 Cor. 7.18–8.4 C4
1009 Phil. 3.9–17; 4.2–8 C4
1010 *6 Ezra* 15:57–59 C4

Vol. 8

1073 Old Latin version of Genesis 5.4–13, 29–31; 6.1–3 C4
1074 Exod. 31.13–14; 32.7–8 C3
1075 Exod. 40.26–32 C3
1076 New recension of Tobit 2:2–8 C6
1077 Amulet: Mt. 4.23–24 C6
1078 Heb. 9.12–19 C4
1079 Rev. 1.4–7 late C3/C4
1080 Rev. 3.19–4.2 C4
1081 Gnostic gospel early C4
1162 Christian letter, from Leon the presbyter to presbyters and deacons, in which *nomina sacra* occur C4

Vol. 9

1166 Gen. 16.8–12 C3
1167 Gen. 31.42–46, 47–54 C4
1168 Josh. 4.23–24; 5.1 C4
1169 Mt. 6.5–6, 8–9, 13–15, 17 C5/C6
1170 Mt. 10.32–11.5 C5
1171 Jas 2.19–3.9 late C3
1172 Hermas, *Similitudes* II C4
1173 Philo, *On Drunkenness* C3

Vol. 10

1224 Extra-canonical gospel C4
1225 Lev. 16.33–34 C4
1226 Pss. 7.9–12; 8.2–3 late C3/early C4
1227 Mt. 12.24–26, 31–33 C5
1228 Jn 15.25–16.2, 21–31 late C3
1229 Jas 1.10–12, 15–18 C4
1230 Rev. 5.6–8; 6.5–8 early C4

Vol. 11

1351 Lev. 27.12, 15–16, 19–20, 24 (vellum; pl. 1) C4
1352 Pss. 82.6–19; 83.1–4 (vellum) early C4
1353 1 Pet. 5.5–13 (vellum) C4
1354 Rom. 1.1–16 C6/C7
1355 Rom. 8.12–27, 33–39; 9.1–9 (pl. 1) C3
1356 Philo, *On Drunkenness* C3
1357 Calendar of church services (pl. 1) 535–36

Vol. 12

1492 Christian letter late C3/C4
1493 Christian letter, in which a *nomen sacrum* occurs late C3/C4
1494 Christian letter early C4
1495 Christian letter C4
1592 Christian letter, in which *nomina sacra* and allusion to Luke 1.46–47 occur late C3/C4

Vol. 13

1594 New recension of Tobit 12:14–19 (vellum; pl. 1) late C3
1595 Sirach 1:1–9 C6
1596 Jn 6.8–12, 17–22 C4
1597 Acts 26.7–8, 20 (pl. 1) late C3/C4
1598 1 Thess. 4.13–2 Thess. 1.2 late C3/C4
1599 Hermas, *Similitudes* VIII.6.4–8.3 C4
1600 Treatise on the Passion, at points similar to Melito's *Paschal Homily* C5
1601 Homily on spiritual warfare, with allusions to Joel 1.6; Eph. 4.12; 1 Pet. 5.8 late C4/C5
1602 Homily to monks (vellum), later identified as the *Acts of Paul* late C4/C5
1603 Homily concerning women C5/C6

Vol. 14

1680 Christian letter C3/C4
1774 Christian letter, in which a *nomen sacrum* occurs C4

Vol. 15

1778 Aristides, *Apology* (pl. 1) C4
1779 Ps. 1.4–6 C4
1780 Jn 8.14–22 C4
1781 Jn 16.14–30 C3
1782 *Didache* 1:3–4; 2:7; 3:1–2 late C4
1783 Hermas, *Mandates* IX early C4
1784 Constantinopolitan Creed C5
1785 Homilies? C5
1786 Christian hymn with musical notation (pl. 1) late C3
1828 Hermas, *Similitudes* VI early C3

Vol. 16

1870 Christian letter C3/C4
1926 Prayer C6
1927 Liturgical fragment, adapting Pss. 32.21–33.2 C5/C6
1928 Amulet (Ps. 90.1–16) (pl. 3) C5/early C6
1945 Order for payment to monks 517
1950 Order for payment issued by a church 487
1951 Order for payment issued by a church C5

Vol. 17

2065 Ps. 90.5–10 C5/C6
2066 Eccl. 6.6–8; 7.1–2 C5/C6
2067 Nicene Creed C5
2068 Liturgical (?) fragments, with allusions to OT texts C4
2069 Apocalyptic fragment (*Enoch*), perhaps alluding to the *Apocalypse of Paul* 43 late C4
2070 Anti-Jewish dialogue late C3
2071 Fragment of a dialogue C6
2072 Fragment of an apology late C3
2073 Fragment of a homily, with allusions to Wis. 11:19 and Sir. 25:16 late C4
2074 Apostrophe to Wisdom (?), with possible allusion to Wis. 7:26 C5

Vol. 18

2157 Gal. 1.2–10, 13–20 C4
2158 Philo, *On Drunkenness* C3

Vol. 22

2344 Petition of a bishop 336

Vol. 24

2383 Lk. 22.41, 45–48, 58–61 C3
2384 Mt. 11.26–27; 12.4–5 C3/C4
2385 Mt. 19.10–11, 17–18 C4
2386 Pss. 83.9–10; 84.1 C4/C5

Vol. 31

2531 Theophilus of Alexandria, *Peri katanuxeos* C6
2601 Christian letter that mentions healing, in which *nomina sacra* occur C4
2609 Christian letter C4

Vol. 33

2665 Report of property registrars, concerning one Paul 305/306
2673 Declaration concerning church property 304

Vol. 34

2683 Mt. 23.30–34, 35–39 later C2
2684 Jude 4–5, 7–8 C3/C4

Vol. 36

2745 Onomasticon of Hebrew names C3/C4
2785 Christian letter to Sotas, in which *nomina sacra* occur C3

Vol. 41

2944 Text that describes the judgment of Solomon C1/C2
2949 Apocryphal gospel(?) C2/C3

Vol. 42

3035 Order to arrest one "Petosorapis, son of Horus, Christian" 256 CE

Vol. 43

3119 Document relating to property confiscation, which mentions "Christians" C3
3149 Christian letter, with possible allusions to Mt. 6.4; 25.34–40 C5

Vol. 44

3184 A "List of Village Liturgists," in which parents Theodorus and Maria are mentioned 297 CE

Vol. 50

3522 LXX Job 42.11–12 C1
3523 Jn 18.36–19.7 C2
3524 *Protevangelium of James* 25:1 C6
3525 *Gospel of Mary* C3
3526 Hermas, *Mandates* V–VI C4
3527 Hermas, *Similitudes* VIII.4–5 early C3
3528 Hermas, *Similitudes* IX.20–22 late C2/early C3
3529 Passion of St. Dioscorus, with a possible allusion to Acts 8.21 C4

Vol. 55

3787 A tax list that lists what appears to be several Christian names C3

Vol. 56

3857 Christian letter, in which *nomina sacra* occur C3/C4
3858 Christian letter, in which *nomina sacra* occur C4

Vol. 60

4009 *Gospel of Peter*? C2
4010 Pater (Mt. 6.9–13), preceded by an introductory prayer C4
4011 Hymn (Ps. 75, intercalated) C6

Vol. 61

4127 Christian letter, in which a *nomen sacrum* occurs first half C4
4128 Nomination to liturgies 24 September 346 CE
4129–30 Nomination to a liturgy C4

Vol. 63

4365 Letter, in which *nomina sacra* occur, about Christian books C4

Vol. 64

4401 Mt. 3.10–12; 3.16–4.3 C3
4402 Mt. 4.11–12, 22–23 late C3/early C4
4403 Mt. 13.55–56; 14.3–5 late C2/early C3
4404 Mt. 21.34–37, 43, 45(?) late C2
4405 Mt. 23.30–34, 35–39 late C2/early C3
4406 Mt. 27.62–64; 28.2–5 C5/C6

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4442 Exod. 20.10–17, 18–22 early C3
4443 Est. E16–9.3 late C1/early C2
4444 Wisdom of Solomon 4:17–5:1 C4
4445 Jn 1.29–35, 40–46 C3
4446 Jn 17.1–2, 11 C3
4447 Jn 17.23–24; 18.1–5 C3
4448 Jn 21.18–20, 23–25 C3
4449 Jas 3.13–4.4; 4.9–5.1 C3/C4
4468 Magic text late C1
4469 *Letter of Abgar to Jesus* (amulet) C5

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4494 Mt. 10.13–15, 25–27 C4
4495 Lk. 17.11–13, 22–23 C3
4496 Acts 26.31–32; 27.6–7 C5
4497 Rom. 2.12–13, 29 C3
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4617 List of festival payments C5

Vol. 69

4705 Hermas, *Visions* I.1.8–9 C3
4706 Hermas, *Visions* III.4.3, 6.9, 9.6–7, 13.3–IV.1.1, 7.9; *Mandates* II.4–5; IV.1.1, 3.6, 4.3–4; V.1.6–7; VI.1.3–5; VII.5; VIII.6. IX 7–8; X.1.1–2 C2/C3
4707 Hermas, *Similitudes* VI.3–VII.2 C3

Vol. 70

4759 Passion of St. Pamoun C6/7

Vol. 71

4803 Jn 1.21–28, 38–44 C3
4804 Jn 1.25–28, 33–38, 42–44 C4
4805 Jn 19.17–18, 25–26 C3
4806 Jn 21.11–14, 22–24 C4/5

Vol. 72

4844 1 Cor. 14.31–34; 15.3–6 C4
4845 2 Cor. 11.1–4, 6–9 C6

Supplement: Oxyrhynchus Papyri published in other series:

Hebrew Bible

Exod. 29.21–24 P.Milan 22 (= van Haelst no. 0039) C4
Pss. 43.20–23 P.Harris 31 (= van Haelst no. 0148) C4/C5
Job 1.19–2.1, 6 PSI 1163 (= van Haelst no. 0272) C4

New Testament

Mt. 25.12–15 PSI 1 C6
Jn 3.14–18, 31–32, 34–35 PSI 3 C6
Jn 18.31–33, 37–38 P.Ryl. Gr. 457 C2
Acts 23.11–17, 23–29 PSI 1165 C3/C4
Rom. 1.27–30; 1.32–2.2 PSI 4 (= 0172) C5
Gal. 3.16–25 PSI 251 (= 0176) C4/C5
Tit. 1.11–15; 2.3–8 P.Ryl. Gr. 5 C2
Heb. 2–5, 10–12 PSI 1292 (see P.Oxy. 657 above) C4
Jas 2.19–3.9 P.Princ. 15 (see P.Oxy. 1171 above) C3

Other Christian Writings

Egerton gospel fragment P.Eger. 2 (= van Haelst no. 0586) C2
Gospel of Mary P.Ryl. Gr. 463 C2
Apocalypse of Peter P.Vind. G. 39756 (= van Haelst no. 0619) C5
Christian sermon P.Mich. 18.764 C2
Christian letter from Sotas to Peter, in which *nomina sacra* occur PSI 208 C3
Christian letter, from Sotas to Paul, in which *nomina sacra* occur PSI 1041 C3
Letter that mentions "Sotas, the Christian" SB 12.10772 (= PSI 1412) C3
Christian letter from Sotas (?) to Maximus, the "beloved brother," in which a *nomen sacrum* occurs P.Alex. 29 C3
A Christian letter from Colluthus to Ammonius, in which a *nomen sacrum* occurs P.Cong. 15.20 C3/C4

Philo

Philo, *On Drunkenness* PSI 1207 C3
Philo, *On Drunkenness* P.Haun. 8 (= van Haelst no. 0696) C3

Chapter 3

The Reception of the Pseudepigrapha in Syriac Traditions: The Case of *2 Baruch*

Liv Ingeborg Lied

It has long been established that several of the texts we commonly refer to as "Pseudepigrapha" were known in the Syriac-speaking realm. *Jubilees*, *The Testament of Adam*, *4 Ezra*, *Joseph and Asenath*, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* and *Odes of Solomon* as well as *2 Baruch* are among the texts that have come down to us in the Syrian context.[1]

Various aspects of the transmission and role of the Pseudepigrapha in the Syrian context have been studied by, among others, Sebastian Brock, William Adler, James H. Charlesworth and David Bundy.[2] In his classic article "Pseudepigrapha in Syriac Literature," Bundy shows that pseudepigraphal texts were part of Syriac Bibles, that pseudepigraphal material entered into liturgy, and that some works were transmitted in whole or in part in Syriac church chronicles and other literature.[3] Hence, it is well established that these texts were kept, copied and read, and, sometimes, referred to and used in texts written by Syriac-speaking Christians.[4]

Using the work of these scholars as a fruitful point of departure, it becomes clear that our knowledge of the functions, status and forms of pseudepigraphal texts and material in Syrian traditions remains limited. This

1 The following works are also attested: *The Cave of Treasures*, *Ahiqar*, *Bel and the Dragon*, *Apocalypse of Daniel*, *Apocalypse of Enoch*, *Jannes and Jambres*, *The Testament of Ephrem*, *Prayer of Manasseh*, *Apocryphal Psalms*, *The History of the Rechabites*. Cf. David Bundy, "Pseudepigrapha in Syriac Literature," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1991 Seminar Papers* (ed. Kent H. Richards; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1991), 748–58.

2 W. Adler, "Jacob of Edessa and the Jewish Pseudepigrapha in Syriac Chronography," in *Tracing the Threads: Studies in the Vitality of the Jewish Pseudepigrapha* (ed. John C. Reeves; SBLEJL 06; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994), 143–71; S. P. Brock, "Abraham and the Ravens: A Syriac Counterpart to Jubilees 11–12 and Its Implications," *JSJ* 9 (1978): 135–52; J. H. Charlesworth et al., *The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research, with a Supplement* (Septuagint and Cognate Studies 7; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981); Bundy, "Pseudepigrapha," 745–65.

3 Bundy "Pseudepigrapha," 745–65.

4 I apply the term "Syrian Christians/Church/tradition" to refer to Christians whose native tongue was Syriac and/or who used Syriac as a liturgical language.

is unfortunate, as the history of the reception of these texts in the Syrian traditions offers new insight into the relationships between biblical and pseudepigraphic literature, particularly the overlaps and interconnections between them.

In this article I first outline the known history of the reception of the Jewish, apocalyptic text, *2 Baruch*, in the Syrian context, and I discuss what may be deduced from the known material. Second, I pose some methodological questions invoked by this known reception history of *2 Baruch* in Syrian traditions, suggesting how Robert Kraft's insistence on treating seriously the historical, cultural and linguistic context of the actual manuscripts of the Pseudepigrapha can be helpful to future studies.[5]

The Known History of 2 Baruch *in Syrian Christianity*

In the nineteenth century, a sixth- or early seventh-century copy of a Syriac Bible—the *Codex Ambrosianus*—was found in the Bibliotheca Ambrosiana in Milan. In addition to the common biblical books of the Old Testament, this Bible included *2 Baruch*, *4 Ezra* and the sixth book of Josephus' *Jewish War* (referred to as *5 Maccabees*, a title also given to the Arabic *Maccabees*). As far as we know, *2 Baruch*, as well as *Jewish War* 6 and *4 Ezra*, were omitted from later versions of Syriac Bibles. At least, the codex referred to as *The Ambrosianus* remains the only *known* Syriac Bible manuscript that includes the work.[6]

Sebastian Brock, Robert Murray, James H. Charlesworth, and Matthias Henze have all suggested that Syrian writers must have known *2 Baruch*, in one form or the other. These scholars have pointed out that, for instance, the *History of the Rechabites* (first–fourth century), the *Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel* (sixth–seventh century), as well as the works of Aphrahat and Ephrem (fourth century), refer and/or allude to material attested in *2 Baruch*.[7] These

5 R. A. Kraft, "The Pseudepigrapha in Christianity," in *Tracing the Threads: Studies in the Vitality of the Jewish Pseudepigrapha* (ed. John C. Reeves; SBLEJL 06; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1994), 55–86; idem, "The Pseudepigrapha and Christianity, Revisited: Setting the Stage and Framing Some Central Questions," *JSJ* 32.4 (2001): 371–95.

6 Bibliotheca Ambrosiana B. 21 Inf., fols. 267a–276b. A. Ceriani's photolithographical version is available ("Translatio syra pescitto Veteris Testamenti ex codice Ambrosiano sec. fere VI photolithographice edita," in *Monumenta sacra et profana 6* (Milan, 1876), 533–53.

7 Cf. e.g. Aphrahat, *Dem.* 23, Ephrem, *Hymns on Virginity* 6.8; *Hist. Rech.* 1.1; 8.3; *Syr. Apoc. Dan.* 8. Cf. S. P. Brock, "Jewish Traditions in Syriac Sources," *JJS* 30 (1979): 212–32; idem, "Ephrem and the Syriac Tradition," in *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature* (ed. F. Young, L. Ayres, and A. Louth; Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 371; R. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom: A Study in Early Syriac Tradition* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 113ff; 284ff; 284–86; 297ff; 310ff; J. H. Charlesworth, "History of the Rechabites," in *OTP* 2:446;

connections have, however, generally been noted in passing, and the nature of the connections was not the main focus of these former studies.

The translation history of *2 Baruch* may also provide some information as to the reception of the work in the Syrian traditions. We know, for instance, that *2 Baruch* was translated into Arabic in the tenth or eleventh century. Scholars have noted that this Arabic translation probably does not have the *Ambrosianus* as its *Vorlage*.[8] Likewise, it has been suggested that the version of *2 Baruch* found in the *Ambrosianus* is not the oldest translation into Syriac, but a reworked version of an older translation.[9] If these assumptions are correct, we may assume that more versions of *2 Baruch* were in circulation, and that the work continued to be read and translated in the Syriac-speaking realm—at least by some educated, literate, groups.

Additionally, excerpts from *2 Baruch* have been found in West Syrian lectionary manuscripts. Three lectionary manuscripts, dating from the thirteenth and fifteenth century, include *2 Bar.* 44:9–15 and 72:1–73:1.[10]

This brief summary of the known history of *2 Baruch* in Syriac traditions suggests that this work, or materials attested in it, were known in the Syriac-speaking realm from around the third to the fifteenth century, maybe continuously—or maybe it, at times, was forgotten, only to be rediscovered later.[11]

2 Baruch *in the Context of the* Codex Ambrosianus

Still, there remains more to be learned by scrutinizing two of these known contexts of *2 Baruch*. First, what can we learn from studying the *Ambrosianus*, the sixth- to seventh-century Bible codex where *2 Baruch* was first discovered? The *Codex Ambrosianus* is unique in many regards. The *Ambrosianus* is among the oldest complete versions of the Syriac Old

M. Henze, *The Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel* (Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 11; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 25.

8 Cf. F. Leemhuis, A. F. J. Klijn, and G. J. H. van Gelder, *The Arabic Text of the Apocalypse of Baruch* (Leiden: Brill, 1986). Cf. further F. Leemhuis, "The Arabic Version of the Apocalypse of Baruch: A Christian Text?" *JSP* 4 (1989): 19–26.

9 P.-M. Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch, Introduction, Traduction du Syriaque et Commentaire* (2 vols.; SC 144–45; Paris: Éditions du cerf, 1969), 1:38–39.

10 Lectionary 1312, MS Add.14,686 and Lectionary 1313, MS Add. 14,687 in the British Museum, and Lectionary 1515, MS 77 in Konath Library, Kerala. Cf. W. Baars, "Neue Textzeugen der syrischen Baruchapokalypse," *VT* 13 (1963): 476–78; C. Moss, *Catalogue of Syriac Printed Books and Related Literature in the British Museum* (Gorgias Historical Catalogues 2; Piscataway: Gorgias, forthcoming).

11 This paper does not deal with the history of transmission of the so-called Epistola Baruch (*2 Bar.* 78–87). This epistle circulated independently and has a separate history of transmission. Cf. M. Whitters, *The Epistle of Second Baruch: A Study of Form and Message* (Library of Second Temple Studies 42; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003).

Testament known. It contains all the books *we* commonly expect to find in a Bible—and a few more.[12]

A closer look at the structure of the *Ambrosianus* suggests that *2 Baruch* was, in all probability, considered an integral part of this particular version of the Bible. *2 Baruch* is situated towards the end of the codex, after 2 Chronicles, but before *4 Ezra*, Ezra-Nehemiah and 1–5 Maccabees. In other words, *2 Baruch* does not appear as an appendix to the Bible, something merely added at the end. Rather, it seems reasonable to assume that *2 Baruch* was deliberately placed amongst the historical books of the Old Testament.

Why was *2 Baruch* included in the *Ambrosianus*? Mark Whitters and Pierre-Marie Bogaert suggest that *2 Baruch*, *4 Ezra* and *5 Maccabees/Jewish War* 6 were included in the codex due to their shared thematic focus on the fall of the temple. Martin Leuenberger further suggested that *2 Baruch* is situated after 2 Chronicles, but before *4 Ezra*, because it fills a lacuna in the biblical story about the fall of the first temple. This suggestion agrees with Brock's observation that the books are in historical order.[13]

I find these suggestions very reasonable. As Brock has noted, the precise contents and order of books in Syriac Bibles were never entirely fixed until the sixteenth to seventeenth century.[14] As such, there was room to insert a text like *2 Baruch*. Perhaps *2 Baruch*, together with *4 Ezra* and *Jewish War* 6, were included in the *Ambrosianus* because they meld nicely into the grand biblical narrative? Maybe they did fill a lacuna in the sense that they told their readers some parts of the story that they did not know before and, in this way, improved the biblical story?

There remains one more thing that examining the *Codex Ambrosianus* may tell us. Antonio Ceriani, the former curator of the library in Milan and the man who rediscovered the *Ambrosianus*, suggests that it appears that the codex may have been detached from ordinary ecclesiastical life.[15] Ceriani, and other scholars after him, have remarked that there are very few liturgical notes in this codex. Ceriani's photolithographical copy of the codex, published in 1876, shows very few liturgical notes in the margins of central texts, as compared to other Syriac Bible manuscripts of the time. The folios containing *2 Baruch* are—as could be expected—completely clean: here, there are no notes at all.

As Brock has noted, many Syriac Bibles were only rarely used in liturgy and during services. Codices containing complete versions of the Bible were precious, as well as large and bulky. Codices containing smaller groups of

12 In addition, this codex is special to Pseudepigrapha scholars, since it contains the only known complete version of *2 Baruch*.

13 Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch* 1:161; Whitters, *Epistle of Second Baruch*, 21–22; M. Leuenberger, "Ort und Funktion der Wolkenvision und ihrer Deutung in der Syrischen *Baruchapokalypse*," *JSJ* 36 (2005): 210; S. P. Brock, *The Bible in the Syriac Tradition* (Gorgias Handbooks 7; Piscataway; Gorgias, 2006), 44.

14 Brock, *Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 17.

15 Ceriani, *Monumenta sacra et profana*, 8.

biblical books were more often used during mass. Several congregations may not even have had Bibles; they may have had lectionaries only.[16] Ceriani's suggestion that the *Ambrosianus* looks like it was detached from regular ecclesiastical life should probably be interpreted on this background. It is possible that this particular Bible codex was seldom used—even less than other Syriac Bibles—that, maybe, it was more of an artifact than a text in regular use. Anyhow, to the modern reader of Ceriani's publication of the *Ambrosianus*, *2 Baruch* looks like an untouched text in a Bible codex that is less touched than usual.

What do these pieces of information tell us about the history of *2 Baruch* in the Syrian tradition? Clearly, no conclusions can be drawn, but it seems reasonable to believe that, in the sixth or seventh century, some circles of the Syrian church found *2 Baruch* important enough to include in a Bible codex. At the same time, it seems clear that those who were somehow engaged with the codex did not consider *2 Baruch* to be among the important texts of this Bible.

2 Baruch *in the Context of the Lectionary Manuscripts*

As mentioned above, three lectionary manuscripts—two manuscripts dating from the thirteenth century and one from the fifteenth century—include passages *we* recognize as excerpts of *2 Baruch*. The two manuscripts dating from the thirteenth century are kept in the British Museum. Their existence was made known to the scholarly community by W. Baars in 1963.[17] One of these manuscripts, Add. 14.686, records 44:9–15. The other manuscript, Add. 14.687, records 72:1–73:1, and, in fact, records this passage twice, in two different lections.[18]

To what extent can these lectionary manuscripts tell us anything about the use, the function, or the status of *2 Baruch* in the Syriac-speaking realm at this relatively late point in time? Add. 14.686 (Lectionary 1312), recording 44:9–15, identifies the excerpt as "From Baruch, the prophet" (□□ □□□□ □□□□), whereas Add. 14.687 (Lectionary 1313) presents 72.1–73.2 as "From Baruch" (□□ □□□□). Thus, both manuscripts associate these passages with "Baruch." It is not obvious, however, what they refer to. The passages in the manuscripts may refer to the book of Baruch, since that book was counted among the prophetic books. Likewise, they may refer to *2 Baruch*, or possibly they refer to the biblical figure "Baruch, the Prophet." This means that the passages are given legitimation by references either to the exemplary biblical figure, or to a book of Baruch.

16 Brock, *Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 17.

17 Baars, "Neue Textzeugen," 476–78.

18 The third manuscript dating from 1423 (MS 77 at the Konath Library in Kerala) transmits both passages together. The details of these manuscripts need further study.

Nonetheless, it is the immediate context of the passages in the lectionary manuscripts themselves that provides the most important information for the present study. Both passages are parts of pericopes, and their contexts in the lections are other excerpts from scripture. The passage *we* would recognize as *2 Bar.* 44:9–15 is part of the lection "The Sunday of the Departed," i.e., the Sunday before Lent. The passage *2 Bar.* 72.1–73.1, which is recorded twice, belongs to the lection "The Holy Sunday of the Resurrection," possibly Easter Sunday, as well as to the "Lection for the Eighth Sunday after Easter."[19] Hence, if these lectionary manuscripts were indeed in regular use somewhere, it is reasonable to assume that the passages could have been considered part of scripture. The passages were read and performed in public, possibly during mass, in the context of other excerpts from scripture. This assumed performative context undoubtedly enhanced the audience's perception that these passages were authoritative reading.

What is the history of these manuscripts, and what is the relationship between the lectionary manuscripts and *2 Baruch*? Our knowledge about the history of these manuscripts is, unfortunately, sparse. However, we do know that these manuscripts were kept for a while at a monastery in the Sketis desert in the northern part of Egypt.[20] It is interesting to note that the *Ambrosianus*, the codex containing the only known complete version of *2 Baruch*, was kept at that very same monastery before it was brought to Europe and ended up in the library in Milan.

Baars has noted that, even though the texts of the *Ambrosianus* and the lectionaries are quite similar, the versions of the lectionary manuscripts do not seem to have the *Ambrosianus* as *Vorlage*. They omit some words, and display alternate spellings of some words.[21] This may indicate that other Syriac versions of *2 Baruch* circulated at the time. Maybe it suggests that the passages were memorized, or maybe verbatim citation was not understood as an end in its own right.

Another possible option is that there is no obvious link between the work *2 Baruch* and the passages associated with Baruch in the lectionary manuscripts, and that these latter passages have had their own autonomous history of transmission apart from *2 Baruch*. In the article "Jacob of Edessa and the Jewish Pseudepigrapha in Syriac Chronography," William Adler points out that some passages of pseudepigraphal texts have survived in collections of excerpts due to their thematic focus. [22] The thematic focus of both *2 Bar.* 44.9–15 and 72.1–73.1 is the other world: the contrast between this world and the other, and between those who wait for that other world

19 Folios 157b–158a; 175a–176a (Baars, "Neue Textzeugen," 477).

20 This monastery is either the Monastery of the Holy Virgin Mary or the Deir el-Suryan monastery. Both names occur in the secondary literature. Note that the church in Deir el-Suryan is dedicated to the Virgin, causing potential confusion.

21 Baars, "Neue Textzeugen," 478.

22 Adler, "Jacob of Edessa," 143–71.

and those who simply are part of the present world.[23] This thematic focus, of course, corresponds well with the "The Sunday of the Departed" and "The Holy Sunday of the Resurrection," and would enhance other excerpts from scripture describing the same events. Hence, it is possible that passages *we* would identify as *2 Bar.* 44.9–15 and 72.1–73.1 were not necessarily identified as "parts of the work *2 Baruch*" by those who historically engaged with the lectionaries, as we tend to assume, but rather as integral parts of the collection of scripture where they are, in fact, found.

Bible and Lectionary—Contexts of 2 Baruch

These two examples of the contexts of *2 Baruch* in Syrian traditions show, firstly, that the work *2 Baruch* was an integral part of *one* Syriac Bible codex. It seems productive to adopt a hypothesis that assumes that the work is there for thematic reasons. However, even though *2 Baruch* is indeed found in a Bible codex, there is no reason to believe that *2 Baruch* was counted among the most important books of that Bible, nor that *2 Baruch* necessarily was part of the standard repertoire of contemporaneous Bibles.

Secondly, excerpts from *2 Baruch* were part of lectionaries, and were most likely read and performed during mass. This fact is interesting in its own right! David Bundy wrote: "Although the pseudepigrapha were not normally included in liturgical texts, specifically lectionaries, the larger part of canonical texts were also excluded."[24] However, *2 Baruch*, or material we recognize as part of this work, evidently was included! The suggestion that the excerpts were identified as parts of *2 Baruch* remains a possibility, but the history of transmission and the versions of the Syriac texts that have come down to us suggest that they were primarily conceived of as part of the collections in which they are found. These passages were probably read as part of scripture and, in all likelihood, blended into that context, at least to those who listened to the readings during mass.

This presentation of the *known* history of *2 Baruch* at two select points in time suggests a complex situation of reception, familiarity, and negotiation, as well as the use and interpretation of *2 Baruch* at different times and settings in the Syrian traditions. This situation indicates that Robert Kraft's insistence on treating the date and the setting of actual manuscripts as the point of departure when studying the Pseudepigrapha would be fruitful to further studies of *2 Baruch*. If we study *2 Baruch* as an integral part of the historical, cultural, and linguistic contexts in which it occurs—instead of studying the reception of *2 Baruch* in Syrian Christianity as the transmission of a fixed, foreign text passively introduced into a novel space—we allow for the possibility that *2 Baruch* (and material we have identified as part of

23 Note that 72.1–73.1 also mentions the messiah.
24 Bundy, "Pseudepigrapha," 764.

this text) was at home among Syrian Christians, at home in many ways, in different forms and to different degrees. Nonetheless, it was at home among these groups at different times and circumstances.[25]

This perspective would bring a valuable contribution to, for instance, the study of the lectionaries. The main agenda of Baars' 1963 article was primarily to compare the textual variants of these lectionary manuscripts with the *Ambrosianus*, and to assess the value of the manuscripts as witnesses to *2 Baruch*.[26] This is clearly an important and relevant contribution. However, to Baars, these passages were "excerpts of *2 Baruch*" only—no matter how they were perceived by their readers and audiences if and when they were read during mass. Maybe there is more to be learned by studying these passages as parts of the lections in which they occur—texts which were evidently collected and put together in order to be recited and performed.

The Reception of 2 Baruch *in the Syrian Traditions: Some Further Questions*

The above considerations display that three sets of questions deserve further attention. Firstly, what was the status of *2 Baruch* in the Syrian Churches? David Bundy has suggested that a text like *2 Baruch* enjoyed a "semi-canonical" status in the West Syrian Church, and that these texts were rather widespread and may have functioned as a form of "folk literature" in Syrian milieus.[27] His suggestions, however, are incomplete, prompting us to ask whether *2 Baruch* was assumed to be canonical by some, or maybe the narrative was "just familiar." Did someone consider it to belong to the category "useful reading," or could it possibly have been treasured because it was "old, biblical in style and valuable?"

Second, in what form(s) was *2 Baruch* at home in the Syrian contexts? The above discussions illustrate some of the various ways and forms material *we* associate with *2 Baruch* may have been in circulation in Syriac-speaking milieus. In light of recent research on literacy and book culture in late antiquity, we should ask ourselves: In what ways were *2 Baruch* and material we identify with this work known among Syrian Christians?[28] Did Syrian Christians know the text as a written work, or did they know storylines,

25 I am not suggesting that *2 Baruch* was originally a Christian work, but that *2 Baruch* and material we associate with it was familiar to Christians in Syriac-speaking milieus. In this sense, *2 Baruch*—as it has come down to us—is Christian material.

26 Baars, "Neue Textzeugen," 477–78.

27 Bundy, "Pseudepigrapha," 745–65, 747.

28 Cf. H. Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995); M. S. Jaffee, *Torah in the Mouth* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); C. H. Roberts and T. C. Skeat, *The Birth of the Codex* (London: Oxford University Press, 1985).

interpretative solutions, or motifs and metaphors transmitted orally, in public readings, or in collections of excerpts? And if they ever identified the material, how did they identify and use it? Did they see passages we identify as part of *2 Baruch* as part of "a Jewish semi-canonical work" or as interpretative solutions and stories seamlessly connected to the grand biblical narrative?

Third, how do we recognize allusions to Pseudepigrapha? When Syriac exegetical texts refer or allude to motifs, narratives, and metaphors that are common both to biblical and pseudepigraphal texts, it is sometimes hard to tell whether these texts allude to biblical or pseudepigraphal material. We may ask ourselves: If it is difficult to assess whether a reference is made to a biblical text or to Pseudepigrapha, to what extent is that divide, then, historically relevant, and to what extent is the divide inferred by the modern reader assuming that the text alluded to must be biblical?

This brief discussion of the known history of *2 Baruch* in the Syrian traditions suggests that there is good reason to pay more attention to the reception of *2 Baruch* in this cultural context. Large chunks of Syriac literature have never been examined carefully from the point of view that they may include references or allusions to *2 Baruch*, or to material we associate with *2 Baruch*. This holds true, for instance, for biblical commentaries, homiletic literature, and other liturgical poetry. This interpretative literature, which often takes exemplary figures and biblical stories as its point of departure, therefore, deserves more study.

Chapter 4

The Coptic, Arabic, and Ethiopic Versions of the *Testament of Abraham* and the Emergence of the *Testaments of Isaac and Jacob*[1]

K. Martin Heide

Well known among the pseudepigrapha of the OT is *The Testament of Abraham* (*T. Ab.*). The Greek version of the *T. Ab.* has been edited by F. Schmidt under the title *Le Testament grec d'Abraham*.[2] In addition, the year 2003 saw the publication of an extensive commentary on the *T. Ab.* by D. C. Allison.[3]

Up to today, the edition of the Greek text by Schmidt remains virtually the only textual source for the translations into modern languages and for commentaries on the *T. Ab.* Francis Schmidt, however, did not aim at a strict critical edition of the Greek text. Accordingly, he based his text primarily on a fourteenth-century codex from the Bibliothèque Nationale (fonds grec 770) for the long recension, and on an eleventh-century codex from the Biblioteca Ambrosiana (Grec 405) for the short recension.[4] In addition, Schmidt published a sub-group of the short recension.[5]

Unfortunately, we do not possess any Greek manuscript earlier than the eleventh century. With the Coptic versions of the *T. Ab.*, however, it is possible for us to take a step beyond the eleventh century and take a look at the text of the first millennium. The Coptic versions of the first millennium seem to have been primarily based on the short Greek recension B, but show, nevertheless, influences from the long recension A.[6] Schmidt observed that

1 This article is a revised and enlarged version of my paper, "The Testament of Abraham: Towards an Edition of the Ethiopic and Arabic Versions," read at the SBL annual conference, 2008.

2 F. Schmidt, *Le Testament grec d'Abraham: Introduction, édition critique des deux recensions grecques, traduction* (TSAJ 11; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1986).

3 D. C. Allison, Jr., *Testament of Abraham* (Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2003).

4 Schmidt, *Testament*, 10, 46–82; Allison, *Testament*, 4–5.

5 Schmidt, *Testament*, 10, 83–95; cf. Allison, *Testament*, 6–7.

6 G. W. E. Nickelsburg, "Eschatology in the *Testament of Abraham*: A Study of the Judgment Scene in the Two Recensions," in *Studies on the Testament of Abraham* (ed. G. W. E. Nickelsburg; *Septuagint and Cognate Studies* 6; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1986), 49–64.

the text of the manuscript which he preferred for his edition of the short recension comes very near to the Bohairic text.[7]

In 1968, the existence of a Sahidic version of the *T. Ab.* became known, which was then dated to the fifth century CE.[8] This Sahidic version, albeit in a fragmental condition, is owned by the *Institut für Altertumskunde* in Cologne, Germany. It seems that, in 1968, M. Weber, a member of the *Seminar für Ägyptologie* in Cologne, prepared an edition and translation of these fragments (Philonenko 1968: 61), but, except for some private communication, nothing leaked out about the text and its implications. In the meantime, Dr Gesa Schenke of the *Institut für Altertumskunde* in Cologne has prepared an edition of the Sahidic *Testament of Job*, which is written on the same manuscript as the Sahidic *T. Ab.* According to Dr Schenke, for paleographic reasons this papyrus can no longer be assigned to the fifth century, but should be dated to the fourth century instead. Dr. Schenke is now preparing an edition of the Sahidic *T. Ab.* Besides these fragments of the Sahidic *T. Ab.*, a complete copy of the Sahidic *Testament of Isaac*, dating to 894/895 CE, was published by Kuhn in 1957 and translated in 1967.

The text of the Bohairic version survived in only one manuscript, which was written in 962 CE, and which was already edited more than 100 years ago.[9] Translations from the Bohairic have been made into German, French, English, and Spanish.

It is important to keep in mind that the Arabic version is a direct (and literal) translation of the Bohairic, and that the Ethiopic in turn is a direct translation of the Arabic version. Consequently, a critical edition of the Arabic and Ethiopic versions will serve as important witnesses to the Bohairic version and, via the Bohairic, of the short recension of the Greek text of the *T. Ab.* as it was available at the end of the first millennium. In addition, if the Sahidic version turns out to be virtually of the same quality as the Bohairic text, it points to the fact that we have an unbroken tradition and transmission of the *T. Ab.* in the Eastern Church from at least the fourth century onwards.

7 Schmidt, *Testament*, 12.

8 M. Philonenko, "Une nouvelle version copte du Testament de Job," *Sem* 18 (1968): 61; Schmidt, *Testament*, 40; C. Römer and H. J. Thissen, "P. Köln Inv. Nr. 3221: Das Testament des Hiob in koptischer Sprache. Ein Vorbericht," in *Studies on the Testament of Job* (ed. M. A. Knibb and P. W. van der Horst; STNSMS; Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 33–45.

9 Guidi, I., "Il testo copto del Testamento di Abramo"; "Il Testamento di Isacco e il Testamento di Giacobbe," in *Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei* (Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche, series 5; Rome, 1900), 9:157–80, 224–64.

The Arabic version has come down to us in five manuscripts.[10] Well known is an Arabic manuscript of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (Ms arabe 132), dated to 1629 CE, which has already been *translated* into French by Marius Chaine.[11] Besides this textual witness of Egyptian provenance, we have four additional manuscripts. One, dating to the nineteenth century, is in the Bibliothèque Nationale (Ms arabe 4785). The Arabic text of this manuscript, however, is far from trustworthy and seems to be a late and free translation from the Coptic. Then, we have an important Arabic witness from the fifteenth century, written in the Carshuni script. The scribe of this manuscript (housed in the Vatican library) used the Syriac Serto script to write the Arabic characters (Ms Syr. 299). As the Serto characters are more distinguished than those of the Arabic script, this manuscript promises to be of great avail in deciphering difficult passages in the other Arabic manuscripts, which sometimes lack diacritical points. Another Arabic manuscript is housed in the Coptic Museum in Cairo (Ms 729). It is dated to the eighteenth century and is partly water-damaged. The Monastery of St. Macarius at Scetis (in the Wadi Natrun) possesses an important textual witness of the fifteenth century for the Arabic version (Ms Hag. 38). From this manuscript about two-thirds of our text has survived.

So far, *none* of these Arabic textual witnesses has been edited (except for the *T. Isaac* and *T. Jacob*[12]). A critical edition of the Arabic and Ethiopic versions of the *Testament of Abraham* is now in process by the present author. So far, translations of the Arabic have only been made from *one* manuscript of the Bibliothèque Nationale, namely Ms arabe 132. A preliminary collation made with the Egyptian manuscripts mentioned above indicates this manuscript has a text suffering from many substitutions, misreading, and orthodox corruptions. Most references to "Abraham," for example, are written in Ms 132 as "our father Abraham."

The situation becomes more complicated if we move on to the Ethiopic version, that is, the Classical Ethiopic or Ge'ez version. Allison's remarks on the Ethiopic versions in his splendid commentary on the *T. Ab.* that we have two versions of the *T. Ab.*, one Falasha and one Christian, is misleading. As I pointed out already in my critical edition of the Arabic and Ethiopic versions of the *T. Isaac* and *T. Jacob*,[13] which were usually

10 J.-C. Haelewyck. *Clavis apocryphorum veteris testamenti* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), 56–61.

11 M. Delcor, *Le Testament d'Abraham: Introduction, traduction du texte grec et commentaire de la recension grecque longue, suivie de la traduction des Testaments d'Abraham, d'Isaac et de Jacob d'après les versions orientales* (SVTP 2; Leiden: Brill, 1973), 242–52.

12 M. Heide, *Die Testamente Isaaks und Jakobs: Edition und Übersetzung der arabischen und äthiopischen Versionen* (Aethiopistische Forschungen 56; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000).

13 Heide, *Testamente Isaaks und Jakobs*, 38–44.

transmitted together with the *T. Ab.*, we have to reckon with two different Ethiopic recensions (not versions). Both recensions are of Christian origin.

The first recension, labeled recension I, is a verbal translation of the Arabic. It is known from at least three manuscripts. In addition, there is a modern, non-critical bilingual edition of the Ethiopic version available, written in Ge'ez in parallel with an Amharic translation.[14] The Ge'ez text of this modern edition, which was solely published for the edification of the members of the Ethiopic Orthodox Church, is based on the same type of manuscripts mentioned above, that is, on the verbal translation from the Arabic.

The Falasha version, named after the Falasha or the *Beta Israel* from Ethiopia, is also based on this verbal translation. It is a sub-group of recension I. Only a few omissions, additions, and transpositions have been made to adapt this version to the creed of faith of the *Beta Israel*. The text of these manuscripts was already edited by M. Gaguine in 1965.[15] This edition, based on six manuscripts for the *T. Ab.*, has never been published.

The other recension, namely recension II, resembles a relatively free translation from the Arabic. The text of this free translation has been partially transmitted, in one manuscript only, from the Bibliothèque Nationale (Ms 134). For the T. Ab., this text was edited in 1954 by A. Z. Aešcoly.[16]

The Textual Form of the Coptic, Arabic, and Ethiopic Versions of the T. Ab.

Still today, scholars argue which should be viewed as the original Greek version: the long Greek recension, also called recension A, or the shorter Greek recension B, from which, as we saw, the Coptic version derives, and, via the Coptic, the Arabic, and Ethiopic versions.

As Allison pointed out, one need not regard either recension as prior.[17] It is conceivable that an earlier *T. Ab.* was shorter than the long recension, and longer than the short recension. In addition, we have to realize that the *T. Ab.* did not become a canonical text, but belongs to the so-called Pseudepigrapha. Texts of this genre tend to exist in a wide range of textual shapes. These texts were usually not created to proclaim certain dogmas, but to edify. Paradoxically, to view the *T. Ab.* as a testament is a misnomer (as has been pointed out time and again); it should rather be labeled a

14 A. T. Mika'el, *The Life of Abraham, The Life of Isaac, The Life of Jacob, The Life of Sarah (Homily on Ephraim)* (Addis Ababa, 1986).

15 M. Gaguine, "The Falasha Version of the Testaments of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: A Critical Study of Five Unpublished Ms., with Introduction, Translation and Notes" (Ph.D. diss., Manchester, 1965).

16 A. Z. Aešcoly, *Recueil de textes falachas: introduction, textes éthiopiens (édition critique et traduction), Index* (Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie, 1951).

17 Allison, *Testament*, 15.

"narrative" or even a "humoresque."

It has been argued that the two recensions are translations of a Hebrew work, to which the short recension is more faithful. This argument has been criticized, largely for the reason that it is much more plausible that a redactor introduced semitisms into the *T. Ab.* because he grew up speaking Hebrew or Aramaic, or because he knew the Septuagint by heart.

Some arguments seem to indicate that the long recension is later than the short recension. That means that not only the *manuscripts* of the long recension themselves are later—which is a matter of fact, and which we realized already, since there is no textual witness to the long recension in the Greek or in any version before the eleventh century—but also, the *text itself* seems to be later than the text of the short recension. The reason is that we find, in the long recension, over 100 Greek expressions or idioms of Christian and/or medieval origin.

On the other side, the shorter recension also contains some late words and ecclesiastical expressions. The main fact, however, that the long recension—despite a considerable number of late Greek expressions—should be seen as superior to the short recension, is to be found in the tendency of most manuscripts to abridge the text. If the long recension has already four different subtypes, each of them omitting different verses, or even whole paragraphs, it is easily conceivable that the so-called short recension is simply a special version of the long recension, abridged intelligently, and, later, frozen through transmission. As some of this curtailing took away important subtleties and artful implications of the text, those parts of the text which have been purged cannot be seen as additions that were added to an earlier, more primitive stratum of the text. Rather, they functioned as more or less important details of the text, which, when removed, do more damage to the text than they would as superfluous additions. In the absence of any textual witness to the long recension from the first millennium CE and in the light of the Sahidic version of the *T. Ab.* which is now dated to the fourth century CE, it is difficult to argue that the long Greek recension should be viewed as original.

If we turn to the Oriental versions, we will see that the Bohairic, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, which are themselves based on the short Greek recension, attached a foreword and an epilogue to their basic text. These additions have three functions: (1) They tell their readers that the *T. Ab.* has a highly authoritative status (foreword); (2) they get the reader to acknowledge a specific holiday, wherein the day of the passing away of Abraham has to be remembered (foreword and epilogue); and (3) they point the reader to the *T. Isaac* and *T. Jacob* (foreword).

In light of this foreword, which transforms the *T. Ab.* from a narrative into an authoritative (if not quasi-canonical) writing, it is interesting that the *T. Isaac* and *T. Jacob* are only extant in Coptic, Arabic, and Ethiopic. Both testaments are modeled after the *T. Ab.*, but, instead of presenting us with a humoresque-like narrative which recommends good works (as does the long

recension of the *T. Ab.)*, the author(s) of both testaments strongly emphasizes asceticism and good works, in the threat of the tortures of hell and in a strict obeisance of the holiday of the patriarchs, which is to be remembered on the 28th of the Egyptian month of Mesore (Coptic), Misra (Arabic) or Nahase (Ethiopic) respectively. In other words, the author of the Coptic, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions of the *T. Ab.* took the material he found in the Greek and adapted it to his concept of salvation by good works and by the veneration of the patriarchs. The means for reaching this goal were the annexations of the *T. Isaac* and *T. Jac.* and the propositioning of a foreword, which points to the purpose of the three testaments.

The Greek *T. Ab.* (long recension) commences with these words (1:1–4):

> Abraham lived the measure of his life, nine hundred and ninety-five years, and all the years of his life he passed in quietness, meekness, and righteousness. The just man was altogether very kind to strangers. For he pitched his tent at the crossroads of the Oak of Mamre, where he welcomed all – rich and poor, kings and rulers, the crippled and the helpless, friends and strangers, neighbors and travelers. These the pious and all-holy, righteous, and hospitable Abraham welcomed equally. But even upon this one came the common and inexorable bitter cup of death and the uncertain end of life. So the Lord God, summoning his archangel Michael, said to him: Go down, chief-captain Michael, to Abraham and speak to him concerning his death . . .[18]

In the short recension, we read the following very short introduction:

> It came to pass, when the days of Abraham's death drew near, the Lord said to Michael: Arise and go to Abraham my servant and say to him, "You shall depart from life . . ."[19]

The Bohairic version (and the Arabic and Ethiopic versions with minor adaptations), however, prefers this introduction:

> This is the departure from the body of our holy fathers, the three patriarchs Abraham and Isaac and Jacob Israel. Abraham left the body on the 28th of the month of Mesore, Isaac also on the 28th, and Jacob too on the 28th of this same month of Mesore [. . .] This is what our holy father Abba Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria and apostolic successor in Alexandria, declared. This is what he found in the ancient books of our holy fathers the apostles.[20]

18 Allison, *Testament*, 63.

19 Allison *Testament*, 63.

20 G. MacRae, "The Coptic Testament of Abraham," in *Studies on the Testament of Abraham* (ed. G. W. E. Nickelsburg; Septuagint and Cognate Studies 6; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press), 328.

Then it continues:

> Listen to me attentively, O people who love Christ, and I will tell you of the life and the departure from the body of our holy fathers the patriarchs Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. This is what I found in the ancient books of our holy fathers the apostles, I, your father Athanasius . . .

Only after this introduction does the text continue with the words that are slightly different from the Greek short recension: "It came to pass when the days of our father Abraham draw near, God sent to him Michael," etc. Until now, it was generally believed that the fragmentary Sahidic version had a lacuna at the beginning,[21] and it has not been possible to make definite statements about the Sahidic introduction. Now, Dr. Schenke has kindly informed me that the commencement of the Sahidic *T. Ab.* is clearly visible, as it follows closely on the end of the *Testament of Job* in the same manuscript. According to Dr. Schenke, the Sahidic version does not have the foreword known from the Bohairic version, and starts immediately with, "When the number of the days were completed for Abraham to go forth from the body," etc.

If we now take a closer look at the *T. Isaac* and *T. Jac.*, it becomes very probable that both testaments were created and modeled after the Coptic *T. Ab.* The *T. Isaac* begins with a very short introduction, reminiscent of the Coptic introduction of the *T. Ab.*: "This is the going forth from the body of Isaac the patriarch: he died on the twenty-eighth[22] of Mesore, in the peace of God, Amen."[23]

After some further exhortations, the narrative proper starts with the formula, "Now it came to pass, when the time had come for the patriarch Isaac to go forth from the body . . ."[24] The archangel Michael is sent to Isaac to tell him that he should make his will and set his house in order. After Michael departs, Isaac informs Jacob of his near death. Jacob wants to accompany his father, but Isaac encourages him to stay, and tells Jacob of his ancestry from Adam on and leading, ultimately, to Jesus, the messiah. An important part of the *T. Isaac* is Isaac's speech on the strict obligations on all priests. After that, Isaac is raptured to the eternal world. First, an angel takes him on a tour through hell, where he sees the tortures inflicted on sinners. Afterwards, he is taken to heaven, where he sees his father Abraham. Isaac returns back to his bed, where he dies. His soul is taken up to heaven in a holy chariot, cherubim and seraphim singing before it.

21 Schmidt, *Testament*, 39.

22 Only the Sahidic version reads "the twenty-fourth"; the Coptic, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions all have "the twenty-eighth."

23 K. H. Kuhn, "*The Testament of Isaac*," in *The Apocryphal Old Testament* (ed. H. F. D. Sparks; Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), 427.

24 *T. Isaac* II.1; Kuhn, "*Testament of Isaac*," 427.

Neither of the Greek recensions of the *T. Ab.* mentions the memorial day of the Three Patriarchs. The Bohairic, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions of the *T. Ab.* allude to this commemoration day in their specific introductions only. In the *T. Isaac*, however, it is found in all versions as part of Isaac's tour through heaven, where he meets Abraham. A conversation between God and Abraham ensures compassion and forgiveness for every believer who is doing good works, especially for those who keep the memorial day of Isaac, the 28th of Mesore. This conversation changes slightly with the Bohairic, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, but its force can already be seen in the Sahidic version:

> "As for all those who are given the name of my beloved Isaac, let them write his testament (ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ) and honour it" [. . .] Abraham said, "My Lord, Almighty [. . .] if he has not been able to write his testament, canst thou in thy mercy accept him?" [. . .] The Lord said to Abraham, "Let him feed a poor man with bread." [. . .] Abraham said, "Suppose he is poor and has not found bread?" The Lord said, "Let him spend the night of my beloved Isaac's [commemoration] without sleep. [. . .] If he has not found incense, let him seek out [a copy of] his testament and read it on my beloved Isaac's day."[25]

Further intercessions of Abraham patterned after these follow. In the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, God finally exhorts Abraham that every believer should "above and beyond all this bring an offering on the memorial day of my beloved Isaac."[26] The epilogue of the *T. Isaac*, likewise, points to the importance of Isaac's memorial day, and implicitly embraces all three testaments: "everyone who shall do an act of mercy on the day of their commemoration shall be given to them as a son in the kingdom of the heavens forever."[27]

Similarly, the references to the commemoration day of Jacob in the *T. Jac.* are found not only in its introduction and epilogue, but also incorporated in the narrative itself. As the death of Jacob approaches, the archangel Michael is sent to Jacob to tell him that he should make his will and set his house in order. Jacob is ready to die, because he has been able to see his son Joseph once again after he came down to Egypt. After that, another angel closely resembling Isaac appears to him. He tells him that he is his guardian angel and that he had already saved him from Laban and from his brother Esau. He announces several blessings to him and to those who keep the memorial day of the patriarchs:

> "Blessed are you [. . .] for you shall be called "patriarchs." [. . .] Blessed be the man who commemorates you on your honored festival. [. . .] Whoever writes an account of your life with its labors, or whoever makes a copy of it

25 *T. Isaac* X.8–15, Kuhn, "*Testament of Isaac*," 436.

26 *T. Isaac* 6.19; Heide, *Testamente Isaaks und Jakobs*, 234, 263, 290; cf. X.18 Kuhn, "*Testament of Isaac*," 437.

27 *T. Isaac* XIII.6; Kuhn, "*Testament of Isaac*," 439.

> with his hands, or whoever reads it attentively, and whoever listens to it with faith and a resolute heart, and whoever emulates your manner of life – they will be forgiven all their sins . . ."[28]

In light of the Bohairic (as well as the Arabic and Ethiopic) introductory formula of the *T. Ab.* pointing to the memorial day of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which is missing from the Greek versions, and in light of the fact that this device has been incorporated into the Coptic, Arabic, and Ethiopic *T. Isaac* and *T. Jac.*, it is very probable that both testaments were not composed before the Coptic version of the *T. Ab.* became available. This view has been put forward by I. Guidi, who argued that the *T. Isaac* and the *T. Jac.* are imitations of the *T. Ab.*, and that they were composed in Coptic.[29] The introduction known from the Bohairic *T. Ab.* and from the *T. Isaac* and *T. Jacob* must have been composed sometime between the fourth century (the Sahidic *T. Ab.* still lacks the introduction) and the ninth century (when the Sahidic *T. Isaac*, with its implicit reference to the *T. Ab.*, was already available). Nevertheless, the commemoration device never entered the narrative proper of the Coptic *T. Ab.*

Theoretically, there is the possibility of a Greek *Vorlage* of the Bohairic *T. Ab.* with its specific introduction. But no Greek manuscript known so far even hints at the memorial day of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Neither is Athanasius mentioned in the introduction of any Greek manuscript, nor is there any reference to the *T. Isaac* and *T. Jacob*.

The only source which may point to the existence of a Greek version of all three testaments is a passage from the *Constitutio apostolorum* (VI 16:3), from the latter quarter of the fourth century: "And among the ancients also some have written apocryphal books of Moses, and Enoch, and Adam, and Isaiah, and David, and Elijah, and of the Three Patriarchs, pernicious and repugnant to the truth."[30]

It is generally held that these three patriarchs "must be Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."[31] But why are they named last, after Moses, Enoch, and Adam, and even after David and Elijah? And in what language did the writer know them? The phrase "three patriarchs" is only known from the introduction of the Bohairic *T. Ab.* But there, it is not used absolutely; rather, the names of the patriarchs are given in addition: "This is the departure from the body of our holy fathers, the three patriarchs Abraham and Isaac and Jacob." Besides, the Arabic and Ethiopic versions never utilize in any textual witness the title, "The Book of the Three Patriarchs," or "The Testaments

28 *T. Jac.* III.15–21; Kuhn "*Testament of Jacob*," in Sparks, *Apocryphal Old Testament*, 444–45.

29 Guidi, "Testo copto," 223; cf. Kuhn, "*Testament of Isaac*," 423.

30 Καὶ ἐν τοῖς παλαιοῖς δε τινες συνεγραψαν βιβλια ἀποκρυφα Μωσεως καὶ Ἐνὼχ καὶ Ἀδὰμ Ἠσαΐου τε καὶ Δαβὶδ καὶ Ἠλια καὶ τῶν τριῶν πατριαρχῶν φθοροποιὰ καὶ τῆς ἀληθειας ἐχθρα.

31 Allison, *Testament*, 34.

of the Three Patriarchs." And why do none of the more than thirty Greek manuscripts of the *T. Ab.*, neither the Slavonic nor the Romanian version, transmit the other two testaments, or at least point to them (see the critical apparatus of Schmidt[32])? As James stated earlier, "The evidence of [. . .] the Apostolic Constitutions points to the existence of some book such as the one before us; but it is vague."[33] As a witness to a Greek version of all three testaments, it is useless.

Even further from being a witness to the "Testament of the Three Patriarchs" are the few remarks known from Priscillian.[34] Priscillian states that, according to Tobit, "we are sons of the prophets: Noah was a prophet, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all our fathers who prophesied from the beginning of the world."[35] Then he puts forth some rhetorical questions: "When has a book of the prophet Noah been read in the canon? Who reads among the prophets a book of Abraham as arranged in the canon? Who has taught that Isaac did utter prophecies long ago? Who has heard that the prophecy of Jacob has been received in the canon?" Priscillian's main argument in his tractate "liber de fide et de apocryphis" runs as follows: We cannot reject Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as prophets of God only because there are no books of Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the canon. This is illustrated by several quotes from the Old and New Testament, as for example by Luke 11:50–51, on which Priscillian comments, "who is this prophet Abel, with whom the blood of the prophets took its beginning . . .?"[36] In other words, with Abel, we have again a prophet who surely was recognized as such, but of whom no prophetic book has been received in the canon. The same applies, according to Priscillian, to several historical books which are known from the Old Testament, but which were never received in the canon, as, e.g., the "book of Jehu the son of Hanani" (2 Chron. 20.34; cf. Schepss 1889:50). What Priscillian emphasizes

32 Schmidt, *Testament*, 46.83.96

33 M. R. James, *The Testament of Abraham: The Greek Text Now First Edited with an Introduction and Notes* (Texts and Studies 2/2; Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1892), 12.

34 Tract. III; G. Schepss, *Priscilliani quae supersunt* (Pragae/Vindobonae/Lipisiae: Bibliopola academiae litterarum Caesareae Vindobonensis, 1889), 45–46.

35 Priscillian quotes, in his third tractate, which is entitled *Liber de fide et de apocryphis*, from the book of Tobit: "Nos fili prophetarum sumus: Noe profeta fuit et Abraham et Isac et Iacob et omnes patres nostri qui ab initio saeculi profetaverunt" (cf. Tobit 4.13). Priscillian elaborates on this verse and asks: "Quando in canone profetae Noe liber lectus est? Quis inter profetas dispositi canonis Abrahae librum legit? Quis quod aliquando Isac profetasset edocuit? Quis profetiam Iacob quod in canone poneretur audivit? Quos si Tobia legit et testimonium prophetiae in canone promeruit, qualiter, quod illi ad testimonium emeritae virtutis datur, alteris ad occasionem iustae damnationis adscribitur?" (Schepss, *Priscilliani*, 45–46; for a modern translation see A. B. J. M. Goosen, "Achtergronden van het Priscillianus' christelijke Ascese" (Proefschrift ter verkrieg van de graad van Doctor in de Godgeleerdheid; Nijmegen, 1976), 305.

36 "Quis est iste Abel profeta, ex quo sanguis profetarum sumpsit exordium, cuius principium in Zachariam finit?" (Schepss, *Priscilliani*, 47).

is the fact as such, and, from this general fact, he draws the conclusion that extra-canonical books cannot be rejected in principle. He does not point directly to any books of Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Abel, or Hanani with which he might have been familiar. Neither do the few allusions to the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob point to the *Testaments*,[37] nor do Priscillian's arguments imply that he knew of prophetic books written in the name of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.[38] To argue that Priscillian might have known "a Latin version of all Three Testaments"[39] is speculative at best.

P. Nagel tried to prove that there must be a Greek *Vorlage* to the Sahidic *T. Isaac*,[40] but, as Kuhn has pointed out, Nagel's linguistic evidence in support of his conclusion is not convincing.[41] On the available evidence alone, i.e., the Sahidic version itself with its linguistic features, it is impossible to reach certainty.

There remains one further point to be dealt with. The introduction of the Coptic, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions mentions Athanasius of Alexandria. Would Athanasius (*c.* 298–373 CE), who labeled such writings simply as "fables,"[42] have recommended the *T. Ab.* and its satellites as coming from "the ancient books of our holy fathers the apostles," i.e., as authoritative?[43] In his 39th Festal or Easter Letter (367 CE) Athanasius listed the same twenty-seven books of the New Testament that are in use today, but added after that:

> But for greater exactness I add this also, writing of necessity; that there are other books besides these not indeed included in the Canon, but appointed by the Fathers to be read by those who newly join us, and who wish for instruction in the word of godliness. The Wisdom of Solomon, and the Wisdom of Sirach, and Esther, and Judith, and Tobit, and that which is called the Teaching of the Apostles, and the Shepherd. But the former, my brethren, are included in the Canon, the latter being [merely] read; nor is there in any place a mention of apocryphal writings. But they are an invention of heretics, who write them when they choose, bestowing upon them their approbation, and assigning to them a date, that so, using them as ancient writings, they may find occasion to lead astray the simple.[44]

37 "Quis Abrahae profetae sinum ad quietis testimonium non requirat? Quis reputari in Isac semen nolit? Quis Iacob dictum a deo Faraonis deum non amet?" (Schepss, *Priscilliani*, 46).

38 R. D. Chesnutt, "Isaac, Testament of," in *Encyclopedia of Religious and Philosophical Writings in Late Antiquity* (ed. J. Neusner and A. J. Avery-Peck; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 179.

39 Kuhn, "*Testament of Isaac*," 423.

40 P. Nagel, "Zur sahidischen Version des Testamentes Isaak," in *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg* 12.3–4 (1963): 259–63.

41 K. H. Kuhn, "An English Translation of the Sahidic Version of the *Testament of Isaac*," *JTS* 18 (1967): 325.

42 Schmidt, *Testament*, 39.

43 Cf. W. Schneemelcher, *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen. I. Band: Evangelien* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1990), 25.

44 P. Schaff and H. Wace, *St. Athanasius* (vol. 4 of *A Select Library of the Nicene*

Attributing the *Testaments of Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* to Athanasius, and, via Athanasius, to the "ancient books of the holy fathers, the holy apostles" was a somewhat shrewd way of telling the reader that what he has before him is sanctified by one of the most holy guards of the biblical canon. Several works ascribed to Athanasius (such as the Athanasian Creed) are not generally accepted as being his own work. This applies especially to Coptic writings without any Greek *Vorlage*.[45]

Taking all these facts together: the pseudepigraphical reference to Athanasius in the Bohairic *T. Ab.*, together with the earliest known fragments of the Sahidic version from the fourth century which lack this introduction, and the earliest textual witness of the *T. Isaac*, point to a date of composition of the Coptic testaments with their specific introduction after the fourth and before the ninth century. In face of the Sahidic *T. Isaac*, the first textual witness to have the pseudo-Athanasian introduction must have been a Sahidic *T. Ab.* It is true that the earliest textual witness of the Coptic *T. Isaac* was transmitted without the *T. Ab.* or the *T. Jac.*, but in its epilogue, the normal mode of transmission in connection with the other two testaments is easily perceived: "Blessed is every man who shall do an act of mercy in the name of these patriarchs [. . .] everyone who shall do an act of mercy on the day of their commemoration shall be given to them as a son in the kingdom of heaven."[46]

and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church; 1891; repr. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1987), 552.

45 O. Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur, Band 3: Das vierte Jahrhundert mit Ausschluß der Schriftsteller syrischer Zunge* (Freiburg: Herder Verlag, 1923), 68.

46 Kuhn, "English Translation," 336; cf. Heide, *Testamente Isaaks und Jakobs*, 237, 265.

Chapter 5

The Son of David in *Psalms of Solomon* 17

Danny Zacharias

Psalms of Solomon 17 represents, in my estimation, one of the most important and under-appreciated pre-Christian messianic texts. This text, which is the first to use the title "Son of David" for the messiah, is almost certainly a pre-Christian Jewish text in which there is no trace of later Christian interpolation.[1] In this text, scholars possess a remarkably detailed discussion of the social climate which gives rise to the messiah's entrance, the description of his kingdom, and the portrayal of the messiah's character. For understanding pre-Christian Jewish messianism, *Pss. Sol.* 17 (–18) is rivaled in importance only by the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Psalms of Solomon 17 has been discussed, often at length, in treatments surrounding messianic expectation or Davidic tradition.[2] However, because of the prominence of this particular psalm, it has often been divorced from its context. Yet, there is no evidence of this psalm apart from the collection of eighteen works known as the *Psalms of Solomon*; it has always been read and understood within a literary unit with the other psalms. A proper appreciation of this work comes when is is understood within its literary context. At the same time, the collection represents a span of Jewish history that also needs to be properly assessed, as the historical context is vital for its understanding. This is where contention lies for *Psalms of Solomon* scholars: What is the historical setting for this psalm, and can a community be identified to which we can attribute its authorship? I will start by presenting briefly some preliminary, but important, issues regarding dating, and authorship, at which point I will move on to discuss *Pss. Sol.* 17 in its literary context, its portrayal of the messiah, and, finally, make some suggestions for points of contact in the New Testament.

1 Even James Davila, a scholar who argues for more Christian influence in the provenance of the so-called Pseudepigrapha, concludes: "The Psalms of Solomon is clearly a collection of Jewish poetic works . . . It is likely that the work was written before the advent of Christianity." See James R. Davila, *The Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha: Jewish, Christian, or Other?* (JSJSup 105; Boston: Brill, 2005), 161, 163.

2 The literature on early Jewish messianism is enormous. See my discussions in H. Daniel Zacharias, *"Raise up to them their King": Psalms of Solomon 17–18 in the Context of Early Jewish Messianism* (Tübingen: VDM, 2008).

Prolegomena

The traditional historical setting for the *Psalms of Solomon* has been a Pompeian setting in the mid-first century BCE. This date is gleaned from several of the psalms that are of a more localized nature—most notably, psalms 2, 4, 7, 8, 15, and 17. Rather recently, Kenneth Atkinson has argued for a Herodian dating for psalm 17.[3] After arguing for this date, Atkinson reverted to a Pompeian dating in a later book.[4] In personal correspondence, Dr. Atkinson has stated that he now views psalm 17 as originating in a Pompeian setting and later appropriated during the time of Herod. This seems to make good sense of the evidence that has been brought forth previously, as well as the light Atkinson has shed on the composition. Psalm 17, then, is a composition reflecting the time when Herod and his general Sosius had laid siege to Jerusalem and, subsequently, had begun to exterminate the remaining Hasmonean family in the years that followed. According to Atkinson, this psalmist names Herod as the "lawless one" (17.11), and the one "foreign to our race" (17.7).[5] Atkinson believes *Pss. Sol.* 17 was appropriated[6] between Herod's siege of Jerusalem in 37 BCE and Herod's murder of Hyracanus II in 30 BCE. The *terminus ad quem* can possibly be pushed a little further to after 25 BCE, the year when the sons of Babas, the last male representatives of the Hasmonean dynasty, died.[7] This is possible because these Hasmonean heirs enjoyed the favour of some Jews, and Herod hunted down and executed them (*Ant.* 15.253–66). *Pss. Sol.* 17.9 indicates that God "did not let one of them escape," which may intimate that the author knew all the potential Hasmonean rulers had been killed by Herod.[8]

The *Psalms of Solomon*, most likely written in Hebrew but now only existing in Greek and Syriac, has traditionally been attributed to the Pharisees.[9] Other suggestions have included an Essene or proto-

3 Kenneth Atkinson, "Herod the Great, Sosius, and the Siege of Jerusalem (37 BCE) in *Psalm of Solomon* 17," *NovT* 38 (1996): 313–22; Kenneth Atkinson, "Toward a Redating of the *Psalms of Solomon*: Implications for Understanding the *Sitz im Leben* of an Unknown Jewish Sect," *JSP* 17 (1998): 95–112; Kenneth Atkinson, "On the Herodian Origin of Militant Davidic Messianism at Qumran: New Light from *Psalm of Solomon* 17," *JBL* 118 (1999): 435–60; Kenneth Atkinson, "On the Use of Scripture in the Development of Militant Davidic Messianism at Qumran: New Light from *Psalm of Solomon* 17," in *Interpretation of Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 106–23.

4 Kenneth Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord: A Study of the Psalms of Solomon's Historical Background and Social Setting* (JSJSup 84; Boston: Brill, 2004), 129–44.

5 Herod's ancestry was believed to be Idumean. See Josephus, *Ant.* 14.403.

6 See below.

7 Craig A. Evans, Stanley E. Porter, and Harold W. Hoehner, "Herodian Dynasty," *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (Accordance Electronic edn.), n.p.

8 The Pompeian dating of *Pss. Sol.* 17 continues to hold sway over significant studies on Jewish messianism and eschatology. See, for example, Brant Pitre, *Jesus, the Tribulation, and the End of the Exile* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006), 78–84.

9 See Atkinson, "Toward a Redating," 96, n.3 and n.4, as well as Joseph L.

Essene group,[10] and the Hasidim or another unknown sectarian group.[11] However, the growing consensus is that scholars cannot properly identify the community that produced the psalms because there is, as Joseph Trafton states, a "growing skepticism regarding the possibility of reconstructing first-century BCE Pharisaism from sources such as Josephus, and a growing awareness of the diversity within Judaism beyond the classic categories."[12]

Despite the diversity of opinion, we can glean some information about this community from the psalms themselves, even if a tidy label cannot be applied:

1. Many of the psalms are reflective of a community outlook, though they may be written by an individual or several individuals. *Pss. Sol.* 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 13, 17, and 18 all employ first-person-plural pronouns or first-person-plural verb forms. Robert Wright states: "Clearly the writer speaks of and for a community that is bound together by persecution and hope for the future. The concerns expressed are not individual but communal."[13]
2. The community likely resided in Jerusalem. The community describes Pompey's Jerusalem siege (especially in *Pss. Sol.* 8), concerns itself with the temple (1.8, 2.3, 8.12), and opposes the establishment of a non-Davidic ruler (17.6).
3. Whether or not scholars want to label the community as a sect, it seems to have had a sectarian outlook and a fractious beginning.[14] The

Trafton, "*The Psalms of Solomon* in Recent Research," *JSP* 12 (1994): 7, for the large number of scholars supporting Pharisaic authorship.

10 Debra Rosen and Alison Salvesen, "A Note on the Qumran *Temple Scroll* 56:15–18 and *Psalm of Solomon* 17:33," *JJS* 38 (1987): 98–101; Paul N. Franklyn, "The Cultic and Pious Climax of Eschatology in the *Psalms of Solomon*," *JSJ* 18 (1987): 1–17; Robert R. Hann, "The Community of the Pious: The Social Setting of the *Psalms of Solomon*," *SR* 17 (1988): 169–89; P. Prigent, "Psaumes de Salomon," in *La Bible, Ecrits Intertestamentaires* (ed. A. Dupont-Sommer; Paris: Gallimard, 1987), 945–92. Atkinson points out that an Essene designation appeared even before the Qumran discoveries, in J. Girbal, *Essai sur les Psaumes de Salomon* (Toulouse: A. Chauvin, 1887). See Kenneth Atkinson, *An Intertextual Study of the Psalms of Solomon* (Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 49; Lewiston, NY: E. Mellen Press, 2001), 422–23.

11 P. Brock, "*The Psalms of Solomon*," in *The Apocryphal Old Testament* (ed. H. F. D. Sparks; Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), 649–82; D. Flusser, "Psalms, Hymns and Prayers," in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Writings, Philo, Josephus* (ed. M. Stone; CRINT 2; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1984), 573–74; E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE–66 CE* (London: SCM Press, 1992), 452–57.

12 Joseph L. Trafton, "Solomon, Psalms of," *ABD* 6: 116. See also the even-handed judgment of James H. Charlesworth in an editorial insertion, Robert B. Wright, "*Psalms of Solomon*: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. James Charlesworth; 2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1985), 642.

13 Ibid., 641.

14 On the beginnings of this community, see Hann, "Community of the Pious." While Hann provides excellent insight, his conclusions go too far and are too speculative.

community refers to itself as the pious[15] and the righteous.[16] Others, however, are labeled unrighteous,[17] sinners,[18] transgressors,[19] lawless,[20] hypocrites,[21] and wicked.[22] This mentality is not simply contrasting Jews versus Gentiles, but reflects "a perceived dichotomy within Israel itself."[23]

4. The community was anti-Hasmonean, or at least against the current Hasmonean leader of the time. *Pss. Sol.* 17.4–6 reflects this attitude, and it is this usurping of the monarchy from the Davidic line that spurns the longing for the Davidic messiah in *Pss. Sol.* 17. These verses possibly suggest a sectarian community, in that the Hasmoneans enjoyed some popular favor during their time—so much so that Herod had to kill most of them to consolidate power.[24]
5. The community is critical of the temple cult.[25] If we can properly speak of Sadducees during this era, then the community was anti-Sadducee (cf. 4.1). One might go so far as to suggest that this community may have withdrawn from temple worship altogether, because they believed that the "holy things of the Lord" had been defiled (2.3). The community also believed that atonement comes through fasting (3.8), and, evidently, congregated in gatherings/synagogues (17.16). In addition, the community may have considered itself the "House of Israel" (10.8).

Literary Setting

The Redactor

Psalm 17 has always been found, and presumably read, along with the previous psalms as well as the following, final, psalm 18. The literary setting of psalm 17 comes from the redactor of the work. Kenneth Atkinson says, "recognition of the role that the redactor plays in selecting our present corpus . . . has considerable impact upon their interpretation."[26] About the redactor, Robert Wright says:

15 2.36; 4.6, 8; 8.23, 34; 9.3; 10.6; 12.4, 6; 13.10, 12; 14.3; 15.7.
16 2.34–35; 3.3–7, 11; 4.8; 8.8; 9.3, 7; 10.3; 13.5–9; 13.11; 14.9; 15.6–7; 16.15.
17 12.5; 15.4.
18 2.16, 34; 12.6; 14.6; 17.5.
19 4.9; 12.4; 14.6.
20 4.19; 4.23; 12.1; 17.18.
21 4.20.
22 12.1–2; 16.7.
23 Trafton, "Solomon, Psalms of," 6:116.
24 Recently, Richard Bauckham has shown that the Hasmoneans, or at least the Hasmonean period, continued to be popular, as evidenced by the most popular names in Palestine. See Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 74–78. It seems that not all were critical of the Hasmoneans in the way the *Pss. Sol.* community and the Qumran community were.
25 1.8; 2.3; 8.12.
26 Atkinson, "Toward a Redating," 108–09.

> He appended the first and eighteenth *Psalms of Solomon*, providing an introduction and conclusion, and perhaps added the superscriptions and liturgical markers. The redactor would have added the remaining "generic" psalms, from an existing pool of cultic poetry. He arranged the psalms, added liturgical headings in emulation of the biblical Psalter, and attributed the whole to King Solomon.[27]

The redactor was not only responsible for bringing these works together in a specific order; he/they also specifically chose these psalms over others, since there were, presumably, other psalms in existence at the time.[28] The collection has thematic patterns and similarities that bring about a unity precisely because the redactor chose them to be together. Moreover, the redactor presumably added an introduction of his own (*Pss. Sol.* 1) as well as a conclusion (*Pss. Sol.* 18). *Pss. Sol.* 1 is modeled after 8.1–13, and is the only psalm not to contain a heading—understandable if it is, indeed, an introduction. *Pss. Sol.* 18 seems to offer reflection on the preceding psalms, especially *Pss. Sol.* 17.[29] The redactor, then, saw fit that readers should not only read these compositions together, but see the culmination of them in the overtly messianic psalms, 17 and 18. As Brad Embry has stated, "[B]y not setting the messianic sections into the thematic and conceptual whole of the document, New Testament scholars often miss the issue of the Messiah's function *within the document itself*."[30] Scholars cannot impose any sort of messianic outlook on *Pss. Sol.* 2–16; nonetheless, the redactor seems to assume some sort of organic link between the earlier psalms composed during the time of Pompey, and the overtly messianic *Pss. Sol.* 17 appropriated during the Hasmonean period,[31] and appends or authors *Pss. Sol.* 18 as well.

Themes

The Nations: The Nations/Gentiles (τὰ ἔθνη) appear at 2.6; 8.13, 23, 9.9, 17.3,14, 34. In 8.23, God is also specified as the judge of the nations. Within *Pss. Sol.* 17, the messiah will have all the Gentiles fearfully standing before him (v. 34). The messiah will also "be merciful" to these Gentiles. In this section, it is said that the "mercy of our God will last forever." This draws

27 Robert B. Wright (ed.), *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text* (Texts and Studies in Late Judaism and Early Christianity; New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 7.

28 4Q380, 4Q381, 11Q11, and five Apocryphal Syriac Psalms.

29 Atkinson, *Intertextual Study*, 397.

30 Bradley Embry, "*The Psalms of Solomon* and the New Testament: Intertextuality and the Need for a Re-evaluation," *JSP* 13 (2002): 100, italics his.

31 Kenneth Atkinson has convincingly argued that Davidic messianism arose during the end of the Hasmonean period and became widespread during the Herodian period. See Atkinson, "Militant Davidic Messianism," 435–60.

another important connection between God and his messiah. The messiah seems to be the presence of God on earth, his representative. That the nations stand "fearfully" before him, implies judgment, and like God, the messiah extends mercy to them.

The Sinners: The label of "sinners" is consistently employed to refer to those who oppose the pious community. God will repay the sinners for their deeds: "[S]inners shall perish forever in the day of the Lord's judgment, when God visits the earth with his judgment" (15.12). The title of sinners is not applied only to Gentiles, but, in fact, is primarily applied to Jews.[32] *Pss. Sol.* 17, then, unfolds a portrait of a messiah who will not only purge the country of Gentiles, but of the "sinners" within the Jewish ranks as well. The messiah will "drive out the sinners from the inheritance, to smash the arrogance of sinners like a potter's jar; condemn sinners by their own consciences; he will expose officials and drive out sinners by the strength of his word" (17.23, 25, 36). It is clear that the messiah is bringing about the judgment of the sinners that the earlier psalms said the Lord would mete out (2.16, 34; 3.12; 4.8; 12.6; 13.11; and 15.5, 10, 12–13).

Rulers: Rulers are not discussed prominently in the *Pss. Sol.* In *Pss. Sol.* 8.16, 20, the rulers are described as, first, greeting Pompey with joy, but, subsequently, being destroyed. In *Pss. Sol.* 17.20, the rulers are sinful; in 17.22, the messiah destroys the "unrighteous rulers"; and, in v. 36, the messiah exposes/rebukes rulers. The use of this word in *Pss. Sol.* 17 again shows the close connection between the functions of the messiah and God himself. Here, God does not spare the rulers from ridicule and, later, the messiah destroys unrighteous rulers and convicts rulers. Just as God is the judge of national rulers, so is the messiah.

Pride: Pride (ὑπερηφανία) is a characteristic of "sinners" in 2.1, of foreign nations in 2.2, of the "dragon" (probably Pompey) in 2.25, and, in 17.6, the Hasmoneans lay waste to the throne of David in pride. God brings down the proud "to eternal destruction" in 2.31; God destroys those who proudly "work all unrighteousness" in 4.24. In 17.23, it is the messiah who will "smash the pride of sinners like a potter's jar."[33] Once again, the messiah is doing what God has done in the previous psalms. In addition, under the messiah's kingship, "there will be no pride among them."

Assemblies: Pss. Sol. 10.7 says the "assemblies of Israel will glorify the name of the Lord." The messiah in 17.43 is active within the assemblies: "In the assemblies he will judge the tribes of a sanctified people." Although assemblies are mentioned, the temple continues to be absent in the psalm. This may be a subtle polemic: the king is not to be the high priest, and the high priest should not be the king. This polemic may be against the Hasmonean ruling priests, who eventually began applying the label "king"

32 Contra Joel Willitts, *Matthew's Messianic Shepherd-King* (BZNW 147; New York: Walter De Gruyter, 2007), 89.

33 Robert Wright's translation, *Critical Edition*, 197. All further translations of *Pss. Sol.*, unless otherwise noted, are from Wright.

to themselves in addition to that of high priest (Josephus *J.W.* 1.3.1 §70; *Ant.* 13.11.1 §301; 20.10.3 §§240–41). However, the messiah does have some priestly functions within the psalm. It is possible that the temple and priesthood are absent from the messianic kingdom because they are no longer viewed as necessary.

Cleansing: The Son of David cleanses (καθαρίζω) Jerusalem from the Gentiles, who trample it. In previous psalms, God purges "every pious man" (3.8) from sins (*Pss. Sol.* 9.6; 10.1–2). It is now for the messiah, as God's representative, to do the work of God. This verb καθαρίζω is used in Lev. 13:6, 23 and 14:7 to refer to the cleansing the priest performs. This act of cleansing is the first indication that the messiah has some priestly function.

Trampling: In continuity with *Pss. Sol.* 2, the foreign nations are also depicted here as "trampling" Jerusalem. See *Pss. Sol.* 2.2, 19.

Judging: In this section, the messiah is twice described as judging (κρίνω) the tribes (v. 26), as well as judging peoples and nations (v. 29). In earlier passages of the *Pss. Sol.*, God is described as judging kings, kingdoms, and princes of the earth (2.30, 32), and judging the whole earth (8.24) and Israel (8.26). Once again, the messiah is portrayed as performing the works of God himself.

Righteousness: Closely tied to his role as judge is the messiah's character of righteousness (δικαιοσύνη). In v. 26 he leads in righteousness and will judge the tribes. In v. 29 he will judge the nations in the "wisdom of his righteousness." In 2.15, God's righteousness is displayed in his judgments. Verse 4.24 declares, "a great and mighty judge is the Lord our God in righteousness." In 8.24 and 26, God judges in righteousness. The messiah, then, is portrayed as having the same character of righteousness that God does, which qualifies him as a judge over Israel and the nations.

Unrighteousness: Verse 27 of this section declares that the messiah will not tolerate unrighteoussness (ἀδικία) to "dwell among them." Earlier in the *Pss. Sol.*, God is asked to destroy those who work unrighteousness (4.24), and, in 9.5, those who do unrighteousness give their lives over to destruction. Beyond this section, 17.32 declares that there will be no unrighteousness in their midst. The semantic range of ἀδικία primarily extends to the idea of injustice or wrongdoing—the messiah corrects this in the midst of the people.

Hope: The theme of hope has been a strong emphasis through the latter half of the psalm. The messiah does not place his hope in war (17.33). The Lord is his hope; he is described as one who hopes in God (17.34); and his hope in God means that none can prevail against him (17.39). Hope (ἐλπίς) also occurs elsewhere in the corpus (5.11, 14; 6.0; 8.31; and 15.1). *Pss. Sol.* 6 is superscripted "in hope," and goes on to describe the life of a person whose hope is in God. It may well provide the best contextual background for understanding why the messiah's hope in God is so important: the ways of people whose hope is in God are directed by the Lord, the work of their

hands are guarded by the Lord, their spirits will not be troubled, they seek the Lord for everyone in their household, and the Lord hears their prayers and fulfills every request (*Pss. Sol.* 6.2–6).

Instruction: Earlier, it was observed that the relationship between Israel and the messiah is spoken of in terms of instruction (παιδεύω), not destruction.[34] Verse 42 confirms this role of the messiah in relation to Israel. The use of the term παιδεύω draws to mind a parent–child relationship, and is used in the Hebrew Bible and the Apocrypha to describe the relationship between God and his people (Deut. 8.5; 21.18; and 32.10; Pss. 6.1; 38.1; and 94.12; Hos. 7.12; and 10.10; Isa. 28.26; Jer. 46.28; and 31.18; 2 Macc. 6:16; 10:4; Wis. 11:9; and 12:22; Sir. 18:13). As in the earlier *Pss. Sol.*, instruction is used, here, to describe the relationship between the Lord and his people (3.4; 7.3; 13.8; 16.11; and 18.4, 7). As in the previous section, that which God does for his people, the messiah also does for God's people, namely, shepherding and parenting. These acts, again, closely tie the messiah to God and shows that the acts of the messiah are the acts of God to his people.

The Messiah in Pss. Sol. 17

The above survey of themes within the corpus has sought to show that the messiah's entrance in this penultimate psalm connects itself with numerous aspects of the earlier psalms. The final redactor shaped the corpus so that the hope for the Davidic messiah was presented as the solution to the trouble and tribulation envisaged in the earlier psalms, and psalm 17 not only brings together the hopes of the earlier psalms, but also incorporates popular eschatological typology. Briefly stated, here are some interesting characteristics:

1. He cleanses Jerusalem (v. 22).
2. He breaks the unrighteous rulers and smashes their arrogance. He acts as a discipliner of Israel (vv. 22–24).
3. He drives out the Gentiles from Jerusalem (v. 25).
4. He has a universal function. Gentiles serve him and stand before him. He also glorifies the Lord throughout the world (vv. 30–31).
5. He places his hope in God alone, whom he acknowledges as his king (v. 34).
6. His power is not in military might, but only his words: "[T]he messiah's words have such powerful effect because they are Spirit-imbued words"[35] (v. 33).
7. He is righteous and sinless and makes the people presentable before God (vv. 27, 32, 36, and 40).
8. There is no hint that there is any need for a priesthood or the temple.

34 See comments on vv. 21–25.

35 Cornelius Bennema, "The Sword of the Messiah and the Concept of Liberation in the Fourth Gospel," *Bib* 86 (2005): 40.

Rather, the messiah has some priestly functions.

9. He gathers those who have been scattered (the eschatological ingathering of Israel) and divides the land among the tribes of Israel (vv. 28 and 31).
10. He acts as a judge of the world and the tribes of Israel (vv. 26, 29, and 35).
11. He vindicates the devout (vv. 32, 40, 43, and 45).

The Non-Militant Warrior

Out of these points, much could be discussed, but I will confine myself to two points of interest. First, is the violent aspect of the messiah. There is a popular conception of the messiah in the *Pss. Sol.* that is misleading, namely, that he is a militant warrior. Unlike the Israelite monarchy, and unlike foreign nations, the eschatological restored Israelite nation has YHWH as its king once again. This is why the messiah acknowledges the Lord as "his king" (17.34), and has no need to depend on an army: the Lord is the true king and the one who fights for Israel (through the words of his messiah). In preceding verses, as well as in the following verses, his strength resides in his words alone. The breaking of rulers, the purging of Jerusalem, the driving out of sinners, the smashing of sinners' pride, and the destruction of lawbreaking Gentiles within Jerusalem all happen, not by military might, but by the "word of his mouth" (17.21–24, 35). There is no doubt that the messiah purges Jerusalem and destroys the Gentiles in Jerusalem, but it is also clear that this violence is distinctly non-military; he is not a warrior. This important distinction has been noted by J. Klausner,[36] J. H. Charlesworth,[37] and K. Pomykala.[38] There is no hint of war, and no indication that the

36 Joseph Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel, from its Beginning to the Completion of the Mishnah* (New York: Macmillan, 1955), 323. Klausner states, "there is no suggestion of wars and bloodshed in his time" (323). Atkinson disagrees with Klausner on this point, stating that, "Klausner's belief that there is no war or bloodshed in this text is also untenable" (Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 142, n. 24). I agree with Klausner; there is no bloodshed, nor is there a war depicted in this psalm. Klausner's assertion is also followed by Brian J. Capper, "The New Covenant in Southern Palestine at the Arrest of Jesus," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls as Background to Postbiblical Judaism and Early Christianity* (ed. James R. Davila; *STDJ* 46; Boston: Brill, 2003), 113.

37 James H. Charlesworth, "From Messianology to Christology: Some Caveats and Perspectives," in *Judaisms and their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era* (ed. Jacob Neusner et al.; Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1987); James Charlesworth, "The Concept of the Messiah in the Pseudepigrapha," *ANRW* 19.1: 188–218; and James H. Charlesworth, "Messianology in the Biblical Pseudepigrapha," in *Qumran-Messianism: Studies on the Messianic Expectations in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. James Charlesworth et al.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 30–31. Atkinson misreads Charlesworth's comparison with *Tg. Ps.-J.* Gen 49:11 and *Pss. Sol.* 17, assuming that Charlesworth is arguing that both texts portray a non-militant messiah. Charlesworth is actually contrasting the two texts: whereas the targum distinctly portrays a militant and bloody messiah, *Pss. Sol.* 17 does not.

38 Kenneth E. Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition in Early Judaism: Its History and Significance for Messianism* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1995), 162.

messiah is leading any type of army at all: "[T]he Son of David to whom the poet of *Psalm of Solomon* 17 looks forward exercises power by his word and not by force."[39] Even though Kenneth Atkinson argues for a militant understanding of the messiah in *Pss. Sol.* 17,[40] he also concedes: "[T]he messiah's victories are not dependent upon military might but upon the authority of his word and his position as the legitimate Davidic king."[41]

It is his character and righteousness before God, and, most importantly, his hope in God, that enables the messiah to use simply the words of his mouth to discipline the unrighteous rulers of Israel, to vindicate the devout, and to destroy the Gentile occupiers. Furthermore, the messiah is not established as a "righteous counterpart to Herod the Great."[42] Indeed, the lawless one all but disappears after the appearance of the messiah in 17.21 and is, seemingly, lumped in with the rest of the Gentiles that are purged from Jerusalem. This highlights a very important difference between messianic expectations that has not been fully appreciated by *Pss. Sol.* scholars: It has to do with the relationship between eschatology and messianism. As I will show in the next chapter, the Qumran community expected a final, eschatological battle, of which they would be a part. Consequently, the messiah was integrated into that belief. By contrast, the *Pss. Sol.* did not expect an eschatological battle, and, therefore, its messiah is not a military warrior.

Priestly Functions

The community was certainly concerned with purity. All the more striking, then, is the absence of priest or temple in this psalm, especially given the level of its detail of the messianic reign. Within much more fragmented messianic texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls, the priests and the eschatological priest are mentioned. In this psalm, we have an alternative portrait of the messiah: one not coupled with an eschatological priest or priesthood, but, rather, a kingly messiah that has some priestly functions. He regulates the holiness of the people (v. 27). He accepts the gifts of the exiles from the Gentile nations (v. 31). His action cleanses Jerusalem (vv. 22, 30) and makes the land holy, and, presumably, his presence continues to keep it holy. He pronounces "Jerusalem clean, consecrating it as it was in the beginning" (v. 30). Although he is not a full-blown priest in the same sense as the eschatological priest at Qumran, some of his actions are priestly.[43]

39 H. J. de Jonge, "The Historical Jesus' View of Himself and of His Mission," in *From Jesus to John: Essays on Jesus and New Testament Christology in Honour of Marinus de Jonge* (ed. Martinus C. De Boer; JSNTSup 84; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 26.

40 Kenneth Atkinson, "Herodian Origin"; Kenneth Atkinson, "Herod the Great, Sosius."

41 Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 143.

42 Atkinson, "Militant Davidic Messianism," 435.

43 In his Ph.D. dissertation, Bradley Embry summarizes his understanding of the priestly motif in psalm 17: "[T]he Messiah in *PssSol* 17, by undertaking the establishment

Although this may seem unexpected, the historical context for this hope can help us to understand the desire for a messiah who has priestly functions. After all, a number of the Maccabean rulers functioned as both king and priest. Scholars have, in *Pss. Sol.* 17, then, the desire for the renewed monarchy, a throne occupied by God's messiah; but, his rulership is framed within the then-current kingship, as displayed by the Maccabean rulers. The hope was not for the restructuring of Israel, as it was in the days of David, but, rather, a new restructuring of Israel, with God as King, represented by his messiah proxy.[44]

Points of Contact with the New Testament

Having highlighted, in particular, the priestly function and non-militant character of the messiah, I will choose these two points to draw some possible connections with the New Testament's portrait of Jesus.

Priestly Messianism

Discussion of priestly motifs and the historical Jesus is minimal or absent from most discussions on Jesus and messianism, which focus, rather, on the prophetic and kingly typologies. Instead, cultic similarities have been confined to the opposition between Jesus and the temple.[45] However, a recent two-part essay by Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis has argued that the Gospel of Mark portrays Jesus with a priestly motif, and may portray Jesus as the eschatological priest-king in the order of Melchizedek.[46] A

of the kingdom of God on earth, is actively finalizing Israel's redemption, the world's recognition of God's sovereignty, and the stasis of purity envisioned in the ideal world of the Israelite priesthood" ("Psalms of Assurance: An Analysis of the Formation and Function of *Psalms of Solomon* in Second Temple Judaism" [Ph.D. Diss., University of Durham, 2004], 267).

44 If this is a correct way to understand the trajectory of messianic thought, it represents an interesting strand of early Jewish reflection. It has been noted in several studies that the post-exilic period saw the waning of the hope in the promise to David on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the rise in the importance of the priesthood. We have, perhaps, in the *Psalms of Solomon*, a move away from the focus on priesthood back towards the hope in a new David. See D. C. Duling, "Traditions of the Promises to David and His Sons in Early Judaism and Primitive Christianity," 253; Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty*, 42–222.

45 Bruce Chilton, *The Temple of Jesus: His Sacrificial Program within a Cultural History of Sacrifice* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992); N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Christian Origins and the Question of God 2; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1992).

46 Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "Jesus as the High Priestly Messiah: Part 1," *JSHJ* 4 (2006): 155–75; Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "Jesus as the High Priestly Messiah: Part 2," *JSHJ 5* (2007): 57–79.

full summary and critique of Fletcher-Louis' arguments are not necessary here, but the following is a summary of some of the fundamental points:

- Fletcher-Louis believes that the Son of Man in Dan. 7.13 was viewed in certain circles as the (perhaps, eschatological) high priest. This helps explain why Jesus declares "the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath" (Mk 2.28), and why Jesus says that "the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" (Mk 2.10).
- Three miracles within the first six chapters of Mark show that Jesus' purity is, effectively, "contagious." Rather than contracting the impurity of the leper (Mk 1.40–45), the hemorrhaging woman (Mk 5.25–34), or Jairus' daughter (Mk 5.35–43), Jesus passes his own purity on to them. This is similar to some OT texts which suggest that the high priest and, especially, the high priest's garb, were charged with holiness (Exod. 30.29; Lev. 21.10–12; Ezek. 44.19; Wis. 18:20–25; cf. Mk 5.28; 6.56).[47]
- The demons recognize Jesus as the "holy one of God" (Mk 1.24). The only precedent for the singular "holy one of God" is Aaron (Ps. 106.16; Num. 16.7).
- Jesus, as the holy one of God, imparts holiness and, therefore, "creates" sacred space. This is why the disciples are allowed to pluck grain on the sabbath. It also may help explain how the "kingdom of God has come near" (Mk 1.15) in Jesus' ministry.
- Jesus answers the high priest's question, "Are you the messiah?", in the affirmative, and he goes on to allude to Dan. 7.13 and Ps. 110.1. Apart from his appearance in Genesis, Melchizedek only appears in Ps. 110, which Mark surely realized, since Melchizedek was a mysterious and much-discussed figure. In Ps. 110, the one sitting at the right hand of God is a priest in the order of Melchizedek (Melchizedek is both priest and king in Gen. 14.18). This recognition that Melchizedek is the primary character in Ps. 110 also informs Jesus' other discussion on Ps. 110, in Mk 12.35–37.

Fletcher-Louis' article is an engaging read that has illuminated many excellent points—though, in his attempts to support his thesis, he virtually ignores the obvious royal and Davidic messianism in the Gospels. Unfortunately, he dismisses the *Pss. Sol.* as "the one striking example of a hope for a single

47 In this, Fletcher-Louis follows and modifies the arguments of both Bruce Chilton and Craig Evans. See Bruce D. Chilton, *Jesus' Baptism and Jesus' Healing: His Personal Practice of Spirituality* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998), 58–71; Craig A. Evans, "'Who Touched Me?' Jesus and the Ritually Impure," in *Jesus in Context: Temple, Purity and Restoration* (eds. Bruce D. Chilton and Craig A. Evans; AGJU 39; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 368–69.

royal messiah . . . [which is] highly situational in outlook."[48] While the messiah in *Pss. Sol.* 17 is, indeed, the royal, Davidic messiah, some priestly functions are also part of his reign. This recognition would have strengthened Fletcher-Louis' thesis, insofar as it shows another example of a messiah-king having a priestly function, though one that does not make use of the Melchizedek figure.

While Fletcher-Louis focused on Mark, the Gospel of Matthew may provide another example of Jesus portrayed in a priestly motif in a way reminiscent of the *Psalms of Solomon* 17. In a series of rapid-fire miracles, Mt. 8–9 describes the healings of a leper (8.1–4), the centurion's servant (8.5–13), and Peter's mother-in-law (8.14–16); the stilling of the storm (8.23–27); and the healing of two demoniacs (8.28–34) and the paralytic (9.2–8). The first thing to note regarding these healings is a well-recognized characteristic of Jesus as a healer: unlike other known Jewish healers, Jesus does not rely on prayer, incantations, or other popular methods of healing. Rather, the healing comes simply at his command. Although not connected to healing, the messiah in *Pss. Sol.* 17 also does things by word alone. Furthermore, a number of these healings (with parallels in the synoptics) have been highlighted by Fletcher-Louis, arguing that Jesus is portrayed with a priestly motif.[49] In Mt. 8–9's string of miracles, not only does Jesus perform a few merely at his word, but, also, he forgives the paralytic his sins. Perhaps most suggestive is the healing of the leper. Not only does Jesus confront the social stigma of leprosy by touching the man, but he tells the cleansed man to show himself to the priest and offer the gift. This, no doubt, would bring social healing to this stigmatized man.[50] But, the fact that the man's actions would be a "testimony to them" may indicate something more at stake: not only the full re-entry of this man into society, but also a strong message that healing, to the man, has come *apart from* the temple and its priests. This, I suggest, is not unlike the role of the messiah in the *Psalms of Solomon*. While the messiah in *Pss. Sol.* 17 is, indeed, the royal, Davidic messiah, some priestly functions are also attributed to him. This not only testifies, once again, to the diversity of messianism in early Judaism; it also offers a richer context for understanding how the early church could have conceived of Jesus, their messiah, as both king and priest.

48 Fletcher-Louis, "High Priestly Messiah," 168. Fletcher-Louis does make minor mention of some of the priestly duties of the messiah in the *Pss. Sol.*, but they do not factor into his main arguments.

49 Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "Jesus as the High Priestly Messiah: Part 1," *JSHJ* 4 (2006): 155–75; Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "Jesus as the High Priestly Messiah: Part 2," *JSHJ* 5 (2007): 57–79.

50 R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (*NICNT*; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 308.

Further Indications of Non-Militant Royal Messianism

While it is clear, from the summaries above, that Jesus actively distanced himself from uprising or conflict, sayings also can be adduced which indicate that Jesus had the power to exercise violence, but that this power was non-military. In Mt. 26.53, after the slave of the high priest is struck with a sword and Jesus rebukes his follower, Jesus says, "Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?" Jesus indicates here that, with a simple command, his accusers could be destroyed. Ulrich Luz states: "Jesus is seen as an all-powerful person who through his heavenly father 'can' do everything."[51] It is curious that Jesus does not appeal to his many followers as a means of protection against the arresting squad. This non-military might is also supported by Jesus' words to Pilate in Jn 18.36: "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." Whether or not these sayings can be traced to the historical Jesus need not concern us. What is important is that at least two of the Evangelists portray Jesus as having the necessary power at his disposal to do as he chose, but that power was neither in his military might, nor, even, in the support of his anxious-for-revolt followers. While this is not an exact correlation with the powerful, non-military messiah of the *Pss. Sol.*, there are points of coherence with it.

One last piece of evidence that may further hint at the non-military might of Jesus should be mentioned. As discussed above, Acts 1.6 indicates that, even after the resurrection appearances, his followers were expecting a geo-political restoration of Israel. I would suggest that the *Pss. Sol.*, again, can shed some light on this verse. Throughout the gospel story, the disciples have not understood his teaching that he must die and rise again (Mk 9.32; Lk. 9.45). Jesus' followers may have expected the beginning of a revolt in Mk 6/Jn 6, and, perhaps, even encouraged the triumphal entry (Lk. 19.35; Jn 12.16). It seems that they also were also expecting a fight in Gethsemane. His death and resurrection reoriented them to the new work of salvation that God was doing. But they still expected a concrete and real political upheaval wherein the kingdom would be restored to Israel. Acts 1.6 may indicate that the disciples had come to believe that the restoration of the kingdom would be done by Jesus alone: "when *you* will restore the kingdom," not "when *we* will restore . . ." There is certainly no indication in the Easter narratives, or in the beginning of Acts, that Jesus' followers are still ready for an uprising. They are passive watchers in the early verses of Acts. They follow Jesus to the Mount of Olives, not unlike the followers of Theudas (*Ant.* 20.97–98), the Egyptian Prophet (*Ant.* 20.169–72), and the Samaritan Prophet (*Ant.* 18.85–87). Without weapons, they now expect that Jesus, simply by his command, will restore the kingdom to Jerusalem.

51 Ulrich Luz, *Matthew: A Commentary* (3 vols., Hermeneia; trans. by W. C. Linns and James E. Crouch; Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1989–2005), 3:420.

Equating Jesus with God

The literary context of *Pss. Sol.* 17 has illuminated the close connection of the messiah with God himself: the messiah is performing the work of God in a very close association with him. The messiah is the judge of peoples and nations, as well as of the tribes of Israel (17.26, 29; cf. 2.30, 32; 8.24, 26). His judgments are righteous, as are God's (17.26, 29; cf. 2.15; 4.24; 8.24, 26). He is their shepherd (17.40); he instructs Israel (17.42); and glory, which is sought out by nations (17.30–31), is ascribed to him. This portrait of the messiah may contribute an important point of coherence for early Christian portraits of Jesus. In some of the earliest Christian documents, written by Paul, Jesus was already spoken of in exalted terms and equated, in some sense, with God himself. The Synoptic Gospels, while not being as overt, nonetheless contribute to this developing view of Jesus as well. I hope my study has shed light on the historical plausibility of the Gospel authors speaking of Jesus in such exalted terms. The understanding of *Pss. Sol.* 17 supports its plausibility in a Jewish context.

In the Gospels, Jesus plays these same types of roles, roles usually performed by God. Jesus longs to gather Israel as a hen gathers her brood (Mt. 23.37; Lk. 13.34). Jesus is described as a judge (Jn 5.22, 27; 8.16); he is the shepherd (Jn 10.1–18); and glory is ascribed to him (Mt. 16.27, 19.28, 24.30, and 25.31; Mk 8.38; 10.37; and 13.26; Lk. 9.26; 21.27; and 24.26; Mk 9.2–10 par.).[52] If we accept *Pss. Sol.* 17 as an important representation of early Jewish messianism, this high view of Jesus, as portrayed in the Gospels, is at home in early Jewish thinking.

52 The Gospels go to even greater lengths than this in portraying Jesus in exalted terms. The Son of Man is clearly understood as Jesus and is equated with God, particularly in Matthew; likewise, also, his role of judging in the eschaton (Mt. 25:31–46).

Chapter 6

The Enochic Library of the Author of the *Epistle of Barnabas*

Eric Rowe

Before addressing the details of "The Enochic Library of the Author of the *Epistle of Barnabas*" it will be helpful to clarify some of the terms in that title. A person might infer from it the idea of a single author who composed the *Epistle of Barnabas* having immediate access in some library to all of the fifteen-plus sources for its hundred-plus quotations. However, such a simple model is not intended by the title. The reigning view of the composition of *Barnabas* is that it is a patchwork of a handful of constituent parts put together either by some lengthy process within a school community or by some final editor.[1] If that is correct, then it follows that most of the citations existed already in these parts and that whoever put them together did not use continuous-text copies of the books cited in them.

The contention of this paper does not require the overturning of that model of the epistle's composition. However, despite its patchwork structure, *Barnabas* exhibits a great deal of homogeneity in its purpose, theology, and style.[2] This implies that either the final work and its constituent parts (or at least many of them) come from a school of likeminded Christians, or they come from a single author who might possibly have made the epistle out of shorter jottings he had composed at earlier times, including anthologies of notes he would have taken from books he had accessed at various opportunities.[3] Thus, for the purposes of this paper, the term *author* is used in

1 Robert Kraft, "Barnabas and the Didache," in *The Apostolic Fathers: A New Translation and Commentary* (ed. Robert Grant; Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1965), 1–3, 19–22; Reidar Hvalvik, *The Struggle for Scripture and Covenant: The Purpose of the Epistle of Barnabas and Jewish–Christian Competition in the Second Century* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1996), 1–5.

2 Cf. James Carlton Paget, *The Epistle of Barnabas* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1994), 183–85.

3 Much of the evidence that is adduced in favor of the hypothesis that the citations in *Barnabas* came from published testimony collections could as easily be explained by the hypothesis that the author used his own private excerpt collections, a practice that was employed widely in the Greco-Roman world (Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.6.14; Aristotle, *Topics* 1.14; *Moralia* 464F, 457D–E; Cicero, *On Invention* 2.4; Seneca, *Ep.* 84.2; Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 3.5; 6.20). See Martin C. Albl, *"And Scripture Cannot be Broken": The Form and Function of Early Christian Testimonia Collections* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 80.

a broad sense to include an author, redactor, or school without implying a commitment to which of those is the most accurate term in the case of *Barnabas*. Likewise, the term *library* refers to the universe of books used both by the final author or redactor of the epistle and by prior authors who composed any large blocks of text that constitute the epistle.

The range of books the epistle cites provides us with some evidence that this school or author had some background or close relationship with a particular stream of Judaism, namely, the *Enochic*.[4] This term also requires clarification. For the purpose of this paper, *Enochic* means that broad stream of Judaism that included the communities that produced the books attributed to Enoch, along with other communities, such as the Qumran sect, that revered those books and other books like them; a stream of Judaism that was distinguished from the main temple authorities in that it held to a solar rather than lunar calendar, among other things. Boccaccini has argued that Enochic Judaism was the very same as the broader Essene branch of Judaism, of which the Qumran sect was an offshoot.[5] For the purposes of this paper it is not necessary to accept his view. It suffices simply to acknowledge that Essene Judaism and Enochic Judaism were closely related,[6] in which case the word *Enochic* is here intended to include both of them, along with any other closely related groups about which we have less knowledge, possibly including the Theraputae described by Philo in *De Vita Contemplativa*.

Boccaccini is probably correct that *4 Ezra* comes from within Enochic Judaism and that it reflects that background in 14:45–48 where the Most High tells Ezra to make public the twenty-four books he had written first, to be read by both the worthy and the unworthy, but to hide the seventy books he had written last, and only give them to the wise, for whom they would be a fountain of knowledge.[7] It is from this broad range of scripture, including the twenty-four books of the Tanach, and the much wider range of special sectarian literature, that the citations in *Barnabas* were originally taken.

The sources of three particular quotations in *Barnabas* can be identified with books from the Enochic stream of Judaism. Additionally, several more generic features of the epistle support the contention that its scriptural corpus was Enochic. The three particular passages are *Barn.* 4:3–5, 12:1, and 16:3–6. Some of the specific Jewish writings that contain passages that

4 This suggestion is in line with the conclusion of Kraft, which he reached without access to the evidence of 4Q383–91. See Robert Kraft, "The Epistle of Barnabas: Its Quotations and their Sources" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard, 1961), 287–90.

5 Gabriele Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis: The Parting of the Ways between Qumran and Enochic Judaism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998).

6 See especially John Collins, "Enoch, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Essenes: Groups and Movements in Judaism in the Early Second Century B.C.E.," and James VanderKam, "Too Far Beyond the Essene Hypothesis," in *Enoch and Qumran Origins: New Light on a Forgotten Connection* (ed. Gabriele Boccaccini; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 345–50 and 388–93.

7 Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis*, 168.

resemble these quotations include: three different books preserved in what is currently known as *1 Enoch*, namely *The Astronomical Treatise*, *The Book of Dreams*, and *The Apocalypse of Weeks*; a reworked prophetic apocryphon found in several copies at Qumran in 4Q383–91; and *4 Ezra*. The following survey of textual affinities between these works and *Barnabas* will reveal certain similarities that suggest the use of either these very works, recensions or translations of them, or other unknown closely related works.

Barnabas *4:3–4, and 12:1*

The first reference to prophetic authority from a source outside of what most Christians recognize as the Old Testament is one explicitly attributed to Enoch in *Barn.* 4:3–4, which reads as follows:

> The last stumbling block is at hand, concerning which the scriptures speak, as Enoch says. For the master has cut short the times and the days for this reason, so that his beloved might make haste and come into his inheritance.[4] And so also says the prophet: "Ten kingdoms will reign over the earth, and after them a little king will arise, who will subdue three of the kings with a single blow."

Kraft applies the Enochic attribution to the phrase "The last stumbling block is at hand," which he views as a reference to "the general theme of the 'final scandal'," about which he claims, "If Pseudo-Barnabas had a precise Enoch passage in mind, it is apparently no longer preserved in extant Enoch literature (the best candidates are *1 Enoch* 89:61–64; 90:17f.; *2 Enoch* 34:1–3, but they are not very satisfactory)."[8]

The Astronomical Treatise

Kraft might have found a more satisfactory parallel if he had understood the Enochic attribution in reference to the words that follow it rather than those that precede it. As Reeves notes, "If we compare the structure of the wording of v. 3 with the other eighty-six direct citations from sources found in *Barnabas*, we discover that the actual citation always follows the named authority."[9] In fact, the idea of shortening units of time measurement is found in *The Astronomical Treatise* (*1 Enoch* 72–82), which reads:

8 Robert Kraft, *Barnabas and the Didache*, 89.

9 John C. Reeves, "An Enochic Citation in *Barnabas* 4:3 and the *Oracles of Hystaspes*," in *Pursuing the Text: Studies in Honor of Ben Zion Wacholder on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday* (ed. John C. Reeves and John Kampen; JSOTSup 184; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press: 1994), 263.

> In respect to their days, the sinners and the winter are cut short. Their seed(s) shall lag behind in their lands and in their fertile fields, and all their activities upon the earth. He will turn and appear in their time, and withhold rain; and the sky shall stand still at that time. Then the vegetable shall slacken and not grow in its season, and the fruit shall not be born in its (proper) season. The moon shall alter its order, and will not be seen according to its (normal) cycles. (*1 Enoch* 80:2–4)

Although the Olivet Discourse refers to God shortening days for the sake of the elect (Mt. 24.22), the concept there seems to be shortening the length of some period of tribulation. *The Astronomical Treatise* describes the shortening of the very units by which time is measured.[10] Since *Barnabas* mentions the shortening of both *times* and *days*, this suggests the use of a source where the Enochic idea of shortening time units is in view. Milik has proposed that this passage in *The Astronomical Treatise* is the source behind *Barnabas* 4:3.[11]

Another passage in *Barnabas* that may support this parallel is *Barn.* 15:5: "'And He rested on the seventh day.' This means: when his son comes, he will destroy the time of the lawless one and will judge the ungodly and will change the sun and the moon and the stars, and then he will truly rest on the seventh day." Although changes in the sun, moon, and stars are a common apocalyptic theme in Jewish and Christian literature, these changes are usually confined to certain specifics, such as the sun being darkened. The use of the generic term ἀλλάσσω in *Barn.* 15:5 may reflect dependence on a source like *1 Enoch* 80, where several changes in the seasons and the cycles of heavenly bodies are described using such words as *err* and *alter*.[12] Moreover, the entire context of *Barn.* 15 pertains to measures of time; and even v. 5 uses time-related words (ἡμέρα and καιρός) in relation to these changes in the heavenly bodies. The use of a source that describes changes in the courses of these bodies, particularly in their roles as time markers, may explain the mention of this sign at this point in the epistle.

10 As Beckwith has observed, the signs described in *1 Enoch* 80 fit well what would be observed by a group following a 364-day calendar without the necessary intercalations ("The Earliest Enoch Literature and its Calendar: Marks of their Origin, Date, and Motivation," *RevQ* 39 [1981], 387). The fact that *Barnabas* shows no concern for this idea within the passage he quotes does not weigh against the likelihood of his using such a source, as he would appeal to this passage according to his own spiritual hermeneutic.

11 J. T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976), 73–74.

12 According to the translation of E. Isaac in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols.; ed. James H. Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1983), 1:58–59.

4Q383–391

Although the source of *Barn.* 4:3 is attributed to Enoch, two other writings that speak of time compression, which make no internal claim of Enochic authorship, have been proposed as the source. Kister has proposed a source that has been preserved in a scroll at Qumran he calls 4Q Second Ezekiel.[13] This scroll contains a passage which reads, "And the days will pass rapidly until [all the sons of] man say: Are not the days hastening on so that the children of Israel can inherit [their land?]" (4Q385 3, 2–3).[14] Not only does this passage describe observable compression of the lengths of days, but also, like *Barnabas*, it gives the reason that it is for someone to "inherit their land." In 4Q385, it is for Israel, whereas in *Barnabas* it is for *the Beloved*.

This parallel becomes more significant in light of a second parallel between 4Q385 and *Barn.* 12:1, which reads, "Similarly, he once again gives an explanation about the cross in another prophet, who says: 'And when shall these things be accomplished? The Lord says, "When a tree falls over and rises again, and when blood drips from a tree." Once again, you have a reference about the cross and about the one who was destined to be crucified.'" Portions of this passage resemble *4 Ezra*, which at one point asks, "How long? When will these things be?" (*4 Ezra* 4:33), and shortly thereafter says, "Blood shall drip from wood" (*4 Ezra* 5:5). However, *4 Ezra* does not mention a tree bending and rising back up, a hole which is neatly filled in by 4Q385, "[And] I said: O, YHWH, when will these things happen? And YHWH said to me . . .] 10 [. . . and] a tree will bend over and straighten up [. . .]" (4Q385 2, 9–10).

One argument against *Barnabas* using the same source (in Greek translation) as that preserved in 4Q385 is that, according to *Barnabas*, the words belong to Enoch, whereas 4Q385 places them in the mouth of Ezekiel. As Kister observes, an apparent quotation from another Pseudo-Ezekiel writing in *Barn.* 11:10 makes it somewhat unlikely that the author believed the words in *Barn* 12:1 came from the same prophet.[15] Kister proposes that the mistaken attribution to Enoch may result from the use of a collection of testimonia.[16] This suggestion is not implausible. However, it should be noted that *Barnabas*, apparently, uses at least one continuous text Enochic source, the *Book of Dreams*, from which *Barnabas* alludes to several details spread throughout *1 Enoch* 89–90, requiring knowledge of the entire section (*Barn.* 16:3–6).[17] Furthermore, the author of *Barnabas* usually does not attribute

13 Menahem Kister, "Barnabas 12:1; 4:3 and 4Q Second Ezekiel," *RB* 97.1 (1990), 63–67.

14 All quotations from the DSS in this paper are taken from Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (2 vols.; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000).

15 Kister, "*Barnabas* 12:1; 4:3 and 4Q Second Ezekiel," 66.

16 Ibid.

17 See discussion below.

quotations to a specific author, speaker, or book, but in the other instances, when he does, the attribution is always accurate.[18]

The Oracles of Hystaspes

Reeves has made a proposal that attempts to improve on that of Kister, saying, "while Kister's proposal is admittedly attractive, there nevertheless remain certain problems with his proposed identification, chief among which are the Enochic ascription and the thematic complex of motifs linking *Barn.* 4:3 and 4:4."[19] His proposed source is the *Oracles of Hystaspes*, a work preserved, in part, in the *Divine Institutes* of Lactantius.[20] This work contains a prediction of time units shortening, "The year will shorten, the month will lessen, and the day will be squeezed into a small span, and stars will fall in great frequency, so that the whole sky will look blind, with no lights in it" (Lactantius, *Div. Inst.* 7.16.10). Moreover, this prediction accompanies predictions of other astronomical anomalies, including the darkening of heavenly bodies and irregularity of orbits (Lactantius, *Div. Inst.* 7.16.8–9), perhaps supporting the expected changes in the sun, moon, and stars in *Barn.* 15:5.

Reeves draws further parallels by noting that the *Oracles of Hystapses* also parallels the prediction of *Barn.* 4:4, wherein ten kingdoms will arise, followed by a little king who will depose three other kings. Lactantius relates this same prediction within his text of *Oracles of Hystaspes* (*Div. Inst.* 7.16.1–3). It is true that this exact scheme is found in Daniel 7. But the words of *Barn.* 4:4 do not match anything in either Daniel or Lactantius. And, as Reeves observes, "*Barnabas* does not identify this quotation as coming from Daniel, but rather ascribes the quotation to an unnamed prophet."[21] Reeves, finally, appeals to the term *Beloved*, found in *Barn.* 4:3, noting that later Manichean literature mentioned by a tenth-century Muslim scholar talks about Hystaspes using the epithet *beloved*. But such a circuitous path to the original wording of the *Oracles of Hystaspes* cannot overcome the fact that, in the quotation of Lactantius, the *Oracles of Hystaspes* neither uses the epithet *beloved*, nor contains any words that match the quote from *Barnabas* as nearly as does 4Q385. Reeves also believes his proposal better explains

18 See *Barn.* 4:5; 6:8; 10:1, 2, 10, 11; 12:6, 11; 13:4; 14:3. To these, could be added several places where *Barnabas* indicates that the quotation to follow comes from a different source than the one just prior, by saying it is from "another prophet," including *Barn.* 6:14; 11:6, 9; 12:1, 4. To be sure, this argument is mitigated by the likelihood that some of these attributions were added to the text in its transmission (so Kraft, "Quotations," 46). Nevertheless, even granting this possibility, it remains the case that the evidence suggests the author gave attributions of quotations only rarely and with care for accuracy.

19 Reeves, "An Enochic Citation," 265.

20 Ibid., 265.

21 Ibid., 268.

the Enochic ascription, as it was possible that an assimilation of culture-heroes occurred between Zoroaster and Enoch, both of whom, allegedly, discovered astrology.[22] This complicated explanation of the ascription does not lessen the main problem with Reeves' proposal, which is lack of clear verbal correspondence.

Of the possible sources behind *Barn.* 4:3 surveyed, the most likely candidate is the prophetic apocryphon attested in 4Q383–391, both because of its similar wording, and because of its relationship to *Barn.* 12:1a. The problem that remains for this suggestion is the attribution to Enoch. However, it must also be noted that Enochic literature in the first century was not contained in a simple discrete corpus, such as the extant Ethiopic (*1 Enoch*) or Slavonic (*2 Enoch*) books of Enoch. Ethiopic Enoch is a compilation of five separate Enochic tracts, four of which are attested at Qumran, in scrolls that grouped them together in varying ways.[23] The fifth portion of Ethiopic Enoch may be of later origin than these, as is the entirety of Slavonic Enoch. But these Enochic collections are not likely to preserve all of the Enochic literature that circulated in early Judaism and Christianity. The majority of citations from Enoch in early Christian literature do not closely match the words of any known book of Enoch, though they frequently fit the ideology of Enochic Judaism.[24] The same is true of Enochic citations in *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*.[25] Also, if Brady and Wacholder are correct that 4Q383–391 represents fragments of several copies of a single prophetic apocryphon that includes pseudonymous sayings of Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and, possibly, Moses, then the presumed author of the work as a whole remains unknown.[26] Its ideological affinities lie closely with Enochic Jewish literature.[27] It is plausible that this work, or a recension of it, such as

22 Ibid., 274.

23 George W. E. Nicklesburg, *1 Enoch 1* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2001), 7–8.

24 See the lengthy survey of Enoch citations in H. J. Lawlor, "Early Citations from the Book of Enoch," *Journal of Philology* 25 (1897): 164–225.

25 The different textual families of *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* disagree in attributing certain sayings to Enoch. Robert Kraft theorizes that later scribes sometimes removed the attribution due to a saying being unattested in their book of Enoch. See "Enoch and Written Authorities in *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*" (paper presented at the SBL Pseudepigrapha Symposium, Washington, D.C., 1993). Cited April 22, 2006. Online: http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/gopher/other/journals/kraftpub/Judaism/Testaments of 12 Patriarchs on Enoch and Scriptures.

26 See Monica Lyn Walsh Brady, "Prophetic Traditions at Qumran: A Study of 4Q383–391" (2 vols.; Ph.D. diss., the University of Notre Dame, 2000); ibid., "Biblical Interpretation in the 'Pseudo-Ezekiel' Fragments (4Q383–391) from Cave Four," in *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran* (ed. Matthias Henze; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005); and Ben Zion Wacholder, "Deutero Ezekiel and Jeremiah (4Q384–4Q391): Identifying the Dry Bones of Ezekiel 37 as the Essenes," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Fifty Years After Their Discovery – Proceedings of the Jerusalem Congress, July 20–25, 1997* (ed. L. Schiffman, E. Tov, J. C. VanderKam, and G. Marquis; Israel Exploration Society, in collaboration with the Shrine of the Book, Israel Museum, 2000), 445–61.

27 Brady identifies the closest textual affinities of 4Q383–391 with *2 Baruch*,

the Greek version used in *The Epistle of Barnabas*, was attributed to Enoch. Thus, Kister's use of the title 4Q Second Ezekiel may be inappropriate for 4Q385, despite the inclusion of Ezekiel's words within it.

Barnabas *16:3–6*

The last specific citation in *Barnabas* that appears to come from known Enochic literature is *Barn.* 16:3–6, where a series of expressions and ideas from the *Book of Dreams* (*1 Enoch* 83–90) and the *Apocalypse of Weeks* (*1 Enoch* 91–107) are woven together:

> Furthermore, again he says: "Behold, they who tore down this temple will build it themselves." [4] This is happening now. For because they went to war, it was torn down by their enemies, and now the very servants of their enemies will rebuild it. [5] Again, it was revealed that the city and the temple and the people of Israel were destined to be handed over. For the Scripture says: "And it will happen in the last days, that the Lord will hand over the sheep of the pasture, and the sheepfold and their watchtower to destruction." And it happened just as the Lord said. [6] But let us inquire whether there is in fact a temple of God. There is—where he himself says he is building and completing it! For it is written: "And it will come to pass, when the week comes to an end, God's temple will be built gloriously in the name of the Lord."

The Book of Dreams contains a long parable encompassing most of *1 Enoch* 89–90 wherein the history of the nation of Israel is described from the time of Abraham until the eschaton. In this parable, the people of Israel are consistently depicted as sheep, Jerusalem as a sheepfold, and the temple as a tower. The nearest parallel in this parable to the description of an eschatological destruction of the sheep, the fold and the tower, as in *Barn.* 16:5, is a passage actually describing the Babylonian conquest (*1 Enoch* 89:55–56, 66–67). Later, the *Book of Dreams* describes an eschatological judgment at which sheep are destroyed and the house (Jerusalem) rebuilt without mention of a tower (*1 Enoch* 90:26–29). *The Apocalypse of Weeks* provides the last needed parallels, saying, "At its [the last week's] completion, they shall acquire great things through their righteousness. A house shall be built for the Great King in glory for evermore" (*1 Enoch* 91:12–13). As this passage is not a parable, the house is here a temple (cf. 4QEn^{g}, "a royal Temple of the Great One in his glorious splendor, for all generations, forever"). VanderKam summarizes the situation of *Barn.* 16:3–6 saying, "There is no

4 Ezra, the *Animal Apocalypse*, the *Book of Jubilees*, and the *Damascus Document* ("Prophetic Traditions at Qumran," 2:539). Boccaccini identifies all of these, except *2 Baruch*, as core works of Enochic Judaism (*Beyond the Essene Hypothesis*, 11–17). Such an overlap of literary affiliation suggests that the attribution in *Barn.* 4:3 may not be a mistake.

doubt that in these two places in chap. 16 the author is alluding to, though not citing from *1 Enoch*."[28]

VanderKam is probably correct that these citations in *Barnabas* are paraphrases of the passages above from the Enochic *Book of the Dreams* and the *Apocalypse of Weeks*. But even if not, and the source was some other book, the similarities that exist are enough to suggest that whatever that other book was, it must have been closely related to these Enochic books, and was probably another representative of Enochic Judaism. This is supported by the popularity of chronologies of weeks within that brand of Judaism. Although the origin of that literary motif seems to have been Daniel, which is not, itself, representative of Enochic Judaism, other books imitate Daniel with their own chronologies of weeks, and this phenomenon is particularly common in the literature of Enochic Judaism. *The Apocalypse of Weeks* is, of course, one example. Other examples include: the *Book of the Watchers*, the *Animal Apocalypse*, the *Testament of Levi*, the *Damascus Document*, 4Q180, 4Q181, 4Q247, 4Q390, 11QMelch, and the *Assumption of Moses*. Another work that contains a chronology of weeks that was not borne directly out of Enochic Judaism, but that, like *Barnabas*, seems to be somehow related to other books that were, is *2 Baruch*.

Generic Comparisons

In addition to these particular passages in *Barnabas* that, apparently, quote from Enochic Jewish sources, some generic observations about the epistle's use of authoritative sources corroborate its affinity to that stream of Judaism. These include a favoritism for a similar group of books of the Hebrew scriptures, a propensity for apocalypticism in *Barnabas* and its sources, a use of alternative Pentateuch-like sources, and a particular hermeneutical approach.

Favorite Books of Scripture

While neither *Barnabas* nor any extant source from Enochic Judaism contains a systematic delimitation of which books are scriptural along the lines of what later sources might call a *canon*, certain features of the available literature provide clues as to which books garnered the most attention in their communities. In *Barnabas*, these clues are in the number of times each book is cited. In Enochic Judaism, they are in the number of manuscripts of each book found at Qumran, and from the citations of books as scripture in the sectarian documents.

28 James C. VanderKam, "*1 Enoch*, Enochic Motifs, and Enoch in Early Christian Literature," in *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity* (ed. James C. VanderKam and William Adler; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1996), 40.

In the Dead Sea Scrolls, the favorite books were the Psalms, preserved in thirty-six scrolls, and quoted fifty-one times in sectarian texts, and Isaiah, preserved in twenty-one scrolls, and quoted eighty times in sectarian texts.[29] After these, the next most frequently quoted and copied books at Qumran were Deuteronomy (thirty scrolls, twenty-seven quotations), Genesis (twenty scrolls, three quotations), Exodus (seventeen scrolls, four quotations), Leviticus (fourteen scrolls, twenty-three quotations), and *Jubilees* (fifteen scrolls, two to four quotations).[30] After these, Numbers, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, the Twelve Minor Prophets (counted as one book), and *1 Enoch* (also counted as one book) were represented in a few quotations and six to twelve scrolls each.[31] Finally, almost all of the rest of the Tanach (except Esther), plus Ben Sira, Tobit, and the *Reworked Pentateuch* were represented with a total fifteen quotations and/or scrolls each.[32]

The quotations in *Barnabas* betray a similar hierarchy of favorite books. Isaiah and the Psalms are again the clear favorites, with twenty-five to twenty-seven and nineteen to twenty-two quotations respectively.[33] The next most attested book is Genesis, with nine quotations.[34] Then come Jeremiah and Deuteronomy, with four to six and two to five quotations respectively.[35] There are a few scattered and questionable references to Zechariah, Ezekiel, Proverbs, Daniel, and Leviticus.[36] Finally, there are a large number of quotations whose sources have not yet been clearly identified and which probably come from books outside the Tanach, including the passages treated above.[37]

Several parallels between the DSS and *Barnabas* emerge from this survey that provide circumstantial evidence for the theory that some relationship should be sought between the author of *Barnabas* and a group of Jews that was similar to the Essenes. *Barnabas* and the DSS both reflect a clear favoritism for Isaiah and the Psalms. Genesis comes third or fourth in both lists. Deuteronomy and Jeremiah are also relatively high in both lists. Lastly, both treat certain books as scripture that were not recognized in

29 James VanderKam and Peter Flint, *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Harper Collins, 2002), 178–80. Cf. George J. Brooke, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2005), 27–51.

30 VanderKam and Flint, *Meaning*, 178–80.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 The numbers of quotations from various books in *Barnabas* used in this paragraph are taken from Kraft, "Quotations," 54–56. When a range of numbers is used for a book, the lower number is the number of quotations that clearly reflect specific passages of the LXX, the higher number includes quotations that, according to Kraft, "reflect particular OT passages and even have some Septuagintal wording, but which also deviate to such an extent from the LXX that they must be considered separately" (56).

34 Kraft, "Quotations," 54–56.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

the later Jewish and Christian canons, especially including books from the Enochic stream of Judaism and alternative versions of the Pentateuch (see below). [38]

Apocalyptic

An aspect of *Barnabas* that is already apparent from the specific quotations treated above is its apocalyptic emphasis. Enochic Judaism was noteworthy for its propensity to use apocalyptic literature.[39] To be sure, apocalyptic themes are common in other early Christian works that do not have the same relationship to Enochic Judaism that *Barnabas* apparently has. Nevertheless, it is worth noting, if only as corroborating evidence, that apocalyptic ideas abound in *Barnabas* and its sources.[40] For example, *Barn.* 6 contains an anthology of verses that, taken on their own, would seem to be oriented around the idea of the restoring of an Edenic state on earth in the eschaton. In *Barnabas*, these verses are interpreted to refer, not to actual land, but to the new creation of Christian converts. This anthology includes the quotation, "Behold, I make the last things as the first," which nicely encapsulates a theme that runs throughout apocalyptic eschatology, but that comes from a source that is, as yet, unidentified.

The same idea of God bringing back the Edenic state in the eschaton emerges in *Barnabas*' own eschatology in chapter 15, where he places on the mouth of God the words, "I will create the beginning of an eighth day, which is the beginning of another world." Similar ideas seem present in the sources of *Barn.* 11:9–10, which *Barnabas*, again, reinterprets in ways immediately relevant to his audience. In 11:9, it quotes the words, "And the land of Jacob was praised more than any other land," which *Barnabas* applies to Jesus' physical body. The source is unknown, but it is very similar to a passage in the apocalyptic *2 Baruch*. This passage in *Barnabas* is followed by a quotation that describes a river flowing by trees that bear fruit that give eternal life. This, also, is not a clear quotation from a known source, though it might be just an abbreviated paraphrase from Ezek. 47. To *Barnabas*, it is a prophecy about baptism. The fact that several of these quotations, or anthologies of quotations, betray an original meaning that seems more apocalyptic than the use *Barnabas* makes of them may support the idea that the author of *Barnabas* had access to a library of Enochic Jewish literature, even while not embracing the beliefs that distinguished that stream of Judaism from other Jews.

38 *Jubilees*, in addition to being an example of an alternative Pentateuch, belongs to the literature of a form of Judaism that can rightly be called *Enochic*. See Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis*, 86–96.

39 Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis*, 14–16.

40 So Kraft, "Quotations," 284–90.

Alternative Pentateuchal Material

Another peculiarity of the sources of *Barnabas* is the way pentateuchal material consistently differs markedly from the biblical Pentateuch. For example, as the epistle tells the story of the Israelites fighting the Amalekites, and winning whenever Moses' hands were raised and losing when they were lowered, it includes the strange detail that Moses was standing on a pile of shields (*Barn.* 12:2). In its treatment of levitical dietary laws, it mentions animals that do not appear in the Bible at all (*Barn.* 10:5, 7). Similar, strange details appear in *Barnabas*' account of Rebecca's conception of Jacob and Esau (*Barn.* 13:1–4), Jacob's blessing of Joseph's sons (*Barn.* 13:5), and the rituals of the Day of Atonement (*Barn.* 7:4–8). Finally, *Barnabas* gives an abbreviated paraphrase of the story of the golden calf that we can reasonably conclude comes not from the author of the epistle but from his source, for the same paraphrase is used in both chapters 4 and 14, and the two accounts differ from each other just enough to rule out that one chapter is a copy of the other.[41]

Retelling of the Pentateuch is widely attested in early Judaism and Christianity. Philo and Josephus both do it, as do Church Fathers, such as Gregory of Nyssa in his *Life of Moses*. The Samaritans had their own edition of the Pentateuch. The later targummim and midrashim took many liberties with the Pentateuch similar to those evidenced in *Barnabas*. One need only skim Ginzberg's *The Legends of the Jews* or Kugel's *The Bible as it Was* to see such things going on in all quarters of Judaism.[42]

Despite its presence in all strands of Judaism, the phenomenon of rewritten pentateuchal material crops up so frequently in the literature of Enochic Judaism that it deserves special note. *Jubilees*, the *Temple Scroll*, *The Genesis Apocryphon*, *The Reworked Pentateuch*, and the reworking of Genesis in both *1* and *2 Enoch* are all examples.[43] As Kraft points out, in discussing this same point, "Perhaps it is also significant that according to Philo the Theraputae commemorated the Exodus events with hymns, etc."[44] Though the evidence of revised pentateuchal sources in *Barnabas* is limited in what it reveals about the background of the epistle, it is notably consistent with the hypothesis of Enochic ties for the author or his library, once that hypothesis has been supported on the basis of other evidence.

41 Kraft, "The Epistle of Barnabas: Its Quotations and their Sources," 130–39.

42 James L. Kugel, *The Bible as it Was* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews* (7 vols.; Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1946–64).

43 To see that this list could probably be lengthened, one need only peruse the table of contents in *Parabiblical Texts* (*The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader*, Part 3; ed. Donald W. Parry and Emanuel Tov; Leiden: Brill, 2005).

44 Kraft, "Quotations," 290.

Essene Hermeneutics

Finally, not only do the variety of sources used in *Barnabas* betray a relationship to Enochic Judaism, but so does the way it appropriates these writings. Repeatedly in *Barnabas*, the author insists that ancient scriptures were written for his own day (*Barn.* 1:7; 2:4; 3:6; 5:3; 7:1). When this conviction requires unexpected meanings of the text, he accommodates these meanings by claiming that they were only revealed (φανερά) to insiders and obscure (σκοτεινά) to outsiders (*Barn.* 8:7), that they must be sought out (ζητεῖν—*Barn.* 2:9; 21:6, 8), that they can only be understood by someone who has knowledge (γνῶσις—*Barn.* 1:5; 2:3; 9:8; 10:10; 13:7), and that this knowledge must be gotten from a teacher, namely, the author (*Barn.* 1:5, 8; 4:9; 9:9; 13:7). Those who have this knowledge are distinguished from those who do not by their observance of God's ordinances (δικαιώματα—*Barn.* 1:2; 2:1; 4:11; 10:2, 11; 16:9; 21:1, 5). A list of such ordinances appears at the end of the epistle in a tractate that distinguishes the behavior of the knowledgeable sons of light from the ignorant sons of darkness (*Barn.* 18–21).

All of that is very reminiscent of the distinctive approach to the scriptures of the Qumran sect.[45] The sectarians also believed that the ancient scriptures were written for the days of the sect,[46] and that the correct meanings of the scriptures were hidden (נסתר) to outsiders and revealed (נגלה) to them (1QS 5:7–14; 8:1–2, 11; CD 3:12–16).[47] Special knowledge (דעת) was a prerequisite to understanding those meanings (1QS 5:11; 6:9; 9:17–18; 1QpHab 10:14–11:2; 4QS^{e} 3:16–18).[48] As in *Barnabas*, this knowledge was to be sought (דרשׁ—1QS 5:11; CD 20:6–7),[49] and required the aid of a teacher (1QS 9:17–18; 4QS^{e} 3:16–18). Finally, just as in *Barnabas*, those who have this knowledge are distinguished by their observance of God's ordinances (מדוקדק—CD 16:1; פרושׁ—CD 4:7–10; 6:18–20; 13:4–7; 14:17–19; משׁפטים—1QS 9:14; CD 12:19–20; 20:27–30),[50] which are, at one point, presented in a two-ways tractate

45 Cf. Maryanne Dacy, "*The Epistle of Barnabas* and the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Fifty Years After their Discovery: Proceedings of the Jerusalem Congress, July 20–25, 1997* (ed. Lawrence Schiffman, Emanuel Tov, and James C. VanderKam; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2000), 139–47; and L. W. Barnard, *Studies in the Apostolic Fathers and Their Background* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966), 87–92.

46 See Joseph Fitzmyer, *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* (London: Scholars Press, 1974), 22–23; Craig Evans, "Biblical Interpretation at Qumran," in *World View, Comparing Judaisms* (*Judaism in Late Antiquity*, Part 5, Section 2; ed. Jacob Neusner, Alan J. Avery-Peck, and Bruce Chilton; Boston: Brill, 2001), 105–24; VanderKam and Flint, *Meaning*, 303–06.

47 Lawrence H. Schiffman, *The Halakhah at Qumran* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 22–32.

48 Dacy, "Barnabas and the Dead Sea Scrolls," 140–42; Barnard, *Studies*, 90–92.

49 Schiffman, *Halakhah*, 54–60.

50 Ibid., 32–49.

that distinguishes the behavior of the knowledgeable sons of light from the ignorant sons of darkness (1QS 3:13–4:26).[51]

Furthermore, *Barnabas* has a pattern of quoting a passage and following that quote with an explanation introduced by the words τοῦτο λέγει or τοῦτο λέγει ὅτι (5:4; 10:3; 11:8–11; 15:4–5). These formulae very closely resemble the Hebrew phrases פשרו and פשרו אשר, which appear in the sectarian pesharim just after the quotation of a scriptural passage, and before giving its interpretation (1QpHab 3:4; 4:5; 5:7; 6:3; 7:7, 15; 10:3). It may well be the case that these formulae in *Barnabas* match those in the pesharim both in wording and in their placement after, and not before, scriptural quotations, more than any other formulae in the NT or Apostolic Fathers.[52]

Thus, in many respects, the similarity between *Barnabas* and the Qumran sectarians in the books they used as scripture is matched by a similarity in the ways their respective teachers mediated the meanings of those scriptures to their disciples. This last point may be of special significance in that it could imply that the author of *Barnabas* not only had access to a library of books from an Enochic Jewish provenance, but that he himself had some background in the movement.

Conclusion

The accumulation of evidence from several specific quotations in *Barnabas*, from Jewish works that align with the Second Temple movement of Enochic Judaism, along with evidence from several general features about the epistle, suggests that the author, or his ideological forebears, had close interaction with the latter remnants of that stream of Judaism, Jews who preserved not just the widely held twenty-four books of scripture, but the additional corpus of seventy secret books (*4 Ezra* 14:45–48). If *Barnabas* was composed in Alexandria, as suggested by the favor it enjoyed by Clement, and its penchant for allegory, then perhaps these Jews were the Theraputae known to Philo (*Vita Contemplativa*),[53] perhaps, also, the source of the *Damascus Document* in the Cairo Geniza. Further research on this topic may shed light on the dissolution of the Enochic movement, the rise of Alexandrian Christianity, varieties of

51 For a thorough treatment of the relationship between the two-ways tractate found in 1QS and that found in the *Didache* and *Barnabas*, see Huub van de Sandt and David Flusser, *The Didache: Its Jewish Sources and Its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2002), 47–55.

52 Cf. Brooke, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 60. Contrast this with the examples of a pesher citation in the NT adduced by Richard N. Longenecker, including Acts 1.20; 2.17–21, 25–36; 4.11; 1 Pet. 1.24–25; in *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (2nd edn.; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 83–84.

53 Cf. Kraft, "Quotations," 288–90.

Christian and Jewish hermeneutics, early canon consciousness, affiliations of yet-unprovenanced Jewish literature, and Jewish and Christian ways of dispensing with the temple cult.

Chapter 7

Ruminating on the Canonical Process in Light of a Bodmer Papyrus Anthology (P72)

James H. Charlesworth

Scholars have shown keen interest in a third-century codex in the Bibliotheca Bodmeriana in Cologne-Geneva, Switzerland.[1] The papyrus is an anthology. Studying this collection prompts a question: "What functions did this collection of *sacra scriptura* serve and how does this papyrus inform us of the canonical process?" By examining the papyri collected into Bodmer Papyri V, X, XI, VII, XIII, XII, XX, IX, and VIII, or P72, we approach an appreciation of the lives of ancient believers. E. A. Judge wisely stated: "The papyri offer us the most direct access we have to the experience of ordinary people in antiquity."[2] Their experiences and beliefs produce corrections and variants, and these help us ponder why documents were collected together.

I offer now only some provisional reflections. My main point is to emphasize that what are called today "non-canonical" writings, often circulated within the same codex or collection as so-called "canonical" writings. That means we should examine such codices or miscellany to discern how Jews or Christians were defining *sacra scriptura*.

At the outset, let me stress that in the Vatican Library, under "*sacra scriptura*," are assembled not only the biblical books but also all the alleged deutero-canonical books, and the so-called excluded (or pseudepigraphical and apocryphal) compositions. This categorization does not appear in other libraries, in which I have found the ancient writings scholars now are considering "scripture" shelved according to those who produced and read them before 325 CE.

Bodmer Papyrus (V–XX) constitutes an ancient miscellany; it is popularly known as P72. The papyrus is a collection of apparently diverse documents.

1 I am grateful to the Trustees of the Bibliotheca Bodmeriana for permission to study this codex and to publish a facsimile of Ode 11; cf. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Odes of Solomon: Papyri and Leather Manuscripts of the Odes of Solomon* (Dickerson Series of Facsimiles vol. 1; Winston-Salem, NC: Hunter Publishing Co., 1981), 8–12. Also, see *Bibliotheca Bodmeriana: La collection des papyrus Bodmer* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 2000).

2 E. A. Judge, *Rank and Status in the World of the Caesars and St Paul* (Broadhead Memorial Lecture 1981; University of Canterbury Publications 29; Christchurch, New Zealand; University of Canterbury, 1982), 7.

E. J. Epp judges P72 to be "the most ancient example" of a collection of Unexpected Books in "New Testament" Manuscripts.[3] I first became interested in the collection because it contains the only Greek copy of the *Odes of Solomon*, which is a text that has elicited the most incredible assessments, ranging from an Essene composition to a Patristic creation. Who, and for what reason, would bring together the following texts (and most likely in this order):

Protevangelium Iacobi (BodPap V)
The Corinthian correspondence with Paul in *3 Corinthians* (BodPap X)
Odes of Solomon 11 (BodPap XI)
Jude 1–25 (BodPap VII)
Melito of Sardis' *Peri Pascha* (BodPap XIII)
A hymn that celebrates "Christ the bridegroom" (BodPap XII)
The *Apology of Phileas* (BodPap XX)
Pss. 33–34 (BodPap IX)
1–2 Pet. (BodPap VIII).

The order of these nine writings seems clear, except for the placing of the *Apology of Phileas* and 1–2 Peter.[4] The precise original order of these texts is unclear. The hymn, which has "page 64" at the top, most likely followed Melito's work, which contains sixty-three pages. Because of the presence of Jude, 1 and 2 Peter and the liturgical hymn, as well as the Christological hymn, we should imagine that some Christian (defined by the collection) decided to organize the diverse texts together.

The codex is attractive. Debates have raged over how many scribes copied the manuscripts; the number ranges from six scribes to one scribe.[5] It is conceivable that the same scribe copied the eleven documents; his uncial letters are often carefully and regularly penned. T. Wasserman claims (in a corrective to Haines-Eitzen) that the forms "shift towards an increasingly cursive hand."[6]

We cannot be certain how many scribes copied these various manuscripts. Paleography is both a science and an art. Often I find wide divergence by the

3 E. J. Epp, "Issues in the Interrelation of New Testament Textual Criticism and Canon," in *The Canon Debate*, ed. L. M. McDonald and J. A. Sanders (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002), 491.

4 I am indebted here to T. Wasserman, "Papyrus 72 and the *Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex*," *New Testament Studies* 51 (2005), 137–54; see esp. 140.

5 E. G. Turner discerned six hands; see his *The Typology of the Codex* (Philadelphia, PA: The University of Pennsylvania, 1977), esp. 79–80.

6 Wasserman, *NTS* 51 (2005), 149. See K. Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters: Literary, Power, and the Transmitters of Early Christian Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 98–99.

same hand in one manuscript. A scribe does not consistently make letters as if he is using a cookie cutter. If P72 represents one hand, then the scribe forms letters irregularly.

One scribe did not copy all these manuscripts. The miscellany dates somewhere between the second and the fourth century CE. I agree with E. J. Epp, who judges that documents copied in different periods by various scribes were collected together into one codex and bound in the fourth century.[7]

Of special interest to those focused on the *Odes of Solomon* is the observation that one scribe copied the Corinthian correspondence with Paul and *3 Corinthians* (BodPap X), the eleventh *Ode of Solomon* (BodPap XI), Jude (BodPap VII), as well as 1 and 2 Peter. That observation raises two questions: Why were the first two not included in the canon and why were the last three included in the canon?

Three or four different paginations are represented by the collection.[8] One thus can discern that some of the documents once belonged to another manuscript and perhaps to other collections. Does the pagination error in the eleventh Ode of Solomon intimate that it once belonged to a Greek manuscript that contained all forty-two *Odes of Solomon*? The scribal errors on the final page of the papyrus clarifies that the Ode had been copied; mistakes are corrected in the margins. Thus, the *terminus ad quem* for the composition of the *Odes of Solomon* is not this third-century papyrus but one much earlier. Epp suggests: "[P]arts of four codices . . . were utilized to construct the present ninety-sheet composite Bodmer volume."[9]

We should observe that the fourth-century date for the anthology is crucial for understanding the canonical process. By the fourth century, it was technologically rather easy to combine into one codex numerous writings or books.[10] R. A Kraft rightly points out that, with the invention of the codex, a scribe or community had to decide what writings to include. Sometimes that decision involved reflections on the shape of a canon.[11] During the fourth century, no council was called to define a canon but canon discussions were energetic within some areas of Christianity. In particular, when P72 was created, the "canonicity" of some writings, including the catholic epistles, were debated.[12] Why did someone separate Jude from 1–2 Peter by four documents (or five texts)?

7 E.J. Epp, in *The Canon Debate*, 491–92.

8 See Wasserman, *NTS* 51 (2005), 141, n. 14.

9 See Epp, *The Canon Debate*, 491.

10 See C. H. Roberts and T. C. Skeat, *The Birth of the Codex* (London: Oxford University Press, 1983).

11 R. A. Kraft, "The Codex and Canon Consciousness," in *The Canon Debate*, 229–33.

12 See J. H. Charlesworth, "Reflections on the Canon, Its Origins, and New Testament Interpretation," forthcoming.

The present study only seeks to draw attention to a neglected side of canon criticism, or the study of the historical process by which our canon appeared. In the past, this discipline proceeded, with astounding ease, to use the terms "canonical" and "extra-canonical," which are anachronistic, as L. M. McDonald has demonstrated.[13] Other misleading and equally anachronistic terms obscured perception; among these, the most misleading were "orthodoxy" and "heresy;" but these are unacceptable terms, as W. Bauer proved long ago.[14] In discerning the formation of the canon, focus was usually on modern editions of the Bible and earlier unexamined (indeed fallacious) assumptions; the most important of these were the beliefs that the Old Testament canon was set at Jamnia (Yavneh) and the New Testament canon at Nicaea or Chalcedon.[15] These assumptions are misleading, even false.[16]

What we need to include now in canon criticism is a study of what works were collected together in a codex or anthology. What does a miscellany reveal to us? Why did someone collect documents together, and what thoughts or theology does it reflect? As T. Wasserman points out, New Testament experts have been more interested in the text of P72 than in the documents that were brought together.[17]

It is well known that some uncials include works that were eventually canonized along with documents that were later excluded from a canon. *Codex Sinaiticus*, of the fourth century, included in "the Bible" such so-called Old Testament Apocrypha as *Tobit*, *Judith*, Wisdom of Solomon, *Sirach*, as well as *1* and *2 Maccabees*. *Codex Vaticanus*, also of the fourth century, contains *Baruch*, the *Epistle of Jeremiah*, Wisdom of Solomon, *Sirach*, *Judith*, and *Tobit*. *Codex Alexandrinus*, of the fifth century, presents for the reader the Old Testament Apocrypha, the *Psalms of Solomon*, as well as *3* and *4 Maccabees*.[18] Obviously, as K. Aland argued, in terms of the so-called canonical Old Testament, as well as the Old Testament Apocrypha

13 See the definitive work of L. M. McDonald, *The Biblical Canon: Its Origin, Transmission, and Authority* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007).

14 W. Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, ed. R. A. Kraft and G. Krodel (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1979).

15 Despite the superb presentation of sexual values in the Bible, J. H. Ellens incorrectly continues a misunderstanding when he states: "At the Council of Nicaea, in 325 C.E., when the Christian bishops met to determine, among other things, what should be the contents of the Christian Scriptures . . ." Ellens, *Sex in the Bible* (London and Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), 40. Today, it is widely recognized that, at Nicaea, Christology, and not canonicity, was in focus.

16 See, esp., the insights and publications cited by me in "Reflections on the Canon, Its Origins, and New Testament Interpretation," forthcoming.

17 Wasserman, *NTS* 51 (2005), 137.

18 See L. M. McDonald, *The Formation of the Christian Biblical Canon*, 115; he also adds reflections on the truncated *Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus* of the fifth century. Now, see McDonald, "Lists and Catalogues of Old Testament Collections," in *The Biblical Canon*, 439–44.

and Pseudepigrapha, there is no distinction between what will be labeled canonical and what will be considered apocryphal.[19]

Codex Sinaiticus also includes *Barnabas* and the *Shepherd of Hermas*. The inclusion of the *Shepherd of Hermas* in one of the oldest uncials requires a special note. Athanasius (*c.* 296–373) considered it an important source for piety. Jerome (342–420) judged the *Shepherd* to be an edifying document. Yet, the author of the *Shepherd* does not quote from the so-called canonical books; he explicitly quotes only from the lost pseudepigraphon attributed to *Eldad and Modad* (see OTP 2.63–65). The collection of sacred texts in *Codex Sinaiticus* elicits this comment from Lee McDonald: "[T]he *Shepherd of Hermas* and the *Letter of Barnabas* eventually dropped away from the church's sacred Scriptures after having been included by some Christians for centuries."[20]

The fourth-century Bodmer anthology contains writings that will be judged canonical or extra-canonical. Psalms 33 and 34 along with Jude and First and Second Peter are collected with the *Protevangelium Iacobi*, *3 Corinthians*, *Odes of Solomon* 11, a portion of a liturgical hymn,[21] the *Peri Pascha* of Melito, and the *Apology of Phileas*. Clearly, the collector and those who copied these writings on the papyrus did not distinguish, nor separate, "canonical" from "extra-canonical" texts. A study of this papyrus warns us that these categories are misleading concepts and terms for navigating antiquity in search of insights regarding the process towards canonization.

Sermons today weave together Jn 1.1–18 with citations from Kierkegaard and C. S. Lewis. It does not seem strange, therefore, that an ancient scribe chose to collect texts that spoke to him. The texts are theological, even Christological, so we are safe to conclude that the author was a Christian who read, even preferred, Greek. Yet, what would that mean? On the one hand, *Odes* 11 has nothing intrinsically Christian about it; on the other

19 K. Aland, *The Problem of the New Testament Canon* (Oxford: A. R. Mowbray & Co., 1962), 8. I am indebted to L. M. McDonald for drawing my attention to this passage in Aland. In many of my reflections, I assume some familiarity with the contributions to the *SNTS* seminars: G. S. Oegema and J. H. Charlesworth (eds.), *The Pseudepigrapha and Christian Origins* (Jewish and Christian Texts Series 4; New York and London: T&T Clark, 2008).

20 L. M. McDonald, *The Biblical Canon*, 67.

21 Why is only a portion of this hymn included? Was this the only section a scribe appreciated and did the other parts contain offensive Christology? Did the copyist not finish his work? Were leaves lost from the *Untertext* when the hymn was gathered into the present collection? Was the hymn never completed and therefore all that was composed has survived? Only subsequent discoveries will shine light on possible answers to these questions. Note the comments by Testuz: "Sur cette page, on a commencé de copier un nouveau texte, que nous donnons ici. Mails il est resté incomplet: après six lignes, le scribe s'est interrompu." See M. Testuz (ed.), *Papyrus Bodmer X–XII* (Cologny–Geneva: Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, 1959), 73. Testuz assumed that the scribe was interrupted and had a full hymn to copy. What is the evidence for that suggestion?

hand, it is astoundingly reminiscent of many passages in the *Hodayot* (for example, the *Hodayot* formula appears in *Odes* 5). Michel Testuz of the Sorbonne and a professor in the Université de Genève concluded that *Odes* 11 was composed in the first century by an Essene.[22] His insights and observations are impressive, but the full collection of the *Odes of Solomon* reflects earliest Christianity. *Odes* 11 was most likely read from a Christian point of view by the complier of this miscellany, since he included it with Jude, *3 Corinthians*, the *Protevangelium Iacobi*, Melito's *Peri Pascha*, and a hymn that salutes Christ as our bridegroom (*ton numphion hymōn Chrn*).

What, then, might be said about this miscellany and its importance for comprehending the canonical process? Worthy of note is another comment by M. Testuz. It introduces the unknown hymn in Bodmer Papyrus 12:

> The absence of any Gnostic element in the other texts of the collection which we now are publishing furnishes a presumption in favor of the hypothesis that this hymn was composed in an orthodox milieu (*dans un milieu orthodoxe*) and that it had been chanted in the great church.[23]

Testuz's judgment that the collection should not be considered gnostic receives support from two observations. First, a study of Melito, the bishop of Sardis, who composed *Peri Pascha* for many reasons. One was to combat the Gnostics by stressing the unity of the human and divine in Christ, and to argue for the unity of the Old and New covenants. Second, as is well known, I have argued that the *Odes of Solomon* should not be branded as gnostic, despite the arguments or opinions of Gunkel, Gressmann, Clemen, Abramowski, Ehlers, and Rudolf.[24]

A study of the miscellany indicates Christological emphases of the Great Church. In Jude 5b, P72 reads *theos Christos*, "God Christ," in place of the usual "the Lord." In 1 Pet. 5.1, P72 reads "the sufferings of God" in place of the "sufferings of Christ." In 1 Pet. 2.3, *Christos* is substituted with *Chrēstos*, "kindness;" this reflects the Christian reading of the Septuagint whereby the "kindness" (*Chrēstos*) of God includes a word play that identifies Christ (*Christos*) with God.[25] M. A. King rightly comments that P72 provides evidence of "the fullest acceptance of the deity of Christ by the scribe (or one of his predecessors) and the church in his area."[26]

22 M. Testuz (ed.), *Papyrus Bodmer X–XII*, 58.

23 M. Testuz (ed.), *Papyrus Bodmer X–XII*, 74.

24 See Charlesworth, "The *Odes of Solomon*—not Gnostic," *CBQ* 31 (1969) 357–69; Charlesworth, *OTP* 2.725–71; Charlesworth, *Critical Reflections on the Odes of Solomon: Volume 1 – Literary Setting, Textual Studies, Gnosticism, the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Gospel of John* (JSPSS 22; The Distinguished Scholars Collection; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998). Bibliographical references to those cited are clarified in these publications.

25 See Wasserman, *NTS* 51 (2005), 153.

26 M. A. King, "Notes on the Bodmer Manuscript," *BSAC* 121 (1964), 54–57; the quotation is on 57.

B. Ehrman describes readings in P72 as "anti-adoptionistic corruptions."[27]

There is enough evidence to conclude that this collection is motivated by theological and Christological agendas. Clearly, the readings in P72 are variants; scribes have changed the Greek text of "the New Testament" to insert Christology and Dogma perspectives that the original authors may not have endorsed.

While the composition also has a liturgical connection, there is no reason to assume, let alone conclude, that the anthology was used in church services.[28] I have argued that the *Odes of Solomon* were most likely used liturgically in church services, but that is not always the case, as we know from the excerpts found in the *Pistis Sophia*; moreover, the Christological hymn may have been intended for private devotion, and the other works were not composed for liturgical use. With these insights, we may deepen our reflections on the importance of this miscellany for the developing concept of canon before the fourth or fifth centuries.

What seems fundamentally "common" to all these texts? Who brought the texts together and what is the purpose of the anthology? What collections of texts antecede—and were mined—for the present miscellany, and in what ways might they inform us of other collections that antedate the selection of sacred scriptures into a canon?

Does the miscellany help us perceive the need for texts to study and meditate upon? Is it merely a selection for meditation and devotion? Does it help us comprehend more clearly the processes toward a liturgical canon? How do we develop reliable criteria to make suggestive answers, and are the categories—private devotion or public worship—so distinct?

I shall offer only a few reflections as a stimulus to more detailed exploration of the purpose of the miscellany. The collector included Jude: Why? As is well known, Jude quotes from *1 Enoch*, explaining that the Lord executes judgment on all the ungodly.[29] That author also seems to know a version of the *Testament of Moses* in which Michael contended with the Devil over the body of Moses.[30] Thus, the author of Jude considers sacred, and spiritually important, documents that, eventually, were not included in the canon. Jude's claim that those who "walk in the way of Cain" are like

27 B. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 85.

28 Here, I agree with Wasserman, *NTS* 51 (2005), 154.

29 See Charlesworth, "Secundus (Jude and *1 Enoch*)," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha & the New Testament: Prolegomena for the Study of Christian Origins* (Harrisburg, PA: TPI, 1995, 1998), 72–74. Also see J. Hultin, "Jude's Citation of *1 Enoch*," in *Jewish and Christian Scriptures*, ed. Charlesworth and McDonald (T&T Clark Jewish and Christian Texts Series 7; New York and London: T&T Clark, 2010), 113–28.

30 See R. Bauckham, "Excursus: The Background and Source of Jude 9," in *Jude, 2 Peter* (Dallas: Word Publishers, 1990), 65–76. Also see Charlesworth, "Quintus (Jude and the Death of Moses)," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha & the New Testament*, 75–77.

"barren autumnal trees" or "fruitless autumnal trees" (*dendra phthinopōrina akarpa* in v. 12) may have reminded the unknown complier of this miscellany of the *Odes of Solomon* 11, in which we are given an apocalyptic view of Paradise that is heavily influenced by Jewish thought:[31]

> Indeed, there is much room in Thy Paradise.
> And there is nothing in it which is barren,
> But everything is filled with fruit.
> Glory be to Thee, O God, the delight of Paradise for ever.
> Hallelujah.[32]

As the author of Jude knew that autumn was the time when some fruit trees are filled with fruit, and portrayed these barren trees as those influenced by the evil Cain, so the Odist knew that God's Paradise boasts trees filled with fruit at all times, and the righteous are the fruitful trees. The compiler of our miscellany obviously wanted both Jude and *Odes* 11 neatly collected together.

We can imagine better the compiler's thought. He begins with Mary's youth, which climaxes in the miraculous birth of Jesus (this emphasis speaks to the "heretical" claims of those targeted by the "apocryphal" Corinthian correspondence). He chooses *3 Corinthians* to express his hope in a future life. Then he moves to the eschatological hope of Paradise clearly stated in *Odes* 11 and a similar thought he may have found in Jude. Then he proceeds to the Eucharist and Melito's *Peri Pascha*. Next he shares with us a hymn that celebrates Christ as the bridegroom.

The compiler's eschatological hope is grounded in Jesus' resurrection and the hope of the resurrection for those who believe that Jesus is the Christ.[33] Not only *3 Corinthians* and *Odes* 11, but also other texts in the miscellany, like 1 Peter, would have evoked in the reader a belief in resurrection and a future life. The future seems imagined ideally, using well-known images found in Greek and Semitic texts: the holy ones are perceived to be like trees planted in the Lord's paradise (*paradison autou* in *Odes* 11); the "righteous"

31 See Charlesworth, "The Odes of Solomon and the Jewish Wisdom Texts," in *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran and the Development of Sapiential Thought*, ed. C. Hempel, A. Lange, and H. Lichtenberger (BETL 159; Leuven: University, 2002), 323–49. Also, see Charlesworth, "The Naming of the Son of Man, the Light, the Son of God: How the *Parables of Enoch* May Have Influenced the *Odes of Solomon*," in *"I Sowed Fruits into Hearts" (Odes Sol. 17:13): Festschrift for Professor Michael Lattke*, ed. P. Allen, M. Franzmann, and R. Strelan (Early Christian Studies 12; Strathfield, Australia: St Pauls Publications, 2007), 31–43.

32 Charlesworth, *The Odes of Solomon* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973), 53.

33 For reflections on resurrection beliefs, see Charlesworth, "Prolegomenous Reflections Towards a Taxonomy of Resurrection Texts (1QH^a, 1En, 4Q521, Paul, Luke, the Fourth Gospel, and Psalm 30)," in *The Changing Face of Judaism, Christianity, and Other Greco-Roman Religions in Antiquity*, ed. I. H. Henderson and G. S. Oegema (JSHTZ Studien 2; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2006), vol. 2, 237–64.

(33:1; 34:16, 22), and those who "fear" the Lord (33:8, 18; 34:10), in Psalms 33 and 34, are those who shall surely be happy (34.9) and see the end of those who hate the righteous (34.22). Indeed, the close of Psalms 33 and 34 is appropriate for the anthology: "the Lord shall redeem the life of his servants" (34.23). Most likely, the compiler imagined "the Lord" was the Lord Jesus Christ. An eschatological judgment and resurrection hope seems to have motivated the compiler of P72.

It is misleading to conclude that the *Odes of Solomon* are heretical and docetic.[34] The main reasons against claiming the *Odes* as having an unacceptable Christology are the thought represented in them, their strong ties with the Gospel of John, and, most importantly, the inappropriateness of judging any work "heretical" at so early a date (the *Odes* surely antedate 125 CE).[35]

It is enlightening to observe that the collector brought together *Odes* 11 and the apocryphal correspondence of Paul and the Corinthians. The latter contains the dogmatic claims of the late second-century church in its struggle for orthodoxy (which is also an anachronistic term at this time). The Corinthians inform Paul that those who are "godless" (*anomou*), who are misled by Simon and Cleobius, teach that "Christ has neither come in the flesh, nor was he born of Mary, and the world is not the work of God but of angels."[36] In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul refers to "the dogmatics of the Evil One" (*ta tou ponērou . . . dogmata*), and emphasizes that God has made heaven and earth, that the prophets proclaimed the true worship of God, that God "sent his Spirit into Mary the Galilean," and that all who believe in Christ will be raised as he was raised. The polemical nature of *3 Corinthians* is obvious. The author argues for the teaching of the "Great Church" defended by Justin Martyr and Irenaeus.

It is now evident that the author of the miscellany aligns himself with the emerging "Great Church." He obviously assumed that all in his collection represented the correct teaching (and an anti-gnostic slant seems evident).

The canonicity of some of these texts now judged "non-canonical" was assumed by some in antiquity. For example, both the Syriac and Armenian churches once considered authentic the correspondence between Paul and those in Corinth. Moreover, this epistle is often included within the *Acts of Paul*. The appearance of *3 Corinthians* in Bodmer Papyrus X reminds us that the epistle originally circulated independent of the *Acts of Paul*.

The study of miscellany is informative. Scribes and those who could afford to obtain collections of sacred writings judged, or reflected, their

34 See Charlesworth's critique of R. Batiffol's claim that the *Odes* are docetic in *Critical Reflections on the Odes of Solomon*.

35 See Charlesworth, *Critical Reflections on the Odes of Solomon, and M. Lattke, Odes of Solomon: A Commentary* (trans. M. Ehrhardt, ed. H. W. Attridge; Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2009) on the date of the *Odes*.

36 I cite the Greek according to Testuz, and use the English rendering of J. K. Elliott (ed.), *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 380–82.

communities' judgment of what should be in a collection; each collection could have been assumed to be a canon. The needs of individuals and communities, and not the edicts of ecumenical councils, defined what was collected together and assumed "canonical." Sometimes, as today, collections brought together documents that are usually separated. For example, the argument that the Fourth Evangelist was deeply influenced by Genesis receives unexpected support by the recognition that Bodmer Papyrus 3 contains the Gospel of John and Genesis (and in that order). Chronology takes a back seat to Christology.

Most likely, most of the Bodmer Papyri and some of the Chester Beatty Papyri come from the same area; this location would be slightly northwest of Dishna, which is between Panopolis (Achmim) and Thebes, in Egypt.[37] This provenience would help explain the inclusion of the *Apology of Phileas*, the bishop of Thmuis, in Lower Egypt on the canal east of the Nile. If the Bodmer and Beatty Papyri represent works collected together by monks in a monastery, conceivably Pachomian monks,[38] then we have very important data to aid us as we study the development of Christian theology and the genesis of the biblical canon.

Is it not important to observe that the *Iliad* often appears in early Christian collections—specifically in Papyrus Bodmer XLVIII? Likewise, another Bodmer papyrus (XLV, XLVI, XXVII) brought together, in one collection, Susanna, Daniel, Thucydides and some moral maxims. The inclusion of classical texts with so-called "canonical texts" reminds us that the canon was not always defined to exclude documents. In many Christian communities, the faithful were encouraged to read "the Greek and Roman Classics." Greek and Roman works, too often branded as "pagan" compositions, are alluded to, and even cited, by New Testament authors, notably Aratus' *Phaenomena* 5 in Acts 17.28, Epimenides' *De oraculis* in Tit. 1.12, Euripides' *Bacchae* 794ff in Acts 26.14, Heraclitus in 2 Pet. 2.22, and Menander in 1 Cor. 15.33.

By focusing too much on the importance of Marcian and Gnosticism in the development of the canon, sometimes we scholars have imagined the canon was created to exclude other texts. By focusing on collections of sacred texts, we might perceive the canon as a rule by which to include other texts. For millennia, Christians perceived beacons to God's Will in many texts never covered by the categories of canonical and extra-canonical.

What is the function of this anthology? Is this a precise or an imprecise question? Is the concept of "function" appropriate, or have we proceeded oblivious of the problems inherent in functionalism? Most likely, the ancient scribes did not choose works according to a function but according to a

37 Contrast the earlier opinion of A. Pietersma, "Bodmer Papyri," in *ABD* 1.766–67.

38 J. M. Robinson, *The Pachomian Monastic Library at the Chester Beatty Library and the Bibliothèque Bodmer* (Occasional Papers of the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity 19; Claremont: Institute for Antiquity and Christianity, 1990).

set of amorphous beliefs. How do observations of works included in an ancient anthology of sacred texts help us improve our perceptions of the long processes of canonization?

The study of the canon is becoming a major concern of many biblical scholars since the pioneering monographs of K. Aland (1962), J. Barr (1983), R. T. Beckwith (1993), J. Blenkinsopp (1977), F. F. Bruce (1993), H. von Campenhausen (1972), P. J. Cunningham (1992), W. R. Farmer (1982), F. V. Filson (1957), H. Y. Gamble (1985), E. J. Goodspeed (1926), R. M. Grant (1965), R. Gnuse (1948), J.-D. Kaestli (1984), E. Käsemann (1970), S. Z. Leiman (1974, 1976), J. T. Lienhard (1995), D. G. Meade (1986), B. M. Metzger (1987), K. H. Ohlig (1972), E. W. Reuss (1891), H. E. Ryle (1892), A. Souter (1917), A. C. Sundberg (1964), and T. Zahn (1929). In addition to these leading lights, B. S. Childs, J. D. G. Dunn, L. M. McDonald, and J. A. Sanders have published brilliant works on canon criticism that make the field of research both fundamental and popular.[39]

We have been studying one collection of documents from Egypt; most likely, it represents the life and thought of Pachomian monks near Dishna. This seems a reasonable deduction when one studies Pachomius' letters, found among the manuscripts, and the fact that the writings were hidden in a jar near the Pachomian headquarters. Surveying what was collected into the miscellany, we see no clear division of writings into canonical and non-canonical. Our conclusion is in line with E. J. Epp's insight regarding Oxyrhrynchus:

> . . . as we assess this abundance of early Christian writings at Oxyrhynchus through the fourth century, including those we call "New Testament" and those we designate "apocrypha," there is no basis for assigning preference to one group over the other, or even for claiming that they were separable groups, nor – with available evidence – can we discern varying degrees of canonical authority among the writings.[40]

These same conclusions fit my assessment of P72: Christians collected together liturgical texts and documents deemed to be fundamental for correct belief according to their standards that are only reflected in a collection. These works, often with revealing variants, were evidently *sacra scriptura* for the compiler. All documents represented God's Word for the reader and probably for his community. It is surprising that no historical works and no Gospels were collected or excerpted in P72. Why?

It should also be obvious that the compiler probably imagined that Paul wrote *3 Corinthians*, Solomon composed the *Odes of Solomon*, David

39 Canon criticism is evident in related areas, as, for example, in Jens Schröter's *Von Jesus zum Neuen Testament: Studien zur urchristlichen Theologiegeschichte und zur Entstehung des neutestamentlichen Kanons* (WUNT 204; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007).

40 E. J. Epp, "The Oxyrhynchus New Testament Papyri: 'Not Without Honor Except in Their Hometown,'" *JBL* 123 (2004), 54–55.

authored Psalms 33 and 34, and Peter issued the two epistles that bear his name. Pseudepigraphical attribution defines works both within and without the canon; false attribution was not a dimension of the compiler or copyist's perception and categories. For him, for example, Peter described what he had experienced. The study of pseudepigraphical compositions, within and on the fringes of our canon, goes hand in glove with the study of the evolution of the canon.

Summary and Conclusion

What is the most important lesson we have learned by examining the Bodmer Papyrus anthology (P72)? It is the following: Fourth-century Christians sometimes had a collection of sacred texts that did not recognize borders between what is inside and what is outside a widely accepted collection of *sacra scriptura* or the Holy Bible. Many questions are now raised in a new light; for example: Has the complier of our miscellany produced his own canon, a collection of texts that he deemed important for spiritual guidance? We have merely added a note to B. M. Metzger's claim that the history of the formation of the canon was a long and a continuous process. Listen to Metzger's words:

> Instead of being the result of a deliberate decree by an individual or a council near the beginning of the Christian era, the collection of New Testament books took place gradually over many years by the pressure of various kinds of circumstances and influences, some external . . . and others internal to the life of congregations . . .[41]

We have seen that a study of collections of sacred documents sheds new light on the processes that shaped and defined the canon.

R. A. Kraft correctly indicated, as we move from Jesus to Eusebius and from Paul to Athanasius, that it is "very difficult for us to recapture the perspectives of earlier times."[42] Studying collections of documents provides one neglected avenue for a better perception of "earlier times" and of canon formation.

Studies like the present one disclose many anachronisms in advanced research. If we converse about the *Odes of Solomon* as an example of "unexpected" works in "New Testament" or "Patristic" collections, we are using anomalies such as "unexpected."[43] What we might expect is certainly not what early Jews or Christians expected. Moreover, even

41 B. M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 7.

42 R. A. Kraft, "The Codex and Canon Consciousness," in *The Canon Debate*, 233.

43 I am indebted to E. J. Epp's comments in *The Canon Debate*, 486.

though Athanasius, in 367, listed the twenty-seven books in the "New Testament," we should be more circumspect about referring to a "New Testament" before we concur that the collection is defined and closed. Of the conventional groupings of texts in ancient manuscripts, among the 2,361 and more so-called New Testament manuscripts, only three majuscules (א, A, C^5) and about 56 minuscules contain the 27 New Testament books.[44] Likewise, of the 116 "New Testament" papyri, which represent 112 different manuscripts, only 14 papyri include more than one writing. Only P45 has the four Gospels. If you dismiss these figures because of the fragmentary nature of papyri, it is wise to hear the judgment of Epp: "Obviously, the units in which the early manuscripts circulated have significance for canon; yet, it is only occasionally possible to offer strong evidence that fragmentary papyri containing, for example, portions only of Matthew and Luke (P^{64} + P^{67} + P^4) or only of Luke and John (P^{75}) came from codices containing the four Gospels . . ."[45]

> In contemporary research, errors in perception and judgment sometimes are caused by misleading nomenclatures and habits that mirror a stage of study left long behind us.[46] For example, we scholars unwittingly continue to posit and draw attention to a distinction between "canonical" and "extra-canonical." We also unwittingly perpetuate that false distinction by placing only the latter documents within *italics*. What other anachronisms are still unseen and how do they impair our perception of the processes that shaped our canon, our Bible?[47]

44 For the full discussion, see Epp in *The Canon Debate*, 486–87.

45 Epp, in *The Canon Debate*, 489.

46 See my reflections regarding nomenclature and also "The Canon, Inspiration and the Pseudepigrapha," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha & the New Testament*, 25.

47 For additional reflections, see Charlesworth, "Writings Ostensibly Outside the Canon," in *Exploring the Origins of the Bible: Canon Formation in Historical Literary, and Theological Perspective*, ed. C. A. Evans and E. Tov (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 57–85.

Chapter 8

The *Hebrew Gospel* in Early Christianity

James R. Edwards

The literature produced by the Early Church far exceeds the twenty-seven books of the New Testament. In *On Illustrious Men*, Jerome produces 135 biographical sketches of leaders of the early church, beginning with Simon Peter, and ending with himself in the early fifth century. Although biographical in format, *Illustrious Men* is, in reality, a bibliography of nearly 800 authors and works in Early Christianity, testifying to the impressive literary activity of early Christians, and to its preservation in the early church.

In the early fourth century, Eusebius of Caesarea tackled the question of identifying and delimiting the Christian canon from this plethora of literature. Writing a century before Jerome, Eusebius considered a less extensive, though still very considerable, body of literature. His task was not to determine the precise contents and limits of the New Testament canon, but, rather, to provide a historical summary of the matter up to his day. Eusebius seemed aware that the actual determination of the canon was not the responsibility of a particular church leader, but, rather, a dogmatic concern of the entire church. In his canonical discussion, Eusebius followed the pioneering work of Origen, who, in the first half of the third century, posited a threefold system of classifying books that, with reference to the New Testament canon, were *recognized* (ὁμολογούμενα), *disputed* (ἀντιλεγόμενα), and *rejected* (νόθα) by the churches of the Mediterranean world. Summarizing the *status quaestionis* in *Ecclesiastical History* 3.25, Eusebius mentions, in the following order, the Four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles of Paul, the First Epistle of John, and the Epistle of Peter. The brevity and assurance with which he lists these roughly twenty core documents of the New Testament indicates that they were firmly anchored in church tradition.

With regard to disputed documents, Eusebius' discussion is more equivocal, probably out of deference to the wide variety of opinions held by his readers. Eusebius mentions that both the book of Revelation and the Gospel according to the Hebrews "belong to the disputed books," and that both were "known to most of the writers of the Church."[1] Eusebius' desig-

1 Theodor Zahn, *Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons* (Erlangen: A. Deichert, 1888), 2:643–48, and Adolf Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*

nation of rejected books as νόθα offers a further clue to his overall judgment of the canon. Νόθα means "illegitimate," "bastard," i.e., these were books that lacked ecclesiastical paternity. Books in the rejected category neither derive from, nor transmit, authorized tradition.[2] This implies that books in the disputed category have, at least, some claim to the kind of ecclesiastical paternity that characterizes books in the recognized category.

The status of the *Hebrew Gospel* in the canonical debate at the beginning of the fourth century offers a fitting point of departure for a discussion of its significance in Early Christianity.[3] In Eusebius' celebrated canonical discussion, the *Hebrew Gospel* occupied a select category of six to eight books, all of which enjoyed wide circulation and general esteem in the early Christian period, some of which, like the Apocalypse, were eventually received into the canon. The *Hebrew Gospel* was not among them, nor, so far as we know, was there any attempt to make it part of the canon. Nevertheless, the *Hebrew Gospel* is cited more frequently and favorably in the early church, alongside canonical texts, than is any non-canonical document of which I am aware. It is also cited more often and more positively in Patristic proof texts than is any other non-canonical text. The *Hebrew Gospel* enjoyed the unique distinction in Early Christianity of being the most authoritative non-canonical text.[4]

The chief purpose of this study is to survey the various references to, and quotations from, the *Hebrew Gospel* in Early Christian sources. Following the survey of the witnesses to the *Hebrew Gospel*, I wish to consider, first, the relationship of the *Hebrew Gospel* to other "Jewish-Christian" gospels, particularly to the so-called "Gospel of the Ebionites"; second, the overall status of the *Hebrew Gospel* in Early Christianity; and, finally, the relationship of the *Hebrew Gospel* to the canonical Gospels.

bis Eusebius (2nd edn.; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs Verlag, 1958), 1:7, rightly understand Eusebius to assign the *Hebrew Gospel* to the "disputed" category. Likewise, note the conclusion of M.-J. Lagrange, "L'Évangile selon les Hébreux," *RB* 31 (1922): 175: "The *Hebrew Gospel* was far from being considered heretical, and although it was not considered equal to the Four Gospels, it was accorded an honorable place among the books of the church."

2 Also noted by Gilles Dorival, "Un Groupe Judéo-Chrétien Méconnu: les Hébreux," *Apocrypha* 11 (2000): 9.

3 The substance of this article, its theses, and its conclusions are elaborated and supported more fully in James R. Edwards, *The Hebrew Gospel and the Formation of the Synoptic Tradition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009).

4 On the recognition and acceptance of the *Gospel of the Hebrews* in the ancient church, see C.-B. Amphoux, "L'Evangile selon Les Hebreux: Source de L'Evangile de Luc," *Apocypha* 6 (1995): 67–77.

References to, and Quotations from, the Hebrew Gospel *in Early Christianity*

*Ignatius (*c. *35–*c. *107)*

The earliest ostensible quotation of the *Hebrew Gospel* occurs in Ignatius' *Letter to the Smyrnaeans* 3:1–2.

> For I know and believe that he was in the flesh even after the resurrection. And when he [Jesus] came to those with Peter he said to them, "Take, touch me and see that I am not a disembodied ghost." And immediately they touched him and believed.[5]

Ignatius is silent about the source of the quotation, attributing it neither to the *Hebrew Gospel* nor to any other source. The quotation is also cited by Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome. Origen attributes it to a tractate circulating in Peter's name rather than to the *Hebrew Gospel*.[6] The quotation is also cited by Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical History*, but, other than attributing it to Ignatius, Eusebius admits ignorance of its source.[7] Explicit connection of *Smyrnaeans* 3:1–2 with the *Hebrew Gospel* first comes from Jerome, who, in his chapter on Ignatius in *Illustrious Men* 16, quotes the above passage, noting that it is a testimony about the person of Christ "from the gospel that has recently been translated by me." "The gospel" that Jerome refers to here can only be the *Hebrew Gospel*, which on four occasions he testifies to having translated from Hebrew into Greek and/or Latin.[8]

5 ἐγὼ γὰρ καὶ μετὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν ἐν σαρκὶ αὐτὸν οἶδα καὶ πιστεύω ὄντα. καὶ ὅτε πρὸς τοὺς περὶ Πέτρον ἦλθεν, ἔφη αὐτοῖς· λάβετε, ψηλαφήσατέ με καὶ ἴδετε, ὅτι οὐκ εἰμὶ δαιμόνιον ἀσώματον. καὶ εὐθὺς αὐτοῦ ἥψαντο καὶ ἐπίστευσαν (Ign., *Smyrn.* 3.1–2).

6 The source of Origen's version remains an unsolved mystery. It may be that the presence of Peter's name in *Smyrn.* 3.2 caused Origen to associate it with a tractate circulating in Peter's name, rather than in Matthew's. The title of the work he cites, *Petri doctrina*, could conceivably be either *The Gospel of Peter* or *The Kerygma of Peter*, but the saying, "I am not a bodiless demon," appears in neither work. The fact that Origen associates the saying with a heretofore unknown work suggests that the saying was more widely known and disseminated than the work to which he attributes it. I am not inclined to associate the *Hebrew Gospel* with either of the above works bearing the name of Peter, primarily because both are typified by fanciful and embellished legends, which do not typify (so far as we know) the *Hebrew Gospel* (see Hans Waitz, "Neue Untersuchungen über die sog. Judenchristlichen Evangelien," *ZNW* 36 [1937]: 69). On the source of Origen's quotation, see Wilhelm Schneemelcher, "The Kerygma Petri," *New Testament Apocyrpha*, rev. and ed. W. Schneemelcher, trans. R. McL. Wilson (Cambridge, UK: James Clarke & Co.; Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 2:36–37; P. F. Beatrice, "'The Gospel According to the Hebrews' in the Apostolic Fathers," *NovT* 48/2 (2006): 149–50.

7 "[Ignatius] wrote to the Smyrnaeans quoting words from a source I do not know" (*Hist. eccl.*. 3.36.11). Apart from two minor changes (γάρ and ἦλθεν in *Smyrn.* 3.1–2 become δέ and ἐλήλυθεν), Eusebius agrees verbatim with Ignatius.

8 *Comm. Mich.* (7:6); *Comm. Matt.* 12:13; *Vir. ill.* 2; *Vir. ill.* 16.

This dominical saying echoes the command of the resurrected Jesus to the bewildered disciples in Lk. 24.39: "Touch me and see, for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see me having." The saying—written no later than 107, when Ignatius met his death in Rome *ad bestias*—occurs neither in Matthew, nor in Mark, but only in Luke.[9] Since the saying is shared by Ignatius and Luke, it is possible—and often assumed—that Ignatius quotes it from Luke. This is unlikely, however. Although there are allusions to the canonical Gospels in Ignatius, he never quotes directly from them, and "explicit references to Luke's Gospel never appear in Ignatius, and nowhere in his letters does he reveal his knowledge and use of Luke."[10] *Smyrnaeans* 3.2 appears to come from a source earlier than, and independent of, Luke.

The personal testimony and the saying of the resurrected Lord are used by Ignatius to chastise unbelievers for denying the physical suffering of Jesus in the crucifixion. Immediately before the text under consideration, Ignatius describes unbelievers as "bodiless and demonic" (ἀσώματοι καὶ δαιμονικοί, *Smyrn.* 2.1). In contrast to them (and in an unmistakable word play), Ignatius cites the resurrected Jesus, who expressly refutes the "demonic and bodiless" docetists by declaring, "Take, touch me and see that I am not a bodiless demon" (ὅτι οὐκ εἰμι. δαιμόνιον ἀσώματον). This appears to be a personal testimony, presumably of the Apostle Matthew, to the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ, employed by Ignatius for maximum effect against the heresy of docetism.

The Epistle to Smyrna, like Ignatius' letters as a whole, protests vigorously against heretical teachers, particularly *docetic* teachers who denied the complete incarnation of Jesus Christ. The phrase "in the flesh" (ἐν σαρκί) appears with redundant regularity in the Epistle to Smyrna with reference to the earthly manifestation of Jesus. Although Ignatius never directly quotes the canonical Gospels, he quotes the *Hebrew Gospel* in *Smyrn.* 3:2 in such a way that it becomes the hermeneutical key to the epistle. The quotation refutes a rampant heresy of Ignatius' day, with a dominical saying that claimed the highest degree of authority in the early church. Indeed, Ignatius enhances the authority of the Jesus-saying, according to the interpretation of Jerome, by placing it within the context of the first-person testimony of

9 λάβετε, ψηλαφήσατέ με καὶ ἴδετε (Ign. *Smyrn.* 3.2); ψηλαφήσατέ με καὶ ἴδετε (Luke 24.39). C.-B. Amphoux, "L'Évangile selon des Hébreux: Source de L'Évangile de Luc," 68, rightly notes that "les deux plus anciennes mentions de ce livre semblent le rattacher à la tradition de *Luc* plutot qu'à celle de *Matthieu*."

10 P. F. Beatrice, "The 'Gospel According to the Hebrews' in the Apostolic Fathers," 148. For a full discussion of citations from Luke up to the time of Irenaeus, see A. Gregory, *The Reception of Luke and Acts in the Period before Irenaeus: Looking for Luke in the Second Century* (WUNT 2/169; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 69–75, 113. E. B. Nicholson, in *The Gospel according to the Hebrews: Its Fragments Translated and Annotated with a Critical Analysis of the External and Internal Evidence Relating to It* (London: C. Kegan Paul, 1879), 72, further notes "that of Ignatius' 12 references to a Matthean text there is not one which is an unmistakeably exact quotation, while the words used differ several times very markedly from our Matthew."

the Apostle Matthew.[11] Thus, already in Ignatius' day the *Hebrew Gospel* of Matthew was recognized as an authority preserving an authentic saying of the resurrected Lord,[12] which corresponds with the Gospel of Luke, but does not, apparently, derive from it.

Papias (c. 60–130)

The earliest explicit reference to the *Hebrew Gospel* occurs in Papias, bishop of Hierapolis. Eusebius records Papias' relevant testimony thus: "Matthew organized the oracles (of Jesus) in the Hebrew language, and each interpreted them as he was able."[13] The primary intent of Papias seems to have been to emphasize the Hebrew composition of the work as a source for later interpreters. Schleiermacher's celebrated treatment of this text,[14] however, shifted emphasis to the meaning of τὰ λόγιά, which he understood to signify a non-narrative compilation of sayings or "oracles" of Jesus. As used in early Christian literature, however, τὰ λόγια refers to an organic whole, a volume, rather than to a collection of sayings.[15] In the New Testament, τὰ λόγια signifies a unified body of material rather than a collection of sayings (Acts 7.38; Rom. 3.2; Heb. 5.12; 1 Pet. 4.11). Clement of Rome used τὰ λόγια with reference to the revealed word of God in either the "gospel" (*1 Clem.* 13:6; *2 Clem.* 13:3) or in the Old and New Testaments (*1 Clem.* 53:1). Both Irenaeus (Preface *Haer.* 1.8.1) and Origen (*Hom. Jer.* 10:1) use the term likewise. Polycarp, a contemporary of Papias, likewise used τὰ λόγια for a complete gospel, containing the cross, resurrection, and last judgment.[16] Especially when used in conjunction with συντάσσω,[17] as it is in the Papias reference, τὰ

11 See P. F. Beatrice, "The Gospel According to the Hebrews," 160–61. Beatrice cites W. R. Inge, M.-J. Lagrange, A. Baumstark, J. Waitz, G. Quispel, and J. Daniélou, who, likewise, attribute Ignatius' quotation to the *Hebrew Gospel*—and, by implication, to the Apostle Matthew (163).

12 C.-B. Amphoux, "L'Évangile selon les Hébreux," 71.

13 Ματθαῖος μὲν οὖν Ἑβραΐδι διαλέκτῳ τὰ λόγια συνετάξατο, ἡρμήνευσεν δ' αὐτὰ ὡς ἦν δυνατὸς ἕκαστος (*Hist. eccl.* 3.39.16).

14 "Ueber die Zeugnisse des Papias von unseren beiden ersten Evangelien," *TSK* 5 (1832): 735–68.

15 J. Kürzinger, "Papias von Hierapolis: Zu Titel und Art seines Werkes," in *Papias von Hierapolis und die Evangelien des Neuen Testaments* (Regensburg: F. Pustet, 1983), 69–89; C. E. Hill, "What Papias Said about John (and Luke). A 'New' Papian Fragment," *JTS* NS 49/2 (1998): 623.

16 ὃς ἄν μεθοδεύῃ τὰ λόγια τοῦ κυρίου πρὸς τὰς ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας (Polycarp, *Phil.* 1.7: "whoever perverts the account of the Lord for his own ends"). See P. F. Beatrice, "The Gospel According to the Hebrews," 182: "It seems to me quite reasonable to claim that Polycarp is speaking here about the Aramaic *Gospel of the Hebrews*, and that the two texts of Papias and Polycarp shed light on each other reciprocally."

17 "συντάσσω," LSJ 1725. A. F. J. Klijn, *Jewish-Christian Gospel Tradition* (VC Supplements 17; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 11: "We may safely assume . . . that the passage refers to the entire Gospel."

λόγια connotes a body of revelation, as opposed to a specialized collection of sayings.[18] Although the Papias testimony does not specifically identify the work of Matthew as the *Hebrew Gospel*, it is reasonable to equate the two.[19]

A second testimony of Papias to a *Hebrew Gospel* also comes from Eusebius: "The same writer [Papias] has used testimonies from the first Epistle of John and likewise from Peter, and he has also set forth another account about a woman who was accused before the Lord of many sins, which is found in the Gospel according to the Hebrews."[20] Eusebius places this citation immediately after the Papias testimonies to Mark and Matthew, which implies that the *Hebrew Gospel*, like Mark and Matthew, was a *bona fide* gospel and not a sayings anthology. The above citation is often thought to refer to the story of the woman caught in adultery in Jn 7.53–8.12.[21] On a formal lexical level, Papias' description seems closer to the description of the woman who was forgiven by Jesus of "many sins" in Lk. 7:36–50.[22] Whatever the history of transmission

18 Dietrich Gla, *Die Originalsprache des Matthäusevangeliums* (Paderborn and Münster: Schöningh, 1887), 29–35; G. Kittel, "λόγιον," *TWNT* 4:140–45; W. L. Schmidt, דבר, *TDOT* 3:111–25, demonstrate that τὰ λόγια should not be restricted to a collection of sayings. Rather, it signifies a summary, historical presentation of divine revelation or an essential account of both word and event.

19 A. S. Barnes, "The Gospel according to the Hebrews," *JTS* 6 (1905): 361, observes: "Is it possible seriously to maintain that there were two separate documents, each of them written at Jerusalem during the Apostolic age and in the Hebrew tongue, each of them assigned to the Apostle Matthew, and each of them dealing in some way with the Gospel story? Or are we not rather forced to the conclusion that these two documents, whose descriptions are so strangely similar, must really be identical, and that the lost Gospel according to the Hebrews, in its earliest and uninterpolated state, was indeed none other than the Book of the Logia, the Discourses of Christ, drawn up by St Matthew at Jerusalem about AD 40, and carried with them into exile by the fugitive Christians when they left Jerusalem for ever, a little before its final destruction in the year 71?"

20 κέχρηται δ᾽ ὁ αὐτὸς [ὁ Παπίας] μαρτυρίαις ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰωάννου προτέρας ἐπιστολῆς καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς Πέτρου ὁμοίως, ἐκτέθειται δὲ κακ᾽ ἄλλην ἱστορίαν περὶ γυναικὸς ἐπὶ πολλαῖς ἁμαρτίαις διαβληθείσης ἐπὶ τοῦ κυρίου, ἣν τὸ καθ᾽ Ἑβραίους εὐαγγέλιον περιέχει (*Hist. eccl.* 3.39.17).

21 Both Nicholson, *The Gospel according to the Hebrews*, 54, and Rudolf Handmann, *Das Hebräer-Evangelium. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte und Kritik des hebräischen Matthäus* (vol. 5 of *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*; ed. O. von Gebhardt and A. Harnack; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1889), 94, make the reasonable suggestion that the account, though originally independent of the Fourth Gospel, was eventually placed in the Gospel of John because of a confusion in *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.14 of *John the Presbyter* with *John the Apostle*.

22 ἀφέωνται αἱ ἁμαρτίαι αὐτῆς αἱ πολλαί (Lk. 7.47). D. Lührmann, *Die apokryph gewordenen Evangelien. Studien zu neuen Texten und zu neuen Fragen* (NovTSup 112; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2004), 212, concludes: "Mit Recht wird allgemein ausgeschlossen, dass Euseb hier Lk 7,36–50 im Sinne hat." So too Alfred Resch, *Agrapha. Aussercanonische Evangelienfragmente* (vol. 5 of *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*; ed. O. von Gebhardt and A. Harnack; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1889), 341–42. Lagrange, "L'Évangile selon les Hébreux," 173–74, argues, however, that Eusebius' reference to "another" story sets the Papias account sufficiently apart from the well-known accounts in John 8 and Luke 7.

behind *Ecclesiastical History* 3.39.17, the incident recorded there appears originally to have derived from the *Hebrew Gospel*.[23]

Irenaeus (c. 130–200)

Also in the second century, Irenaeus references the *Hebrew Gospel*: "Matthew published among the Hebrews a written gospel also in their own language, while Peter and Paul were preaching and founding the church in Rome."[24] Irenaeus, again, writes that the Ebionites "use the Gospel according to Matthew only, and repudiate the apostle Paul, maintaining that he was an apostate from the law."[25] The *Hebrew Gospel* is not mentioned in the second quotation, but it seems plausible to take it as such, since other references in Eusebius mention the *Hebrew Gospel* similarly.[26] In *Against All Heresies* 1.26.1, Irenaeus further writes that the Ebionites used only the *Hebrew Gospel* of Matthew. Irenaeus' testimony to the *Hebrew Gospel* provides a number of new data that may derive from tradition current in Rome in his day, for he expressly mentions the *Hebrew Gospel* in relationship to the preaching of Peter and Paul in Rome.[27]

Pantaenus († c. 190)

A third name associated with the *Hebrew Gospel* in the second century is Pantaenus, teacher of Clement of Alexandria and head of the Catechetical School in Alexandria. According to Eusebius, the Gospel according to Matthew had been taken to India by the Apostle Bartholomew. This Gospel, Eusebius further notes, was written "in Hebrew script" (Ἑβραίων

23 Klijn, *Jewish-Christian Gospel Tradition*, 116–19, affirms that the story "was present in some Jewish-Christian Gospel or other, maybe the *Gospel of the Hebrews*." Even Lührmann, *Die apokryph gewordenen Evangelien*, 191–215, who rejects an origin in the *Hebrew Gospel* finds (a) that Didymus cites the story not from John's Gospel but from certain apocryphal gospels; (b) that Didymus shares similarities with the Papias citation in *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.17, and may well be identical with it; (c) that Didymus clearly differentiates between canonical and apocryphal gospels; and (d) that the *Hebrew Gospel*, though not canonical, occupies an especially positive category.

24 ὁ μὲν δὴ Ματθαῖος ἐν τοῖς Ἑβραίοις τῇ ἰδίᾳ αὐτῶν διαλέκτῳ καὶ γραφὴν ἐξήνεγκεν εὐαγγελίου, τοῦ Πέτρου καὶ τοῦ Παύλου ἐν Ῥώμῃ εὐαγγελιζομένων καὶ θεμελιούντων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.8.2; Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.1.1).

25 Solo autem eo quod est secundum Matthaeum evangelio utuntur (Ebionaei) et apostolum Paulum recusant apostatam eum legis dicentes (*Haer.* 1.26.2). In 3.11.7 Irenaeus repeats that "the Ebionites use only the Gospel of Matthew." For another reference to the Ebionite rejection of the Apostle Paul, see *Haer.* 3.15.1.

26 *Hist. eccl.* 3.27.4; 6.17.1.

27 In Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.8.2, and Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.1.1, note the appended genitive absolute, "while Peter and Paul were preaching in Rome." So too C. J. Thornton, *Der Zeuge des Zeugen* (WUNT 56; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991), 10–54; Martin Hengel, *The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ* (trans. J. Bowden; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000), 35–38.

γράμμασι) and was preserved in India until the visit of Pantaenus, who died at the close of the second century.[28]

Clement of Alexandria (c. 150–215)

A fourth witness to the *Hebrew Gospel* in the second century comes from Clement of Alexandria, who twice quotes from the *Gospel to the Hebrews* in the *Stromata*. "And in the Gospel according to the Hebrews it is written, 'The one who wonders will reign, and reigning he will rest.'"[29] Clement cannot give unequivocal support to the *Hebrew Gospel* because it is not one of the four canonical Gospels and because it is invoked by Gnostics. Nevertheless, the authoritative formula γέγραπται, "it is written," signals Clement's deference to the tradition preserved in the *Hebrew Gospel*.[30] Moreover, the citation about wondering and rest is intended to show the superiority of Christian revelation to Plato's *Theaetetus* and *Timaeus*, which Clement references immediately before. For Clement to counter a luminary such as Plato with a citation of the *Hebrew Gospel* is a remarkable testimony to its stature in the second century.

Hegesippus (late second century)

The final name associated with the *Hebrew Gospel* in the second century is Hegesippus, who made extracts "from the Gospel according to the Hebrews and from the Syriac, and especially from the Hebrew language."[31] The syntax of the statement suggests that the Hebrew and Syriac were two separate documents, rather than one and the same document.[32] The Syriac document may be the same as, or similar to, the "Chaldean and Syriac" document that Jerome mentions in *Against the Pelagians* 3.2. Handmann

28 ὁ Πάνταινος, καὶ εἰς Ἰνδοὺς ἐλθεῖν λέγεται . . . οἷς Βαρθολομαῖον τῶν ἀποστόλων ἕνα κηρῦξαι αὐτοῖς τε Ἑβραίων γράμμασι τὴν τοῦ Ματθαίου καταλεῖψαι γραφήν (*Hist. eccl.* 5.10.3). This tradition is repeated by Hippolytus (*De duodecim Apostolis*) and Jerome (*Vir. ill.* 36.2).

29 κἀν τῷ καθ' Ἑβραίους εὐαγγελίῳ ὁ θαυμάσας βασιλεύσει γέγραπται καὶ ὁ βασιλεύσας ἀναπαήσεται (*Strom.* 2.9.45). Further possible references to the *Hebrew Gospel* are found in *Strom.* 3.9.63; 5.14.96.

30 Bruce M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997), 132. Lagrange, "L'Évangile selon les Hébreux," 172, draws attention to evidence of a Semitic original behind Clement's quotation.

31 ἔκ τε τοῦ καθ' Ἑβραίους εὐαγγελίου καὶ τοῦ Συριακοῦ καὶ ἰδίως ἐκ τῆς Ἑβραΐδος διαλέκτου (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.22.8). This passage is quoted verbatim a thousand years later by the fourteenth-century priest of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopulus, in his *Historia ecclesiastica* 4.7 (PG 145.992).

32 So Philipp Vielhauer and Georg Strecker, "Jewish-Christian Gospels," in *New Testament Apocrypha* (rev. and ed. W. Schneemelcher, trans. R. McL. Wilson; Cambridge, UK: James Clarke; Louisville, KY: Westminister/John Knox Press, 1991), 1.138, who understand the wording to mean two gospels, "both from the Gospel according to the Hebrews and from the Syriac (Gospel)."

recognizes the importance of Hegesippus' testimony: "It is therefore obvious that in addition to the other gospels [Hegesippus] used the one written in his mother tongue and with which he was best acquainted; for this reason he must always remain for us an important witness for the antiquity and status of this gospel."[33]

Hippolytus (c. 170–c. 236)

In the third century, Hippolytus preserves a reference to the *Hebrew Gospel* that probably comes from "On the Twelve Apostles": "Matthew, having written the Gospel in Hebrew, published it in Jerusalem, and slept in Hierae of Parthia."[34] The Greek spelling of "Jerusalem" is a transliteration of Hebrew, and thus argues for the antiquity of this quotation.

Origen (185–254)

The second third-century witness to the *Hebrew Gospel* is Origen, whose reputation as a textual critic and exegete, and whose work on the four canonical Gospels, was unsurpassed in the ancient church. Origen's references to the *Hebrew Gospel* indicate its widespread recognition in the early church and its enduring status in the emergent canon. According to Eusebius, Origen followed the fourfold canonical order in discussing the origins of the Gospels in his *Commentaries on the Gospel according to Matthew*. The First Gospel, says Origen, "was written by Matthew, who once had been a tax collector but later became an apostle of Jesus Christ, having published it for believers from Judaism, composed in Hebrew script."[35] Origen here attributes the "first gospel" to Jesus' disciple who had been a tax collector, and who composed it in Hebrew letters or script (γράμασσιν Ἑβραΐκοις) for the benefit of converts from Judaism.

Origen refers to the *Hebrew Gospel* five times, three of which give quotations from it.[36] Two of Origen's three quotations are slightly different

33 R. Handmann, *Das Hebräer-Evangelium*, 34.

34 Ματθαῖος δὲ, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον Ἑβραιστὶ γράψας, δέδωκεν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ, καὶ ἐκοιμήθη ἐν Ἱερέει τῆς Παρθείας (*De Duodecim Apostolis*; PL 10.952). Uncertainty over the authenticity of "The Twelve Apostles" is due to the fact that it not attributed to Hippolytus by Jerome in *Vir ill.* 61. Most scholars, however, attribute it to Hippolytus.

35 πρῶτον μὲν γέγραπται τὸ κατὰ τόν ποτε τελώνην ὕστερον δὲ ἀπόστολον Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ Ματθαῖον, ἐκδεδωκότα αὐτὸ τοῖς ἀπὸ Ἰουδαϊσμοῦ πιστεύσασιν, γράμμασιν Ἑβραϊκοῖς συντεταγμένον (*Hist. eccl.* 6.25.4).

36 *Comm. Jo.* 2:12; *Comm. Matt.* 15:14; 16:12; *Hom. Jer.* 15:4; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.4. Dorival, "Un Groupe Judéo-Chrétien Méconnu," 21–26, suggests that the reference to "the Hebrews" immediately in *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.1–2 should also be taken as a reference to the Hebrew-Christians. He argues that the canon advanced by Origen in *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.1–2 does not conform to the MT, but rather to a rabbinic canon probably in use by Hebrew-Christians in Egypt. Dorival's argument is weakened by the fact that the context of *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.1–2 clearly refers to the Hebrew OT and not to Hebrew-Christian believers. Further, Origen's canonical proposals are among the earliest in the Christian tradition. It is hardly surprising that they would vary slightly (and the variations are very

versions of the same quotation. The longer of the two versions is preserved in his *Commentary on John* (1:3):

> Whoever accepts the Gospel according to the Hebrews, where the Savior himself says, "Just now my mother, the Holy Spirit, took me by a lock of hair and lifted me up to great Mount Tabor," raises a new question how the Holy Spirit coming through the Word is able to be the mother of Christ.[37]

A shorter version of the same appears in Origen's *Homilies on Jeremiah* (15:4): "If anyone receives the [word], 'Just now my mother, the Holy Spirit, took me and bore me to great Mount Tabor,' etc., he can see his mother."[38] The reference to the Holy Spirit as "mother" may initially seem apocryphal and/or gnostic. If this were the case, however, it is unlikely that Origen and Jerome, both of whom were decidedly anti-gnostic, would each cite this passage *twice* and *thrice*, respectively. In both passages cited by Origen, the speaker is Jesus, who reports being seized by the Holy Spirit and transported to Mt. Tabor. Although most scholars suspect that this account was originally related to Jesus' temptation, the reference to "lifted up" seems to me more suited to the transfiguration.[39] This same text is thrice quoted by Jerome in Latin.[40] All five versions of the saying by Origen and Jerome preserve the first-person testimony of Christ to his seizure by the maternal Holy Spirit.

slight in Origen's list) from the eventual canon adopted by the church, which in Origen's day was not established.

37 ἐὰν δὲ προσιῆταί τις τὸ καθ' Ἑβραίους εὐαγγέλιον, ἔνθα αὐτὸς ὁ σωτήρ φησιν; Ἄρτι ἔλαβέ με ἡ μήτηρ μου, τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, ἐν μιᾷ τῶν τριχῶν μου καὶ ἀπήνεγκέ με εἰς τὸ ὄρος τὸ μέγα Θαβώρ, ἐπαπορήσει πῶς μήτηρ Χριστοῦ τὸ διὰ τοῦ λόγου γεγενημένον πνεῦμα ἅγιον εἶναι δύναται. ταῦτα δὲ καὶ τούτῳ οὐ χαλεπὸν ἑρμηνεῦσαι (*Comm. Jo.* 2.12.87).

38 εἰ δέ τις παραδέχεται τὸ Αρτι ἔλαβέ με ἡ μήτηρ μου, τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, καὶ ἀπήνεγκέ με εἰς τὸ ὄρος τὸ μέγα Θαβώρ καὶ τὰ ἑξῆς, δύναται αὐτοῦ ἰδεῖν τὴν μητέρα (*Hom. Jer.* 15:4).

39 So too Adolphus Hilgenfeld, *Novum Testamentum Extra Canonem Receptum* (2nd edn.; Leipzig: Weigel, 1866), 16; Nicholson, *The Gospel according to the Hebrews*, 75–76, however, suspects the episode to refer to the temptation, the "lifted up" being softened to "led up" in later tradition.

40 Sed qui legerit Canticum canticorum, et sponsum animae, Dei sermonem intellexerit, credideritque Evangelio, quod secundum Hebraeos editum nuper transtulimus, in quo ex persona Salvatoris dicitur: "Modo tulit me mater mea, Sanctus Spiritus in uno capillorum meorum" (But whoever makes the Song of Songs the spouse of his soul will come to know the word of God and believe the Gospel, the Hebrew edition of which we recently translated in which it is said of the person of the Savior, 'My mother, the Holy Spirit, once took me by a lock of hair,'" *Comm. Mich.* 7:7). Sed et in Evangelio quod iuxta Hebraeos scriptum Nazaraei lectitant, Dominus loquitur: "Modo me tulit mater mea, Sanctus Spiritus" ("But in the Gospel written according to the Hebrews the Nazarenes read, the Lord says, 'My mother, the Holy Spirit, once took me,'" *Comm. Isa.* 40:9). In Evangelio quoque Hebraeorum, quod lectitant Nazaraei, Salvator inducitur loquens: "Modo me arripuit mater mea, Spiritus Sanctus" ("Also in the *Gospel of the Hebrews* that the Nazarenes read, the Savior introduces the saying, 'My mother, the Holy Spirit, once seized me,'" *Comm. Ezech.* 16:13).

Minor variations in the citations are probably due to mnemonic recall on the parts of Origen and Jerome.

Origen preserves a second and lengthier quotation from the *Hebrew Gospel* in his commentary on the rich man in Mt. 19.16–22, in which he speculates why the parallel accounts in Mk 10.17–22 and Lk. 18.18–23 omit the commandment to "love your neighbor as yourself."

> It is written in that Gospel, which is called "According to the Hebrews" (if it pleases one to receive it, not as an authority, but as an example of the proposed question): "Another rich man," it says, "inquired, 'Master, what good must I do to live?'" He said to him, "Man, do the law and prophets." He responded to him, "I have done (so)." He said to him, "Go, sell all you possess and distribute it among the poor, and come, follow me." The rich man began to scratch his head in displeasure. The Lord said to him, "How can you say, 'I have done the law and prophets,' since it is written in the law: Love your neighbor as yourself; and behold, your many brothers, who are sons of Abraham, are covered in dung, dying from hunger, while your house is filled with many good things, and not one of the good things goes out to them." And [Jesus] turned to Simon, his disciple sitting with him, "Simon, son of John, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven."[41]

The *Hebrew Gospel*, in Origen's judgment, preserves the most original version of the story without the commandment to "love your neighbor as yourself." Despite Origen's opening disclaimer that the *Hebrew Gospel* is not an authority, his exegesis invests it with authority over canonical Matthew.

41 Scriptum est in evangelio quodam, quod dicitur secundum Hebraeos (sit tamen placet suscipere illud, non ad auctoritatem, sed ad manifestationem propositae quaestionis): Dixit, "inquit ad eum alter divitum: magister, quid bonum faciens vivam? dixit ei: homo, legem et prophetas fac. respondit ad eum: feci. dixit ei: vade, vende omnia quae possides et divide pauperibus, et veni, sequere me. coepit autem dives scalpere caput suum, et non placuit ei. et dixit ad eum Dominus, Quomodo dicis 'legem feci et prophetas'? quoniam scriptum est in lege: diliges proximum tuum sicut teipsum, et ecce multi fraters tui filii Abrahae amicti sunt stercore, morientes prae fame, et domus tua plena est multis bonis, et non egreditur omnino aliquid ex ea ad eos. et conversus dixit Simoni discipulo suo sedenti apud se: Simon, fili Jonae, facilius est camelum intrare per foramen acus quam divitem in regnum coelorum" (*Comm. Matt.* 15:14). The fact that this citation exists only in a Latin translation of a lost Greek original has caused some scholars to doubt its authenticity. Dorival, "Un Groupe Judéo-Chrétien Méconnu: les Hébreux," 16–19, defends its authenticity by noting that Origen does not introduce the passage from the *Hebrew Gospel* as an authority, but only as an illustration, similar to the way he introduces it in his *Commentarii in evangelium Joannis* and *Homiliae in Jeremiam*. More importantly, the commentary that follows the quotation exhibits Origen's style and manner.

Eusebius (c. 260–c. 340)

The existence of a *Hebrew Gospel* is acknowledged by Eusebius throughout the *Ecclesiastical History*, which was composed early in the fourth century. Eusebius reminds his readers that "the Gospel according to the Hebrews" (τὸ καθ' Ἑβραίους εὐαγγέλιον) was always and everywhere preferred by Jewish converts to Christianity."[42] Among those who accepted the *Hebrew Gospel* were the Ebionites, who "use only the said Gospel according to the Hebrews."[43] Eusebius further notes that the apostles Matthew and John both wrote down their recollections (ὑπομνήματα). When Matthew first began preaching to Hebrews (πρότερον Ἑβραίοις κηρύξας), but found it necessary to leave and go elsewhere, he committed the gospel into his native tongue (πατρίῳ γλώττῃ γραφῇ παραδοὺς τὸ κατ' αὐτὸν εὐαγγέλιον) as a substitute for his personal presence and preaching.[44] Eusebius does not here expressly say that Matthew wrote in Hebrew, but writing to Hebrews in their native tongue clearly implies either Hebrew or Aramaic.

Eusebius' classification of the *Hebrew Gospel* in the "disputed" category, mentioned in the introduction, is echoed in the *Chronographia Brevis* of Nicephorus. In his early ninth-century catalog of canonical books, Nicephorus, bishop of Constantinople from 806–815, lists four books as disputed (ἀντιλέγονται): the Revelation of John, the Apocalypse of Peter, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, and the *Gospel of the Hebrews*. A full five centuries after Eusebius, the *Hebrew Gospel* was still a single, identifiable entity, and still held in favorable repute.[45] Nicephorus is the only Church Father to report the length of the *Gospel of the Hebrews* as 2,200 lines.[46]

Two passages in Eusebius' *Theophania* preserve quotations from what appears to be the *Hebrew Gospel*. The first, in *Theophania* 4.12, is extant only in Syriac, the English translation of which reads:

> The cause therefore of the divisions of souls that take place in houses Christ himself taught, as we have found in a place in the Gospel existing among the Jews in the Hebrew language, in which it is said: "I will choose for myself the best which my Father in heaven has given me."[47]

42 *Hist. eccl.* 3.25.5; also in *Theoph.* 4.12 Eusebius refers to "the Gospel that is among the Jews in the Hebrew language."

43 εὐαγγελίῳ δὲ μόνῳ τῷ καθ' Ἑβραίους λεγομένῳ χρώμενοι (*Hist. eccl.* 3.27.4).

44 Ματθαῖός τε γὰρ πρότερον Ἑβραίοις κηρύξας, ὡς ἤμελλεν καὶ ἐφ᾽ ἑτέρους ἰέναι, πατρίῳ γλώττῃ, γραφῇ παραδοὺς τὸ κατ' αὐτὸν εὐαγγέλιον, τὸ λεῖπον τῇ αὐτοῦ παρουσίᾳ τούτοις ἀφ' ὧν ἐστέλλετο, διὰ τῆς γραφῆς ἀπεπλήρου (*Hist. eccl.* 3.24.5–6).

45 Note the judgment of Lagrange, "L'Évangile selon les Hébreux," 180, on the significance of Nicephorus' *Chronographia Brevis*, "L'importance de cette attestation est vraiment impressionnante. Cet évangile [des Hébreux] existait donc alors en grec et il était assez connu pour qu'on puisse en déterminer exactement l'étendue, trois cents lignes de moins que le Mt. canonique; ou bien il faut dire que c'est une affirmation en l'air!"

46 By comparison, Matthew: 2,500 lines; Mark: 2,000 lines; Luke: 2,600 lines, John: 2,300 lines.

47 Cited from Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*, 7; and J. K.

The theme of dividing households against themselves is reminiscent of Mt. 10.34–36 and Lk. 12.51–53, but the theme of "choosing" shows a special affinity with Luke. When Lk. 6.13 is transposed from the third to the first person, the result is very close to the above quotation (cf. Jn 6.37).

The second quotation from Eusebius' *Theophania* 4:22 is longer:

> For the Gospel that has come to us in Hebrew characters does not bring condemnation on the man who hid [the money], but on the man who lived dissolutely. For he had three servants: the one who squandered the wealth of the master with prostitutes and flute-players; the one who greatly increased the principal sum; and the one who hid the talent. One of them was praised; another was merely rebuked; the other was locked up in prison. As for the last condemnation of the servant who earned nothing, I wonder if Matthew repeated it not with him in mind but rather with reference to the servant who caroused with the drunks.[48]

Lagrange takes the first eleven words to mean that Eusebius received the *Hebrew Gospel* into his library in Caesarea.[49] This passage is vaguely related to the Parable of the Talents as preserved in Mt. 25.14–30 and Lk. 19.11–27 (see also *Gos. Thom.* 41). The *Hebrew Gospel* quite plausibly represents "the earliest, simplest, and most natural form of the parable."[50] Eusebius may also have regarded the version of the *Hebrew Gospel* as the more primitive, for he recounts it without qualification and explains Matthean differences in the parable on the basis of the version in the *Hebrew Gospel.* Much in the quotation is special or unique to Luke, however, especially the servant who "lives dissolutely" (ἀσώτως ἐζηκότος), a phrase occurring only in the parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk. 15.13).

Ephrem the Syrian (c. 306–373)

A younger contemporary of Eusebius, Ephrem the Syrian also records the tradition of an original *Hebrew Gospel* in his *Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron*, preserved only in Latin. Commenting on the authorship of the four canonical Gospels, Ephrem says that "Matthew wrote his Gospel

Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2004), 11. For translational details related to the Syriac, see Klijn, *Jewish-Christian Gospel Tradition*, 63–64.

48 ἐπὶ δὲ τὸ εἰς ἡμᾶς ἦκον ἑβραι?κοῖς χαρακτῆρσιν εὐαγγέλιον τὴν ἀπειλὴν οὐ κατὰ τοῦ ἀποκρύψαντος ἐπῆγεν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τοῦ ἀσώτως ἐζηκότος· τρεῖς γὰρ δούλους περιεῖχε, τὸν μὲν καταφαγόντα τὴν ὕπαρξιν τοῦ δεσπότου μετὰ πορνῶν καὶ αὐλητρίδων, τὸν δὲ πολλαπλασιάσαντα τὴν ἐργασίαν, τὸν δὲ κατακρύψαντα τὸ τάλαντον· εἶτα τὸν μὲν ἀποδεχθῆναι, τὸν δὲ μεμφθῆναι μόνον, τὸν δὲ συγκλεισθῆναι δεσμωτηρίῳ· ἐφίστημι μήποτε κατὰ τὸν Ματθαῖον, μετὰ τὴν συμπλήρωσιν τοῦ λόγου τοῦ κατὰ τοῦ μηδὲν ἐργασαμένου, ἡ ἐξῆς ἐπιλεγομένη ἀπειλή, οὐ περὶ αὐτοῦ ἀλλὰ περὶ τοῦ προτέρου κατ' ἐπανάληψιν λέλεκται τοῦ ἐσθίοντος καὶ πίνοντος μετὰ τῶν μεθυόντων (Eusebius, *Theoph.* 4.22).

49 Lagrange, "L'Évangile selon les Hébreux," 177.

50 Handmann, *Das Hebräer-Evangelium*, 103.

in Hebrew, and it was then translated into Greek."[51] Ephrem's use of "Hebrew" should be fully appreciated, for he wrote in Syriac and did not know Greek. He obviously knew how to recognize Hebrew, and especially the difference between Hebrew and Aramaic, the latter of which was a sister language to his native Syriac.

Didymus of Alexandria (c. *310–398)*

In an exposition of Ps. 34.1 (LXX 33.1), Didymus of Alexandria, also known as Didymus the Blind, seeks to explain why the Bible sometimes refers to the same person by two different names. In reference to the name change of Matthew/Levi, Didymus writes:

> There are many such name changes. Matthew appears in the [Gospel] according to Luke under the name of Levi. He is not the same person, but rather the Matthew who was appointed [apostle] in place of Judas; he and Levi are the same person under two different names. This is made apparent in the Hebrew Gospel.[52]

Like others before him, Didymus attributes an authority to the *Hebrew Gospel over* the canonical Gospels. As late as the the fourth century, and as far away as Egypt, the status of the *Hebrew Gospel* was such that it was enlisted to resolve exegetical difficulties in canonical texts.[53]

Epiphanius (c. *315–403)*

Along with Jerome, Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis, is the most important witness to the *Hebrew Gospel* in the late fourth century. In eight instances Epiphanius ascribes authorship of the *Hebrew Gospel* to the Apostle Matthew, in five of which he identifies its language as Hebrew.[54] Epiphanius mentions the *Hebrew Gospel* only in relation to the sects of the Nazarenes and the Ebionites. A lone reference to the former reads: "[the Nazarenes]

51 "Matthaeus hebraice scripsit id (i.e., evangelium), et deinde translatum est in graecum." Epiphanius knows a tradition linking the Diatessaron and the *Gospel of the Hebrews*: "It is said that from [Tatian] comes the Diatessaron, which is also called the Gospel according to the Hebrews" (*Pan.* 46.1). It is difficult to know what relationship, if any, Ephrem and Epiphanius share on this datum.

52 καὶ πολλαὶ γέ εἰσιν τοιαῦται ὁμωνυμίαι. τὸν Μαθθαῖον δοκεῖ ἐν τῷ κατὰ Λουκᾶν Λευὶν ὀνομάζειν. οὔκ ἐστιν δὲ αὐτός, ἀλλὰ ὁ καταστατθεὶς ἀντὶ τοῦ Ἰούδα ὁ Μαθθίας καὶ ὁ Λευίς εἷς διώνυμός εἰσιν· ἐν τῷ καθ' Ἑβραίους εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦτο φαίνεται (from Sebastian Brock, "A New Testimonium to the 'Gospel according to the Hebrews'," *NTS* 18 [1971], 220; D. Lührmann, *Die apokryph gewordenen Evangelien*, 184). In the original manuscript διώνυμός ἐστιν has been altered to διώνυμός εἰσιν. The change to the plural verb has led some textual editors to emend the text to διώνυμοί εἰσιν.

53 So too, Dorival, "Un Groupe Judéo-Chrétien Méconnu: les Hébreux," 11–21, who further argues for the significance of the existence of a Hebrew-Christian community in Egypt and its use of the *Hebrew Gospel*.

54 *Pan.* 29.9.4; 30.3.7; 30.6.9; 30.13.1; 30.13.2; 30.14.2; 30.14.3; 51.5.3.

have the Gospel according to Matthew complete in Hebrew. For it is still distinctly preserved among them, as it was originally written, in Hebrew script."[55] Epiphanius' other references to the *Hebrew Gospel* occur in relationship to the Ebionites. Along with the Cerinthians and Merinthians, says Epiphanius, the Ebionites used only the Gospel of Matthew. "They call it, however, According to the Hebrews, which it truly is, for only Matthew put the exposition and proclamation of the Gospel in Hebrew and in Hebrew script in the New Testament."[56] It seems unwarranted to conclude with some scholars that Epiphanius is referring to several distinct and self-contained *Hebrew Gospel* traditions.[57] Rather, especially in relation to what Hegesippus, Ephrem, and Jerome say on the matter, it seems reasonable to understand Epiphanius to be referring to an original *Hebrew Gospel* that was later altered—or "mutilated" as he says—in accordance with the interests of different Jewish-Christian sects.

Epiphanius preserves eight quotations from the *Hebrew Gospel*. Although fewer in number than Jerome's references and quotations, Epiphanius' are of greater value because they are longer and afford greater comparison with the Synoptic narratives. All eight quotations occur in his chapter on the "Ebionite" heresy in *Panarion* 30. These quotations confirm the two conclusions that have emerged so far: namely, that quotations from the *Hebrew Gospel* correspond more closely with Luke than with Matthew and/or Mark; and, second, that quotations from the *Hebrew Gospel* are not abridgements or harmonies of the Synoptic tradition in general, but apparently quotations from an original *Hebrew Gospel* authored by the Apostle Matthew.[58]

The first quotation in *Panarion* 30.13.1–2 reads:

> In what they (i.e., the Ebionites) then call the Gospel according to Matthew, which however is not complete but forged and mutilated—they call it the Hebrew Gospel—it is reported: "There appeared a certain man by the name of Jesus, about thirty years of age, who chose us. And having come to

55 ἔχουσι δὲ τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγέλιον πληρέστατον Ἑβραιστί. παρ' αὐτοῖς γὰρ σαφῶς τοῦτο, καθὼς ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐγράφη, Ἑβραικοῖς γράμμασιν ἔτι σῴζεται (*Pan.* 29.9.4).

56 καλοῦσι δὲ αὐτὸ κατὰ Ἑβραίους, ὡς τὰ ἀληθῆ ἔστιν εἰπεῖν, ὅτι Ματθαῖος μόνος Ἑβραιστὶ καὶ Ἑβραικοῖς γράμμασιν ἐν τῇ καινῇ διαθήκῃ, ἐποιήσατο τὴν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἔκθεσίν τε καὶ κήρυγμα (*Pan.* 30.3.7). Epiphanius again refers to Matthew's writing "in the Hebrew script" (Ἑβραικοῖς γράμμασιν) in *Pan.* 51.5.3. Further, see *Pan.* 30.6.9; 30.13.2.

57 So Vielhauer and Strecker, "Jewish-Christian Gospels," 139–41.

58 For a detailed linguistic analysis of all the Greek texts in *Pan.* 30 in which the *Hebrew Gospel* is mentioned, see James R. Edwards, "The *Gospel of the Ebionites* and the Gospel of Luke," *NTS* 48 (2002): 568–586. In response to my article, Andrew Gregory, "Prior or Posterior? The *Gospel of the Ebionites* and the Gospel of Luke," *NTS* 51 (2005): 344–60, seems to concede (1) that all but two of the excerpts of the *Gospel of the Ebionites* that are found in Epiphanius are more closely related to Luke than to any other Gospel, and (2) that the Lucan parallels usually appear in Luke's single tradition (349). Gregory dismisses the weight of this evidence, however, and in a chain of reasoning that is neither entirely clear nor compelling concludes that the *Hebrew Gospel* was a compilation from Luke and the Synoptic Gospels.

> Capernaum, he entered the house of Simon who was called Peter, and having opened his mouth, said, 'As I passed beside the Lake of Tiberias, I chose John and James the sons of Zebedee, and Simon and Andrew and Thaddaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the Iscariot, and you, Matthew, I called while you were sitting at the tax table, and you followed me. You therefore I desire to be twelve apostles for a witness to Israel.'"[59]

This passage is conclusively linked to the Gospel of Luke in several particulars. First, mention of Jesus being "about thirty years of age" parallels Lk. 3.23, who, alone of the Evangelists, preserves Jesus' age. Second, reference to "the Lake of Tiberias" is exclusive to Luke. Third, mention of entering the house of Simon (εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν Σίμωνος) is verbatim with Lk. 4.38 rather than Matthew's and Mark's wording of the same episode. Fourth, the reference to "Simon the Zealot," is unique to Luke (6.15), and the order of "John and James," as opposed to "James and John," is found in the apostolic lists in the NT only in Acts 1.13, again, from Luke. Fifth, the phrase "there appeared a certain man by the name of Jesus" is practically verbatim with Lk. 1.5.[60] Finally, the source of this passage purports to be an eyewitness testimony of the Apostle Matthew, who here, as in Ignatius' *Smyrn.* 3.1–2, speaks in the first person.

The above quotation is immediately followed by two more in *Panarion* 30.13.4–6 pertaining to John the Baptist: the first about John himself, and the second about his baptism of Jesus. Combined, they read:

> And John came baptizing, and Pharisees went out to him, and they and all Jerusalem were baptized. And John had clothing made of camel hair and a leather belt around his waist; and his food, it is said, was wild honey, the taste of which was that of manna, as a cake dipped in oil. Thus they were resolved to pervert the word of truth to a lie, and they replace grasshoppers with a honey cake. The beginning of their Gospel has this, "In the days when Herod was king of Judaea <when Caiaphas was high priest>, <a certain> John <by name> came baptizing a baptism of repentance in the Jordan River. John, it was said, was of the line of Aaron the priest, a child of Zechariah and Elisabeth, and all were going out to him."[61]

59 ἐν τῷ γοῦν παρ' αὐτοῖς εὐαγγελίῳ κατὰ Ματθαῖον ὀνομαζομένῳ, οὐχ ὅλῳ δὲ πληρεστάτῳ, ἀλλὰ νενοθευμένῳ καὶ ἠκρωτηριασμένῳ, (Ἑβραικὸν δὲ τοῦτο καλοῦσιν) ἐμφέρεται ὅτι "ἐγένετό τις ἀνὴρ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦς, καὶ αὐτὸς ὡς ἐτῶν τριάκοντα, ὃς ἐξελέξατο ἡμᾶς. καὶ ἐλθὼν εἰς Καφαρναούμ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν Σίμωνος τοῦ ἐπικληθέντος Πέτρου καὶ ἀνοίξας τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ εἶπεν· παρερχόμενος παρὰ τὴν λίμνην Τιβεριάδος ἐξελεξάμην Ἰωάννην καὶ Ἰάκωβον, υἱοὺς Ζεβεδαίου, καὶ Σίμωνα καὶ Ἀνδρέαν καὶ Θαδδαῖον καὶ Σίμωνα τὸν ζηλωτὴν καὶ Ἰούδαν τὸν Ἰσκαριώτην, καὶ σὲ τὸν Ματθαῖον καθεζόμενον ἐπὶ τοῦ τελωνίου ἐκάλεσα καὶ ἠκολούθησάς μοι. ὑμᾶς οὖν βούλομαι εἶναι δεκαδύο ἀποστόλους εἰς μαρτύριον τοῦ Ἰσραήλ (*Pan.* 30.13.2–3).

60 Luke 1:5: ἐγένετο . . . τις ὀνόματι Ζαχαρίας; Epiphanius: ἐγένετό τις ἀνὴρ ὀνόματι.

61 καὶ "ἐγένετο Ἰωάννης βαπτίζων, καὶ ἐξῆλθον πρὸς αὐτὸν φαρισσαῖοι καὶ ἐβαπτίσθησαν καὶ πᾶσα Ἱεροσόλυμα. καὶ εἶχεν ὁ Ἰωάννης ἔνδυμα ἀπὸ τριχῶν καμήλου καὶ ζώνην δερματίνην περὶ τὴν ὀσφὺν αὐτοῦ. καὶ τὸ βρῶμα αὐτοῦ, φησί, μέλι ἄγριον, οὗ ἡ γεῦσις ἡ τοῦ μάννα, ὡς

Panarion 30.13.4 agrees generally with Mt. 3:4, but more specifically with Luke—and only Luke. Epiphanius records that the Gospel of the Ebionites began with the words, ἐγένετο ἐν ταις ἡμέραις Ἡρῷδου βασιλέως τῆς Ἰουδαίας. This eight-word phrase is verbatim with the infancy narrative of Lk. 1.5.[62] The statement that John appeared when "Caiaphas was high priest" is practically verbatim with Lk. 3.2. Likewise, the reference to John's descent from the line of Aaron reflects Lk. 1.5, as do the names of his parents, Zechariah and Elisabeth.

A fourth citation from Epiphanius, again with reference to John the Baptist, occurs in *Panarion* 30.13.7–8.

> After many things had been said, it continues, "When the people had been baptized, Jesus also came and was baptized by John. And as he arose from the water, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Holy Spirit of God in the form of a dove descending and entering into him. And a voice came from heaven, saying 'You are my beloved Son, in you I am pleased'; and again, 'Today I have begotten you.' And immediately a great light shone on the place. When John saw it, it is recorded that he said to [Jesus], 'Who are you, Lord?' And again a voice from heaven came to him, 'This is my beloved Son, on whom my pleasure rests.' And then, it is reported, John fell before him saying, 'I beg you, Lord, to baptize me.' But he prevented it saying, 'Let it be, for in this way it is necessary for all things to be fulfilled.'"[63]

This passage appears to be a harmony of the Synoptics, though with less material from Mark than from Matthew and Luke. But, again, there are unique correspondences with Luke, especially the reference to Jesus being baptized with the people (Lk. 3.21), and to the "Holy Spirit" in the form of a dove (Lk. 3.22). The passage concludes, however, in correspondence with Matthew, specifically the divine address to Jesus in the third person singular

ἐγκρὶς ἐν ἐλαίῳ." ἵνα δῆθεν μεταστρέψωσι τὸν τῆς ἀληθείας λόγον εἰς ψεῦδος καὶ ἀντὶ ἀκρίδων ποιήσωσιν ἐγκρίδα ἐν μέλιτι. ἡ δὲ ἀρχὴ τοῦ παρ' αὐτοῖς εὐαγγελίου ἔχει ὅτι "ἐγένετο ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Ἡρῴδου βασιλέως τῆς Ἰουδαίας <ἐπὶ ἀρχιερέως Και?άφα>, ἦλθεν <τις> Ἰωάννης <ὀνόματι> βαπτίζων βάπτισμα μετανοίας ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ ποταμῷ, ὃς ἐλέγετο εἶναι ἐκ γένους Ἀαρὼν τοῦ ἱερέως παῖς Ζαχαρίου καὶ Ἐλισάβετ, καὶ ἐξήρχοντο πρὸς αὐτόν πάντες" (*Pan.* 30.13.4–6).

62 Hugh J. Schonfield, *According to the Hebrews* (London: Duckworth, 1937), 232, is one of the few scholars to recognize this manifest parallel between Luke and the *Hebrew Gospel*, as well as the parallel in Jesus' age of thirty years.

63 καὶ μετὰ τὸ εἰπεῖν πολλὰ ἐπιφέρει ὅτι "τοῦ λαοῦ βαπτισθέντος ἦλθεν καὶ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἐβαπτίσθη ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἰωάννου. καὶ ὡς ἀνῆλθεν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος, ἠνοίγησαν οἱ οὐρανοὶ καὶ εἶδεν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐν εἴδει περιστερᾶς, κατελθούσης καὶ εἰσελθούσης εἰς αὐτόν. καὶ φωνὴ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ λέγουσα· σύ μου εἶ ὁ υἱὸς ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν σοὶ ηὐδόκησα, καὶ πάλιν· ἐγὼ σήμερονγεγέννηκά σε. καὶ εὐθὺς περιέλαμψε τὸν τόπον φῶς μέγα. ὃ ἰδών, φησίν, ὁ Ἰωάννης λέγει αὐτῷ· σὺ τίς εἶ, κύριε; καὶ πάλιν φωνὴ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ πρὸς αὐτόν· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐφ' ὃν ηὐδόκησα. καὶ τότε, φησίν, ὁ Ἰωάννης προσπεσὼν αὐτῷ ἔλεγεν· δέομαί σου, κύριε, σύ με βάπτισον. ὁ δὲ ἐκώλυσεν αὐτὸν λέγων· ἄφες, ὅτι οὕτως ἐστὶ πρέπον πληρωθῆναι πάντα" (*Pan.* 30.13.7–8).

in accordance with Matthew's baptismal narrative, plus the reference to Jesus overriding John's qualms about baptizing him (οὕτως ἐστὶ πρέπον πληρωθῆναι πάντα; Mt. 3.15, οὕτως γὰρ πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῖν πληρῶσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην). The latter reference is reversed, however, for in Matthew it is John who attempts to prevent Jesus from being baptized, whereas according to the text quoted by Epiphanius it is Jesus who prevents John. Jerome's *Against the Pelagians* 3.2 will likewise testify that, in the *Hebrew Gospel*, it was Jesus who attempted to prevent John from the baptism.

Epiphanius' fifth citation from a *Hebrew Gospel* in *Panarion* 30.14.3 repeats and amplifies the third citation about John's baptism.

> For having removed the genealogies of Matthew, they begin, as I said earlier, by saying that "It came to pass in the days of Herod king of Judaea, when Caiaphas was chief priest, a certain man named John came baptizing a baptism of repentance in the Jordan river," etc.[64]

This quotation repeats *Panarion* 30.13.6 quoted above, and, like it, is related more distinctly to Luke than to the Synoptic parallels in Mt. 3.1–2 and Mk 1.4. The wording ἐγένετο ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Ἡρῴδου βασιλέως τῆς Ἰουδαίας again repeats verbatim the opening line of the infancy narrative in Lk. 1.5. The addition of the high priesthood of Caiaphas is also found only in Lk. 3.2, and the reference to "the baptism of repentance in the Jordan river" is closer to Lk. 3.3 than to its parallels in either Mt. 3.1 or Mk 1.4. The repetition of this passage is significant, for, according to its introduction by Epiphanius, the body of the *Hebrew Gospel* began not with the birth of Jesus (so Mt. 1.18), but with the story of Elizabeth and Zechariah (so Lk. 1.5).

A sixth snippet from the *Hebrew Gospel* in *Panarion* 30.14.5 refers to Jesus' rebuff of his mother and brothers. Not only were the Ebionites guilty of compromising the deity of Jesus, according to the testimonies of Epiphanius and Irenaeus, but they also compromised his humanity, as the following passage indicates.

> Again, they deny that [Jesus] was a true man, surely from the word spoken by the Savior when it was announced to him, "Behold, your mother and your brothers are standing outside." The Savior's word was, "Who is my mother and who are my brothers?" And having stretched out his hand to the disciples, he said, "These are my brothers and my mother, those who are doing the desires of my Father."[65]

64 παρακόψαντες γὰρ τὰς παρὰ τῷ Ματθαίῳ γενεαλογίας ἄρχονται τὴν ἀρχὴν ποιεῖσθαι ὡς προείπομεν, λέγοντες ὅτι "ἐγένετο," φησίν, "ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Ἡρῴδου βασιλέως τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἐπὶ ἀρχιερέως Και?άφα, ἦλθέν τις Ἰωάννης ὀνόματι βαπτίζων βάπτισμα μετανοίας ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνη¸ ποταμῷ" καὶ τὰ ἑξῆς (*Pan.* 30.14.3).

65 πάλιν δὲ ἀρνοῦνται εἶναι αὐτὸν ἄνθρωπον, δῆθεν ἀπὸ τοῦ λόγου οὗ εἴρηκεν ὁ σωτὴρ ἐν τῷ ἀναγγελῆναι αὐτῷ ὅτι "ἰδοὺ ἡ μήτηρ σου καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοί σου ἔξω ἑστήκασιν," ὅτι "τίς μού ἐστι μήτηρ καὶ ἀδελφοί; καὶ ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα ἐπὶ τοὺς μαθητὰς ἔφη· οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ ἀδελφοί μου καὶ ἡ μήτηρ καὶ ἀδελφαὶ οἱ ποιοῦντες τὰ θελήματα τοῦ πατρός μου" (*Pan.* 30.14.5).

This is the second of Epiphanius' quotations of the *Hebrew Gospel* that is a harmony of the Synoptics, though again with preference for Matthew and Luke over Mark.

A seventh passage from Epiphanius in *Panarion* 30.16.4–5 is a maverick text with only one possible allusion to Matthew.

> But they claim that [Jesus] was not begotten from God the Father, but rather that he was created as one of the archangels, although greater than them. He rules over both angels and all things made by the Almighty, and he came and instructed, as their so-called Gospel relates, "I came to abolish the sacrifices, and unless you cease from sacrificing, the wrath [of God] will not cease from you."[66]

"I came to abolish the sacrifices" (ἦλθον καταλῦσαι τὰς θυσίας) may suggest, "I did not come to abolish the law" (οὐκ ἦλθον καταλῦσαι τὸν νόμον) of Mt. 5.17. I should like to argue, however, that the phrase is more probably related to a satirical story from *b. Shabbat* 116a–b in the Talmud involving Imma Shalom, wife of Rabbi Eliezer, and sister of Rabban Gamaliel II. A certain "philosopher" of high moral standing lives in their neighborhood. Shalom and Gamaliel hatch a plot to attempt to bribe him by presenting him with a golden lamp in order to secure a favorable verdict from him, and thus tarnish his reputation.

> Imma Shalom, R. Eliezer's wife, was R. Gamaliel's sister. Now a certain philosopher lived in his vicinity, and he bore a reputation that he did not accept bribes. They wished to expose him, so she brought him a gold lamp, went before him, and said to him, "I desire that a share be given me in my [deceased] father's estate." "Divide," ordered he. [R. Gamaliel] said to him, "It is decreed for us, Where there is a son, a daughter does not inherit." [The philosopher replied], "Since the day that you were exiled from your land the Law of Moses has been superseded and another book [= gospel, וועֿ ווילג] given, where it is written, 'A son and daughter inherit equally.'" The next day [R. Gamaliel] brought him a Libyan ass. [The philosopher] said to them, "Look at the end of the book, wherein it is written, 'I came not to diminish the Law of Moses nor to add to the law of Moses, and it is written therein, 'A daughter does not inherit where there is a son.'" [Imma Shalom] said to him, "Let thy light shine forth like a lamp." [R. Gamaliel] to him, "An ass came and knocked the lamp over."[67]

66 οὐ φάσκουσι δὲ ἐκ θεοῦ πατρὸς αὐτὸν γεγεννῆσθαι, ἀλλὰ κεκτίσθαι ὡς ἕνα τῶν ἀρχαγγέλων [καὶ ἔτι περισσοτέρως], αὐτὸν δὲ κυριεύειν καὶ ἀγγέλων καὶ πάντων <τῶν> ὑπὸ τοῦ παντοκράτορος πεποιημένων, καὶ ἐλθόντα καὶ ὑφηγησάμενον, ὡς τὸ παρ' αὐτοῖς εὐαγγέλιον καλούμενον περιέχει, ὅτι "ἦλθον καταλῦσαι τὰς θυσίας, καὶ ἐὰν μὴ παύσησθε τοῦ θύειν, οὐ παύσεται ἀφ' ὑμῶν ἡ ὀργή" (*Pan.* 30.16.4–5).

67 The Aramaic text reads:

אימא שלום דביתהו דרבי אליעזר אחתיה דרבן גמליאל הואי הוה ההוא פילוספא בשבבותיה דהוה שקיל שמא דלא מקבל שוחדא בעו לאחוכי ביה אעיילא ליה שרגא דדהבא ואזול לקמיה אמרה ליה בעינא דניפלגי לי בנכסי דבי נשי אמר להו פלוגו אמר ליה כתיב לן במקום ברא ברתא לא תירות אמר

Rabbi Eliezer was one of the most famous rabbis of his day. According to the Talmud, he was charged before a Roman governor with Christian leanings. In order to counteract Eliezer's Christian sympathies, his wife and brother-in-law conspire to bribe the "philosopher" in the story. The story is a clever anti-Christian parody, beginning with the reference to the gospel as ווילג ווע. The phrase technically means "sin pages," but its vocalization, *awen gilyon*, is an unmistakable homophone for the Greek *euaggelion*, "gospel."[68] *B. Shabbat* 116 does not mention the name of Jesus Christ, but substitutes instead the "gospel" as a personification of Jesus. Both Jewish and Christian interpreters are correct in taking the "philosopher" to be a Christian (spokesman), since he renders a decision based on the gospel. The lampoon ends with the light (= gospel) overturned by a donkey and placed under a bushel, which appears to be a mockery of the motif of the lamp/light in Mt. 5.14–16. The image of a donkey overturning a lamp became a later rabbinic proverb.[69] The point of the satire is to provide a legitimate Jewish response to the claims of Christians, as if to say: Whatever Jesus did, he neither added to nor subtracted from the Torah.[70]

The satire of the Imma Shalom story obviously rests on an intimate acquaintance with Christianity.[71] But what is the "gospel" alluded to? Immediately before the Imma Shalom satire, *Shabbat* 116 addresses the

> להו מן יומא דגליתון מארעכון איתנטלית אורייתא דמשה ואיתיהיבת עון גליון וכתיב ביה ברא וברתא ירתון למחר הדר עייל ליה איהו חמרא לובא אמר להו שפילית לסיפיה דעון גליון וכתיב ביה אנא עון גליון לא למיפחת מן אורייתא דמשה אתיתי אלא אוספי על אורייתא דמשה אתיתי וכתב ביה במקום ברא ברתא לא תירות אמרה ליה נהור נהוריך כשרגא אמר ליה רבן גמליאל אתא חמרא ובטש לשרגא
> (*b. Šabb.* 116a–b)

Cited (with slight changes) from to the *Hebrew-English Edition of the Babylonian Talmud* (ed. I. Epstein; London: Soncino, 1972). On this particular text, see especially B. L. Visotzky, *Fathers of the World: Essay in Rabbinic and Patristic Literature* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 81; and W. D. Davies and D. Allison, Jr., *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (ICC; London and New York: T&T Clark, 1988), 485.

68 Rightly perceived by P. Billerbeck, Str-B 1:241.

69 Str-B 1:242.

70 See the insightful discussion of the passage in Luitpold Wallach, "The Textual History of an Aramaic Proverb (Traces of the Ebionean Gospel)," *JBL* 60 (1941): 408. Likewise, R. T. Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash* (New York: KTAV, 1903), 154–55: "The rectitude of the Jew has been corrupted by the spirit of Christianity, the light of the true religion had been extinguished by a mischievous heresy." The editors of the *Hebrew-English Edition of the Babylonian Talmud* (ed. I. Epstein; New York: Soncino, 1972), *Sabb.* 116b, fn. B, maintain without justification that "[Herford's] conjecture that the story ends with a covert jibe at Christianity is hardly substantiated."

71 The various versions of the saying have been attributed to mutations resulting from the process of oral transmission, or to inaccuracies of memory. Gustaf Dalman, *Jesus Christ in the Talmud, Midrash, Zohar, and the Liturgy of the Synagogue* (trans. and ed. A. W. Streane; New York: Arno, 1973), 66–70, attributes the changes to the former; and Wallach, "The Textual History of an Aramaic Proverb," 407–09, suspects an interpolation on the basis that Mt. 5.17 interrupts the teachings on inheritance in Deut. 27.36 and Num. 27.1–8 that precede and follow it.

problem of the books read by the Minim, which is usually an allusion to Christian literature. *B. Shabbat* 116 appears to give clues to the identification of this Christian literature, for the references to "the Books of *Be Abedan*" and "*Be Nizrefe*" seem to reference the Ebionites and Nazarenes, respectively. If so, then the "gospel" referenced in the subsequent Imma Shalom story would appear to be the *Hebrew Gospel*. No other gospel is introduced, and the context leads one to conclude that the gospel of the "*Abedan*" and "*Nizrefe*," mentioned immediately before, is the gospel referenced in *b. Shabbat* 116, and the source of the citation from it. These clues suggest that *b. Shabbat* 116 is not generic anti-Christian polemic, but directed rather to two Jewish-Christian sects, the Ebionites and Nazarenes, and to the *Sifre Minim*, the *Hebrew Gospel* they read.

R. T. Herford argues for the historicity of the Talmudic story, at least in substance, by placing it in the early 70s.[72] If this date is correct—and the dates of Rabbis Eliezer, Gamaliel II, and the reference to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE all corroborate it—then the saying, "I came not to diminish the Law of Moses," could date to the late first century.[73] Whether or not it predates canonical Matthew is not clear, but if it does, then the "gospel" referred to would doubtlessly be the *Hebrew Gospel*—the same *Hebrew Gospel* mentioned just prior to the satirical story. If this is the case, then the quotation in *b. Shabbat* 116 is the earliest independent witness to the *Hebrew Gospel*.

An eighth and final citation in *Panarion* 30.22.4 also correlates distinctly with Luke. According to Epiphanius, the Ebionites attempted to justify their refusal to eat meat by falsifying a saying of Jesus from the Last Supper (see also *Pan.* 30.15.3–4), "I have truly desired to eat this Passover with you" (Ἐπιθυμί ἐπεθύμησα τοῦτο τὸ πάσχα φαγεῖν μεθ' ὑμῶν). Epiphanius quotes the falsified claim of the Ebionites as follows: "[The Ebionites] changed the saying . . . and made the disciples to say, 'Where do you wish for us to prepare the Passover feast for you?" And look what they make the Lord say, "I have not desired to eat meat in this Passover with you.'"[74]

The statement about "earnestly desiring [to eat] this Passover with you" occurs only in the Eucharistic words of institution in Lk. 22.15. The reference to "earnestly desiring" (Ἐπιθυμίᾳ ἐπεθύμησα) is a literal rendering

72 *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash*, 149. Nicholson, *The Gospel according to the Hebrews*, 147, offers further evidence of its essential historicity on the grounds that (1) from 82 CE until his death in 123, Rabban Gamaliel was president of the synagogue, and it seems unlikely that he would compromise the dignity of that office by the unseemly behavior reported in the satire; and (2) he did not succeed his father until the latter's death in 70 CE; Nicholson thus concludes (3) that the event most plausibly falls in the time frame between 70–82 CE, immediately following the fall of Jerusalem.

73 See Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* (trans. J. Bowden; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), 83.

74 ἤλλαξαν τὸ ῥητόν . . . καὶ ἐποίησαν τοὺς μαθητὰς μὲν λέγοντας "ποῦ θέλεις ἑτοιμάσωμέν σοι τὸ Πάσχα φαγεῖν," καὶ αὐτον δῆθεν λέγοντα "μη ἐπιθυμίᾳ ἐπεθύμησα κρέας τοῦτο τὸ Πάσχα φαγεῖν μεθ' ὑμῶν" (*Pan.* 30.22.4).

in Greek of the Hebrew infinitive absolute נִכְסֹף נִכְסַפְתִּי (e.g., Gen. 31.30). It is a classic Semitism.[75] Neither Greek nor Aramaic shows emphasis in this way, or, if so, only rarely, whereas the use of the infinitive absolute before a finite verb of the same root to show emphasis or decisiveness is typical in Hebrew and ubiquitous in the MT.[76] This construction is further evidence that an original Hebrew expression lay behind Luke's literal Greek rendering.[77]

*John Chrysostom (*c. *347–407)*

In his *Homilies on Matthew*, John Chrysostom includes notes on the occasions of the writing of the Gospels of Luke and John, to which he appends a note that the composition of Hebrew Matthew was requested by Jewish-Christians: "And of Matthew it is said, when Jews who believed approached him and asked him to reduce his spoken words into writing for them, he brought forth the Gospel in the language of the Hebrews."[78]

*Jerome (*c. *345–419)*

The most numerous, specific, and also most contested references to the *Hebrew Gospel* come from the pen of Jerome, who preserves at least twenty-four references to and quotations from it.[79] Jerome's references can be divided into three general categories. The first is a series of passing references to the *Hebrew Gospel* without further description,[80] some of which attribute its use specifically to the sect of the Nazarenes.[81] A second group of references emphasizes the Hebrew character of the Gospel, often with the

75 Elsewhere in Lucan writings, Acts 4.17 (ψ); 5.28; 23.14.

76 The custom of emphasizing the finite verb by the addition of its infinitive is frequent and characteristic of Hebrew, but rare in Aramaic. See Gustaf Dalman, *The Words of Jesus* (trans. D. M. Kay; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1909), 34–35; J. H. Moulton and W. F. Howard, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1930), 2:443; C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge, UK: The University Press, 1960), 178.

77 Nicholson, *The Gospel according to the Hebrews*, 98: "The verse in Luke's form may have been contained in the Gospel according to the Hebrews before the Ebionites corrupted it."

78 λέγεται δὲ καὶ Ματθαῖος, τῶν ἐξ Ἰουδαίων πιστευσάντων προσελθόντων αὐτῷ καὶ παρακαλεσάντων, ἅπερ εἶπε διὰ ῥημάτων, ταῦτα ἀφεῖναι συνθεῖναι διὰ γραμμάτων αὐτοῖς, καὶ τῇ τῶν Ἑβραίων φωνῇ συνθεῖναιτὸ εὐαγγέλιον (*Hom. Matt.* 1.3). Chrysostom's testimony may be indebted to Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.24.5–6.

79 In *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*, II/1 8–10, Harnack lists only nineteen.

80 E.g., *Comm. Matt.* 6:11, "Ín evangelio quod appellatur secundum Hebraeos." Also *Comm. Matt.* 27:16; 27:51; *Comm. Eph.* 5:4.

81 *Comm. Matt.* 23:35, "In euangelio quo utuntur Nazaraeni." Also *Comm. Isa. praef.* (18); *Comm. Isa.* 11:1; *Comm. Isa.* 40:9; *Comm. Ezech.* 16:13; *Comm. Ezech.* 18:7.

added note that the *Urtext* was composed by the Apostle Matthew.[82] In a third set of statements, Jerome testifies in four instances that he translated the *Hebrew Gospel* into Greek and/or Latin.[83]

Among Jerome's more significant references to and quotations from the *Hebrew Gospel* are the following:

> Matthew, also known as Levi, a tax-collector who became an apostle, was the first in Judea to compose a Gospel of Christ in Hebrew letters and words, on whose account those of the circumcision believed, although it is not certain who later translated the Gospel into Greek. Indeed, the Hebrew itself was diligently brought out by Pamphilus the Martyr and is still to this day in the library of Caesarea. I have actually had opportunity to have the volume described to me by people who use it, the Nazarenes of Beroea, a city in Syria. It should be noted that wherever the Evangelist, whether by his own person or by the Lord our Savior, quotes testimonies from the Old Testament that he does not follow the authority of the translators of the Septuagint, but rather the Hebrew, from which these two forms exist: "Out of Egypt I have called my son," and "For he shall be called a Nazarene."[84]

This is not a biographical sketch of Matthew, as we should expect, but rather a bibliographical note about the *Hebrew Gospel*—its composition, transmission, translation, and use. In addition, one-third of Jerome's second chapter on James is also devoted to the *Hebrew Gospel*. The promi-

82 *Epist.* 20, 5 *ad Damasum*, "Denique Matthaeus, qui evangelium Hebraeo sermone conscripsit"; *Epist.* 120, 8 *ad Hedybiam*; *Comm. Isa.* 11:2; "The first evangelist was Matthew, a tax-collector, surnamed Levi, who edited a Gospel in Judea in the Hebrew language chiefly for the sake of Jews who believed in Jesus but were serving in vain the shadow of the law after the true Gospel had come" (Primus omnium Mattheus est publicanus cognomento Levi, qui evangelium in Judaea hebreo sermone edidit, ob eorum vel maxime causam qui in Iesum crediderant ex Iudaeis et nequaquam legis umbra succedente evangelii veritatem servabant, *Comm. Matt.* Praefatio).

83 "The Gospel that is called 'According to the Hebrews' was recently translated by me into the Greek and Latin" (Evangelium quoque, quod appellatur secundum Hebraeos et a me nuper in Graecum Latinumque sermonem translatum est, *Vir. ill.* 2); "In the Gospel used by the Nazarenes and Ebionites that we recently translated from the Hebrew language into Greek and that is called by many the authentic Matthew" (In euangelio quo utuntur Nazareni et Hebionitae quod nuper in graecum de hebraeo sermone transtulimus et quod uocatur a plerisque Mathei authenticum, *Comm. Matt.* 12:13); "the Gospel according to the Hebrews that we have recently translated" (Credideritque evangelio, quod secundum Hebraeos editum nuper transtulimus, *Comm. Mich.* 7:57); also, *Vir ill.* 16.

84 Matthaeus qui et Levi, ex publicano apostolus, primus in Iudaea, propter eos qui ex circumcisione crediderunt, Evangelium Christi Hebraeis litteris verbisque composuit, quod quis postea in Graecum transtulerit, non satis certum est. Porro ipsum Hebraicum habetur usque hodie in Caesariensi bibliotheca, quam Pamphilus martyr studiosissime confecit. Mihi quoque a Nazaraeis qui in Beroea, urbe Syriae, hoc volumine utuntur, describendi facultas fuit. In quo animadvertendum quo ubicumque evangelista, sive ex persona sua sive ex Domini Salvatoris veteris scripturae testimoniis abutitur, non sequatur Septuaginta translatorum auctoritatem, sed Hebraicam. E quibus illa duo sunt: "Ex Aegypto vocavi Filium meum," et "Quoniam Nazaraeus vocabitur" (*Vir. ill.* 3).

nence of the *Hebrew Gospel* in the important early chapters of *Illustrious Men* testifies to its significance for Jerome.

Jerome's most puzzling reference to the *Hebrew Gospel* occurs in *Adversus Pelagianos.*

> In the Gospel according to the Hebrews, which is written in the Chaldean and Syrian language, but in Hebrew characters, and which is used to this day by the Nazarenes, which is of apostolic tradition, or as many assert 'according to Matthew,' which also is found in the library in Caesarea."[85]

This reference, written about 415 CE, late in Jerome's life, should perhaps be understood as evidence that, early in the fifth century, Jerome was aware of the use of the *Hebrew Gospel* in a different form or version by the sect of the Nazarenes. By the late Patristic period the *Hebrew Gospel* evidently circulated among various Jewish-Christian sects in two or more forms. Already in the nineteenth century Adolphus Hilgenfeld considered the Gospel of the Ebionites as a later recension and corruption of an older, and ostensibly original, *Hebrew Gospel.*[86] Like Epiphanius, Jerome does not correlate this *Hebrew Gospel* of Matthew with canonical Greek Matthew. Both Epiphanius and Jerome imply an entirely separate Hebrew document (which in *Against the Pelagians* 3.2 was later translated into either Aramaic or Syriac).

With regard to specific quotations from the *Hebrew Gospel*, several of those preserved by Jerome are rather insignificant and cannot be considered in the space of this article.[87] Jerome's most significant quotations include,

85 In Euangelio iuxta Hebraeos, quod Chaldaico quidem Syroque sermone, sed Hebraicis litteris scriptum est, quo utuntur usque hodie Nazareni, secundum apostolos, siue, ut plerique autumant, iuxta Matthaeum, quod et in Caesariensi habetur bibliotheca (*Pelag.* 3.2). The phrase "secundum apostolos, siue, ut plerique autumant, iuxta Matthaeum" is problematic. Majority opinion renders it "[the Gospel] according to the Apostles," but if Jerome intended a separate document we should expect "iuxta apostolos" (in conformity with "iuxta Hebraeos" and "iuxta Matthaeum" in the same sentence) rather than "secundum apostolos." I am inclined to take "secundum apostolos" as a parenthetical reference to the *Hebrew Gospel*, i.e., that the latter derives from *apostolic tradition*. The meaning seems to be that the Gospel according to the Hebrews is apostolic, or better known as the Gospel of Matthew.

86 *Novum Testamentum Extra Canonem Receptum* 6–12; also Lagrange, "L'Évangile selon les Hébreux," 162. Similarly, Zahn, *Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons* 1/2:776–77, held that the *Hebrew Gospel* known to later church tradition was an expansion of an original Aramaic Gospel that was a *Vorlage* of canonical Greek Matthew. In *Praefatio in Quatuor Evangelia*, Jerome further alludes to a fragmentation of the *Hebrew Gospel* into "various channels."

87 A reference to "Hosanna in the highest" (*Epist.* 20); "Never be joyous unless you observe charity with your brother" (*Comm. Eph.* 5:4); the spelling of "Judah" (*Comm. Matt.* 2:5); meaning of *mahar* in Lord's Prayer (*Comm. Matt.* 6:11); occupation of the man with the withered hand (*Comm. Matt.* 12:13); "son of Jehoiada" (*Comm. Matt.* 23:35); on the name of "Barabbas" (*Comm. Matt.* 17:16); three instances in which Jerome preserves a tradition of the breaking of the temple *lintel* rather than tearing of the temple curtain (*Comm. Matt.* 27:51; *Epist.* 120.8.2; *Hist. pass. Com.* f.65).

first of all, *De viris illustribus* 2, where he recounts an appearance of the risen Christ to James.

> The Gospel also entitled "according to the Hebrews" which I lately translated into Greek and Latin, and which Origen often quotes, contains the following narrative after the Resurrection: "Now the Lord, when he had given the cloth to the servant of the priest, went to James and appeared to him." For James had taken an oath that he would not eat bread from that hour on which he had drunk the cup of the Lord till he saw him risen from the dead. Again a little later the Lord said, "Bring a table and bread," and forthwith it is added: "He took bread and blessed and broke it and gave to James the Just and said to him, 'My brother, eat your bread, for the Son of Man is risen from those who sleep.'"[88]

This quotation begins with Jerome's testimony, made in several different epistles and contexts, of having translated the *Hebrew Gospel* into Greek and/or Latin. The mention of James, without distinguishing him from James the son of Zebedee and brother of John who died in 44 CE, suggests that this account was composed after that date. James *the Just* also recalls the brother of Jesus rather than the son of Zebedee.[89] The James here mentioned must therefore be the bishop of Jerusalem (Gal. 2.9, 13), also called the Lord's brother (Gal. 1.19). The asceticism ascribed to James is typical of other stories in early church tradition in which the Lord's brother abstains from wine, meat, shaving, and so forth.[90] The resurrection narratives are among the most divergent narratives preserved in the Gospels, and although they do not mention a resurrection appearance to James, it does not overtax our

88 According to the translation in J. K. Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 9–10. Jerome's original reads: "Evangelium quoque quod appellatur secundum Hebraeos et a me nuper in Graecum sermonem Latinumque translatum est, quo et Origenes saepe utitur, post resurrectionem Salvatoris refert: 'Dominus autem cum dedisset sindonem servo sacerdotis, ivit ad Iacobum et apparuit ei,' iuraverat enim Iacobus se non comesurum panem ab illa hora qua biberat calicem Domini, donec videret eum resurgentem a dormientibus rursusque post paululum, 'Adferte, ait Dominus, mensam et panem,' statimque additur; 'Tulit panem et benedixit et fregit et dedit Iacobo Iusto et dixit et: "Frater mi, comede panem tuum, quia resurrexit Filius hominis a dormientibus"'" (*Vir. ill.* 2). J. B. Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1971), 274, emends the text to "qua biberat calicem *Dominus*," i.e., "on which the Lord has drunk the cup." Lightfoot explains the resurrection appearance to James as follows: "It is characteristic of a Judaic writer whose aim it would be to glorify the head of the church at all hazards, that an appearance, which seems in reality to have been vouchsafed to this James to win him over from his unbelief, should be represented as a reward for his devotion." For a positive assessment of "the cup" as a metaphor of death, see R. Handmann, *Das Hebräer-Evangelium*, 79–82.

89 Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 2.23: James was "named by all Just from the times of the Lord until our own times."

90 See the many references gathered by Nicholson, *The Gospel according to the Hebrews*, 61–65; and Hengel, *The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ*, 276, n. 454.

credibility—especially in light of the resurrection appearance to James in 1 Cor. 15.7—to imagine an appearance like the one recorded here. The phrase "again a little later" (rursusque post paululum) may in fact splice the record of such an appearance to this account. The mention of the (chief) priest (rather than the Roman guard) seems to anchor this vignette to an early source related to the Sanhedrin.[91] Luke 22.4 (and its several textual variants) is the only Synoptic text suggesting a collusion of the chief priest and the (temple) guard in the arrest of Jesus. Matthew 26.20 and Mk 14.17 both record that only the Twelve participated in the Lord's Supper; this would seem to exclude James, the brother of the Lord, who (although later counted among the "apostles") was not among the original Twelve. Luke 22.14, however, expands the Eucharistic guest list to include the "the apostles," which could include the brother of the Lord.

There is no specific mention in the canonical Gospels of a post-resurrection appearance of Jesus to James, although a passing reference of such occurs in 1 Cor. 15.7. Jerome's account of a special post-resurrection appearance of Jesus to James apparently spawned a series of similar accounts in late antiquity.[92] In the Gospels there are post-resurrection appearances of Jesus to Peter and John, Mary Magdalene and two or three women, Thomas, and Cleopas and another disciple walking to Emmaus. Jerome's reference in *Illustrious Men* 2 may be related to the last appearance to Cleopas and a fellow disciple.[93] In both stories, the resurrected Lord serves a Eucharist-like meal *of bread only* to disciples, and in the same sequence of words: he took bread, blessed, broke, and gave.[94] The presence of bread alone suggests a very early date, which later traditions would have expanded to bread *and wine*. In both stories the meal enlightens previously non-comprehending disciples. The testimony of the *Hebrew Gospel* is close enough to the wording of Lk. 24.30, in fact, to suggest that the mysterious companion of Cleopas may have been James, the brother of the Lord.[95]

91 So R. Handmann, *Das Hebräer-Evangelium*, 78.

92 Klijn, *Jewish-Christian Gospel Tradition*, 80–83, cites a later Greek translation of *Vir. ill.* 2, as well as similar renditions in Pseudo Abdias, Gregory of Tours, the Irish Reference Bible, Sedulius Scottus, and Jacobus a Voragine.

93 Also recognized by Pierson Parker, "A Proto-Lukan Basis for the Gospel according to the Hebrews," *JBL* 59 (1940): 472–73.

94 Lk. 24.30 (Vulg.): accepit panem et benedixit ac fregit et porrigebat illis; *Vir ill.* 2: Tulit panem et benedixit et fregit et dedit Iacobo Iusto. Both readings faithfully render the Greek of Lk. 24.31: λαβὼν τὸν ἄρτον εὐλόγησεν καὶ κλάσας ἐπεδίδου αὐτοῖς.

95 Hegesippus, as quoted by Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 4.22.4), lists James, the brother of the Lord, and Symeon, his cousin, the son of Cleopas, as the first two bishops of Jerusalem. Nicephorus, *Chronographia Brevis* (6, Patriarchae Hierosolymitani), lists James and Symeon Cleopas, both brothers of the Lord, as the first two bishops of Jerusalem.

Further quotations occur in Jerome's commentary on Isa. 11.1–2, in which he twice mentions the *Hebrew Gospel*. Jerome begins the exposition with a play on words: the "root" (*virga*) of Jesse is in truth the holy virgin (*virginem*) Mary; and the flower of the root is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jerome cites no fewer than sixteen biblical references in his two-page commentary on this passage.[96] The only non-canonical text cited—and cited twice—is from the *Gospel of the Hebrews*. The text reads:

> But according to the Gospel that is written in the Hebrew language, the Nazarenes read: "the whole fountain of the Holy Spirit will descend on him." . . . Further, in the Gospel that we mentioned above, we find these words written: "It happened that when the Lord came up out of the water, the whole fountain of the Holy Spirit descended on him, and rested on him, and said to him, 'My Son, in all the prophets I awaited you, that you might come and that I might rest in you. For you are my rest, you are my firstborn Son, who reigns eternally.'"[97]

This citation from the *Hebrew Gospel* does not correspond particularly closely with any one canonical Gospel narrative, for it contains elements found in all of them and in none of them. "The whole fountain of the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus" is not present in the Gospels, although the theme was characteristic of Judaism and early Christianity in general.[98] The *Hebrew Gospel* was thus not a compilation of the four canonical baptismal narratives, but preserved a fuller baptismal narrative than any of them. In the Old Testament echoes and imagery in the *Hebrew Gospel*, Handmann detects evidence of a very early baptismal account.[99] Overall, the narrative quoted by Jerome seems to combine the theology of John's baptismal

96 Pss. (2x), Prov., Cant., Isa., Zech., Mal., Mt. (2x), John (2x), Rom., Col., 1 Cor., 2 Cor., 1 Jn.

97 Sed iuxta evangelium quod Hebraeo sermone conscriptum legunt Nazaraei: "Descendet super eum omnis fons Spiritus sancti." . . . Porro in evangelio, cuius supra fecimus mentionem, haec scripta reperimus: "Factum est autem cum ascendisset Dominus de aqua, descendit fons omnis Spiritus sancti, et requievit super eum, et dixit illi: 'Fili mi, in omnibus prophetis exspectabam te, ut venires, et requiescerem in te. Tu es enim requies mea, tu es filius meus primogenitus, qui regnas in sempiternum'" (*Comm. Isa.* 11:1–3). Contra Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 10, and *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum* 27, I take the words following "Spiritus sancti" (Dominus autem spiritus est, et ubi spiritus Domini, ibi libertas = The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty) to be a quotation of 2 Cor. 3.17 and not part of the quotation from the *Hebrew Gospel*. Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*, 9, rightly omits the phrase.

98 Klijn, *Jewish-Christian Gospel Tradition*, 99–100, cites Ps. 36.10; Jer. 2.13; 17.13; Rev. 21.6; 2 *Bar.* 3:12, and passages in Justin Martyr and Tertullian.

99 R. Handmann, *Das Hebräer-Evangelium*, 68–69: "Diese Taufgeschichte . . . steht aber den alttestamentlichen Vorstellungen viel näher . . . und trägt desshalb auch einen alterthümlicheren Charakter zur Schau . . . Die Taufe Christi ist also im H.E. mit der ächt jüdischen Anschauung der Messiasweihe verbunden."

narrative (1.32–33) in the language of Isa. 11.1–2. With good reason, Jerome cited the *Hebrew Gospel* in relation to Isa. 11.1–2, for its version of the baptism is a veritable consummation of the prophetic text.

In Jerome's *Commentary on Ezekiel*, a passage from the *Hebrew Gospel* is cited with reference to the injunction in Ezek. 18.7 not to wrong anyone. "In the Gospel according to the Hebrews that is common to the Nazarenes, among the greatest of wrongs is 'to grieve the spirit of one's brother.'"[100] Jerome's comment on Ezek. 18.7 consists of a catena of proof texts on *contristare*, including Eph. 4.30, "Do not grieve (Lat.: *contristare*) the Holy Spirit of God," who "dwells in you" (Rom. 8.9, 11; 1 Cor. 3.16). Jerome concludes by quoting the above passage from the *Hebrew Gospel*, which, in the Latin translation, again employs *contristare*. The inclusion of the *Hebrew Gospel*—the only non-canonical text in his pool of sources—attests to its status not only in Jerome's estimation but also among his readership.

The reference in the *Hebrew Gospel* to the greatest of wrongs being a violation of one's brother must be related to Lk. 17.1–2. There, Jesus says that sin is inevitable, but that violations of one's brother must be avoided at all costs. Indeed, he warns, it would be better to be thrown into the sea with a millstone around one's neck than to cause "your brother" to stumble. The Luke 17 passage picks up the two foci of the *Hebrew Gospel* cited by Jerome—the gravest of wrongs, and grievance against a brother. Lk. 17.1–2 is immediately followed by a passage in verses 3–4 about rebuking and then forgiving a sinful brother. In Jerome's final quotation of the *Hebrew Gospel* in *Against the Pelagians* 3.2, we shall see a saying about forgiving a sinful brother seventy times seven. The passage on the gravity of sinning against a brother that Jerome here cites from the *Hebrew Gospel* must have immediately preceded the one he cites in *Against the Pelagians* on forgiving a brother seventy times seven. The two passages evidently formed a unit in the *Hebrew Gospel*, as they do in Lk. 17.1–4.[101]

In addition to this reference, Jerome immediately appends the following two citations from the *Hebrew Gospel*:

> And behold, the mother of the Lord and his brothers were saying to him, "John the Baptist baptizes for the remission of sins; let us go and be baptized with him." He [Jesus] said to them, "What sin have I committed that I should go and be baptized by him? Unless in saying this I am in ignorance."[102] And

100 Et in evangelio quod iuxta Hebraeos Nazaraei legere consuerunt, inter maxima ponitur crimina: "qui fratris sui spiritum contristaverit" (*Comm. Ezech.* 18:7).

101 R. Handmann, *Das Hebräer-Evangelium*, 87, correctly notes the Lucan preservation of the originality of the *Hebrew Gospel* and the Matthean mutilation of it: "Die Ursprünglichkeit [der Lesung liegt] auf Seiten des H.E., wie uns auch Luc. 17,4 den Ausspruch Jesus vom siebenmaligen Vergeben an einem Tage richtig erhalten hat, freilich zusammengearbeitet mit anderen Sprüchen, wesshalb bei ihm der Dialog ganz weggefallen ist, während er bei Mtth. verstümmelt erscheint."

102 This statement could also perhaps be translated: "Unless perhaps I said something in ignorance."

> in the same volume, he [Jesus] said: "If your brother would sin in word and would make restitution to you seven times in one day, receive him." His disciple Simon said to him, "Seven times in one day?" The Lord responded and said to him, "Even, I say to you, as many as seventy times seven. For even in the prophets this word about sin was found after they were anointed by the Holy Spirit."[103]

This quotation contains two sin-texts from the *Hebrew Gospel*, the first from the baptism of Jesus, and the second similar to the saying on forgiveness in Mt. 18.21–22 and Lk. 17.3–4. As in Mt. 3.15, the *Hebrew Gospel* also questions why Jesus, who is sinless, should be baptized. The saying on the forgiveness of sins depends on Lev. 26.18–28, in which the Israelites are instructed on a sevenfold chastisement for their sins. In the *Hebrew Gospel*, however, as well as in Matthew and Luke, the sevenfold is applied not to chastisement but to forgiveness. As in the preceding baptismal text, the account of the forgiveness of the sinful brother shares a thematic relationship to Matthew and Luke, although with noticeable differences in details from the canonical Gospels.

Jerome's citation of the *Hebrew Gospel*, however, reveals several remarkable agreements with Lk. 17.3–4. First, "remission of sins" is distinctively Lucan.[104] Further, in both the *Hebrew Gospel* and Lk. 17.3–4, the initial question is put by Jesus—and in the same verb tense. The Vulgate translation of Luke and Jerome's Latin citation of the *Hebrew Gospel* also preserve two, three-word sequences verbatim.[105] Moreover, the idea of sinning "in word" in Jerome's quotation seems curiously restrictive. One is tempted to see behind *verbo* the Hebrew דבר, which would result in the more plausible rendering, "If your brother would sin in any *thing* . . ." Luke's vocabulary and syntax (ἐὰν ἁμάρτῃ ὁ ἀδελφός σου) allow for this phrase, but Matthew's does not. The same point should be made about the final use of *sermo*; if it renders רבד, the preferable translation "any *manner* of sin was found" results. Finally, Luke alone of the Evangelists refers to the anointing of the Holy Spirit (e.g., "God anointed him with the Holy Spirit," Acts 10.38; also Lk. 4.18; Acts 4.27). Thus, although Luke's version of the saying on forgiveness is shorter than Matthew's, it agrees in important details more closely with the form of the saying cited by Jerome from the *Hebrew Gospel*. Perhaps more important than the particulars themselves is the fact

103 Et ecce mater Domini et fratres eius dicebant ei: "Iohannes Baptista baptizat in remissionem peccatorum; eamus et baptizemur ab eo." Dixit autem eis: "Quid peccavi, ut vadam et baptizer ab eo? Nisi forte hoc ipsum quod dixi, ignorantia est." Et in eodem volumine: "Si peccaverit," inquit, "frater tuus in verbo et satis tibi fecerit, septies in die suscipe eum." Dixit illi Simon discipulus eius: "Septies in die?" Respondit Dominus, et dixit ei: "Etiam, ego dico tibi, usque septuagies septies. Etenim in Prophetis quoque, postquam uncti sunt Spiritu sancto, inventus est sermo peccati" (*Pelag.* 3.2).

104 The phrase occurs once in Mt. 26.28, twice in Mk 1.4 and 3.29, but thrice in Lk. 1.77; 3.3; 24.47, and five times in Acts 2.38; 5.31; 10.43; 13.38; 26.18.

105 "peccaverit frater tuus"; "septies in die."

that the commonalities between Luke and the *Hebrew Gospel* are *incidental*, i.e., they are not anchor data that would be consciously remembered. This agreement of incidental particulars would seem to heighten the likelihood of a literary relationship between the *Hebrew Gospel* and Luke.

Theodoret of Cyrrhus (393–c. 460)

Only a remnant of the theological legacy of Theodoret of Cyrrhus has survived, but his name appears in relation to the *Hebrew Gospel* with regard to a five-volume work entitled *Haereticarum Fabularum*, where he condemns the Ebionites as those "who alone accept the Gospel according to the Hebrews, and regard the Apostle [Paul] as apostate."[106] Theodoret's testimony may echo Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* 3.27.4 rather than express his own personal acquaintance with the *Hebrew Gospel*.[107] Whatever the source, Theodoret's statement indicates the enduring legacy of the *Hebrew Gospel* in the fifth century.

Marius Mercator (early fifth century)

A Latin writer who was probably from Italy,[108] and who was a friend and disciple of Augustine, Marius Mercator commented on the above text of Theodoret and on a reference to the *Hebrew Gospel* in Jerome. "The followers of Ebion"—and here Marius quotes Theodoret of Cyrrhus—"receive only the Gospel according to the Hebrews, they call the Apostle (Paul) an apostate . . . they make use of the Gospel according to Matthew alone."[109]

Philip Sidetes (early fifth century)

Another early fifth-century historian, whose work also survives only in fragmentary form, was Philip Sidetes, a native of Side in Pamphylia. The following reference to the *Hebrew Gospel* is found in Philip's thirty-six-volume *Christian History*: "The Gospel according to the Hebrews and the Gospel attributed to Peter and Thomas were wholly repudiated (by the ancients) who asserted that they were jointly written by heretics."[110] Philip's

106 μόνον δὲ τὸ καθ' Ἑβραίους εὐαγγέλιον δέχονται, τὸν δὲ ἀπόστολον ἀποστάτην καλοῦσι (*Haer. fab. comp.* 2.1) A subsequent passage notes of the Ebionites: εὐαγγελίῳ δὲ τῷ κατὰ Ματθαῖον κέχρηνται μόνῳ (ibid.).

107 Both mention that the Ebionites accept only the *Hebrew Gospel* and consider the Apostle Paul apostate; see Lagrange, "L'Évangile selon les Hébreux," 180.

108 Mercator is often supposed to be of African origin, but that may be a mistake due to his association with Augustine, who was a North African.

109 Solum hi (the Ebionites) Evangelium secundum Hebraeos recipient, Apostolum vero apostatam vocant . . . Evangelio autem secundum Matthaeium solo utuntur (Marius Mercator, *de Haeresi et Libris Nestorii*, 4.2 [PL 48.1127–28]).

110 τὸ δὲ καθ' Ἑβραίους εὐαγγέλιον καὶ τὸ λεγόμενον Πέτρου καὶ Θωμᾶ τελείως ἀπέβαλλον [the ancients] αἱρετικῶν ταῦτα συγγράμματα λέγοντες (cited from Lagrange, "L'Évangile selon les Hébreux," 181).

reference indicates that the *Hebrew Gospel* was known in Constantinople in the fifth century, but he is the only Father to place the *Hebrew Gospel* in the rejected category of texts.

Venerable Bede (c. 673–735)

A single reference to the *Hebrew Gospel* appears in the commentary on Lk. 1.1–4 of the Venerable Bede:

> Here it must be noted that the Gospel according to the Hebrews, as it is called, is not to be reckoned among apocryphal but among ecclesiastical histories; for it seemed good even to the translator of Holy Scripture himself, Jerome, to cite many testimonies from it, and to translate it into the Latin and Greek language.[111]

Having quoted Luke's "magnificent prologue," Bede quickly denounces the superstitions of Basilides and Apelles and the many pseudonymous gospels circulating under the names of the Twelve Apostles. Among the latter he mentions the Gospels of Thomas and Bartholomew. Bede declares that the Gospel according to the Hebrews, by contrast, belongs not to detestable counterfeits, but to "ecclesiastical histories," by which he means the orthodox tradition.

Scholia in Codex 566

In the margins of the Gospels of Matthew in codex 566, edited by Constantin von Tischendorf, four scholia are preserved that are attributed to the *Hebrew Gospel*. They appear at Mt. 4.5; 16.7; 18.22; and 26.74, each introduced by "The Jewish [Gospel]" (τὸ ἰουδαϊκόν), followed by an emended reading.[112] That "the Jewish [Gospel]" refers to the *Hebrew Gospel* is made probable by the fact that the third and longest scholium to Mt. 18.22 preserves a Greek reading that Jerome preserves in Latin and attributes to the "Gospel according to the Hebrews."[113] Codex 566 is dated to the twelfth century and thus beyond the chronological limit of this study, but Tischendorf, who claims to have brought the manuscript to St. Petersburg "from the east," edited and published 566 in his critical edition of *Codex Sinaiticus* with the following enthusiastic endorsement of the four marginal scholia: "But of

111 Inter quae notandum quod dicitur euangelium iuxta Hebraeos non inter apocriphas sed inter ecclesiasticas numerandum historias. Nam et ipsi sacrae scripturae interpreti Hieronimo pleraque ex eo testimonia usurpare, et ipsum in Latinum Graecumque visum est transferre sermonem (*In Lucae Evangelium Expositio* 1.1–4; CCSL 120, 19–20).

112 A. Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*, I/1.10.

113 Scholium to Mt. 18.22 of Cod. Sinaiticus, τὸ ἰουδαι?κὸν ἑξῆς ἔχει μετὰ τὸ ἐβδομακοντάκις ἑπτά· καὶ γάρ ἐν τοῖς προφήταις μετὰ τὸ χρισθῆναι αὐτοὺς ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ εὑρίσκετο ἐν αὐτοῖς λόγος ἁμαρτίας. Jerome, *Pelag.* 3:2, In Euangelio iuxta Hebraeos . . . Etenim in Prophetis quoque, postquam uncti sunt Spiritu sancto, inuentus est sermo peccati.

greatest importance are four notes in our codex, written in the margin of the gospel according to Matthew only. These, indeed, arose from no other source than the *Gospel of the Hebrews*, and were arranged so as to bring some light to one inquiring regarding what relation there is between the Gospel of Matthew and that celebrated writing."[114]

Islamic Hadith (ninth to tenth century)

Finally, knowledge of the *Hebrew Gospel* extended into the Islamic Hadith. "Khadija then accompanied [Muhammad] to her cousin Waraqa ibn Naufal ibn Asad ibn 'abdul 'Uzza, who, during the Pre-Islamic Period became a Christian and used to write the writing with Hebrew letters. He would write from the Gospel in Hebrew as much as Allah wished him to write."[115] Sayings in the Hadith are undated and difficult precisely to date. For Muslims, however, *hadith* connote eyewitness testimony, and predominantly in oral form. By definition, therefore, *hadith* connote early tradition. This particular *hadith* likely comes from the early years of Muhammad's work on the Qur'an, or at least from the early Islamic period, because there is no anti-Jewish or anti-Christian polemic in the saying, both of which tend to characterize later Islamic references to "The People of the Book." This extraneous reference, coupled with the reference to the *Hebrew Gospel* in Nicephorus' *Chronographia Brevis*, expands the attestation to the *Hebrew Gospel* from Ignatius and Papias in the late first century and early second century well into the Byzantine and Islamic worlds.

Summary and Evaluation of the Hebrew Gospel *in Early Christianity*

The foregoing survey of the *Hebrew Gospel* in early Christianity has revealed three matters, above all, that require special consideration in conclusion. One is the particular relationship of the *Hebrew Gospel* to the various Jewish-Christian gospels that circulated in early Christianity. A second and broader matter is the need to assess the overall status of the *Hebrew Gospel* in early Christianity. Third and finally, I wish to conclude with a particular

114 Aenoth. Frid. Const. Tischendorf, *Notitia Editionis Codicis Bibliorum Sinaitici*, Lipsiae: F. A. Brockhaus, 1860. The dating of codex 566 to the twelfth century should not overly bias readers against the value of the marginal notations. The dating itself is very provisional, since Tischendorf regarded 566 as a separated part of codex L (039), which is dated to the ninth century. Whatever the date, Tischendorf believed the notations both ancient and important. Tischendorf's original Latin quotation reads: "Sed maximi momenti sunt notae quattuor in codice nostro eoque solo margini evangelii secundum Matthaeum adscriptae, quippe quae non aliunde nisi ex evangelio Hebraeorum fluxerunt atque ita sunt comparatae, ut quaerenti, quae tandem inter Matthaei evangelium et celeberrimam illam scripturam ratio intercesserit, aliquid lucis afferrant" (58).

115 Sahih al-Bukhari 1.3.

hypothesis regarding the relationship of the *Hebrew Gospel* to the Gospel of Luke.

The Hebrew Gospel *and Jewish-Christian Gospels in General*

The precise relationship of the *Hebrew Gospel* to the so-called Jewish-Christian gospels in early Christianity is, and will doubtlessly remain, problematic, but, two conclusions seem reasonably clear. First, "The Traditions of Mathias" and the "Teachings (of the Apostles)," two Jewish-Christians texts that are sometimes equated with the *Hebrew Gospel*, should not be confused with the *Hebrew Gospel*. The "Traditions" and the "Teachings" were unanimously proscribed throughout the Patristic period, whereas the Fathers unanimously esteemed the *Hebrew Gospel*.

A second conclusion, more qualified, but still reasonably certain, pertains to the relationship of the *Hebrew Gospel* to "the Gospel of the Ebionites" and "the Gospel of the Nazarenes."[116] The Gospel according to the Hebrews was widely attested in the early church, although it did not circulate under a fixed epithet.[117] It is important to clarify here that "The Gospel of the Ebionites" was almost certainly not a separate document from the *Hebrew Gospel*. Indeed, "The Gospel of the Ebionites" is a neologism of modern scholarship. This title is commonly associated with the gospel that

116 H. Waitz, "Neue Untersuchungen über die sogen. judenchristlichen Evangelien," 61–81, provides a list of the major German scholars who divide the Jewish-Christian gospels into these traditions, although Waitz himself argues for only two traditions—the *Hebrew Gospel* (which he believes was identical with the so-called *Gospel of the Ebionites* mentioned by Epiphanius) and the *Gospel of the Nazarenes*. Prior to Waitz, A. Resch, *Agrapha. Aussercanonische Evangelienfragmente*, 326–27, also limited the tradition to two recensions by the Nazarenes and Ebionites. The threefold tradition is advocated and expounded by Vielhauer and Strecker, "Jewish-Christian Gospels," 134–78; and Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 3–16. Klijn's pronouncement on this matter is the most dogmatic: Es ist heute unbestritten, dass von kirchlichen Schriftstellern mittelbar oder unmittelbar drei verschiedene judenchristliche Evangelien angeführt worden sind, nämlich das Hebräerevangelium, das Nazoräerevangelium and das Ebionitenevangelium" ("Das Hebräer- und das Nazoräerevangelium," *ANRW* II 25.5:3997; also, Klijn, *Jewish-Christian Gospel Tradition*, 29–36).

117 The *Hebrew Gospel* is referred to variously by the Fathers—and even variously by a given Father—as "the Gospel according to the Hebrews," "the Gospel existing among the Jews in the Hebrew language," "the Gospel that has come to us in Hebrew characters," "the Gospel according to Matthew," "the Hebrew Gospel," "the Gospel that is written in Hebrew letters," "the Gospel according to the Hebrews . . . according to the Apostles, or, as very many reckon, according to Matthew," "the Gospel that is written in Hebrew and read by the Nazarenes," "the Gospel that the Nazarenes and Ebionites use," "the Gospel that the Nazarenes use." For names and references, see A. Resch, *Agrapha. Aussercanonische Evangelienfragmente*, 322–23. The fact that the *Hebrew Gospel* was known by different names is scarcely an argument against either its existence or its identifiable content and text type. Criminologists as well as secret police in oppressive regimes (e.g., the Stasi in former East Germany) know that truth-tellers often vary in their description of a factual matter, whereas liars formulate a fixed alibi and adhere to it without alteration.

Epiphanius mentions in *Panarion* 29 and 30. Technically speaking, however, it is a misnomer, for the title "The Gospel of the Ebionites" never occurs in Epiphanius or in any other ancient source.[118] Epiphanius speaks of "the Hebrew Gospel *used* by the Ebionites," but neither he nor any Church Father specifies a "Gospel of the Ebionites." The absence of the supposed title "The Gospel of the Ebionites" in Patristic literature is quite significant. Had a separate "Gospel of the Ebionites" existed beyond the *Hebrew Gospel*, we can scarcely imagine that Irenaeus or Epiphanius—or any of the Fathers—would have left it unmentioned.

A similar conclusion must also be drawn with respect to "the Gospel of the Nazarenes."[119] The vocabulary of the early church implies that "the Gospel of the Ebionites" and "the Gospel of the Nazarenes" were not different documents, but rather the *Hebrew Gospel* as it was used by the Ebionite and Nazarene communities. Jerome reinforces this equation by referring to the one *Hebrew Gospel* used by two Jewish-Christian sects, "the Gospel used by the Nazarenes and Ebionites."[120] "It would appear," notes Klijn correctly, "that Jerome always speaks of one single Gospel but gives it various names."[121] This seems to have been true throughout the Patristic period. In his early fourth-century canonical classifications, Eusebius speaks of "the Gospel according to the Hebrews" as a single entity rather than as a family of Jewish-Christian gospels. Never in Eusebius' several references to the *Hebrew Gospel* does he designate it as "The Gospel of the Ebionites" or "The Gospel of the Nazarenes," or use such titles.[122] The testimony of the ancient sources implies that "the Gospel of the Ebionites" and "the Gospel of the Nazarenes" were either identical with the *Hebrew Gospel* of the Apostle Matthew, or clearly within its textual family.

The General Consensus of the Early Church Regarding the Hebrew Gospel

The survey of the *Hebrew Gospel* in Part I reveals a nearly univocal consensus in early Christianity that the Apostle Matthew published an original gospel written in Hebrew that was occasionally called "The Gospel

118 Hilgenfeld, *Novum Testamentum Extra Canonem Receptum*, 10, mistakes Theodoret's testimony in *Haer. Fab.* 2:1 to read τὸ κατὰ Ἐβιωναίους εὐαγγέλιον (the Gospel according to the Ebionites), whereas Theodoret's original in fact reads τὸ κατὰ Ἑβραίους εὐαγγέλιον (the Gospel according to the Hebrews).

119 Lührmann, *Die apokryph gewordenen Evangelien*, 244–45, thinks the "Nazarenes" mentioned by Jerome hailed from the "sect of the Nazarenes" mentioned in Acts 24.5, 14. This could be true, but it is not certain. Particularly in the Early Patristic period the epithet "Nazarene" was used generically of followers of Jesus. It could (and probably did) refer to any number of groups in the intervening three and a half centuries between the writings of Luke and Jerome.

120 *Comm. Matt.* 12.13.

121 Klijn, *Jewish-Christian Gospel Tradition*, 18, 27.

122 Dorival, "Un groupe judéo-chrétien méconnu: Les Hébreux," 7–36; D. Lührmann, *Die apokryph gewordenen Evangelien*, 239.

of Matthew," but was more frequently known as "the Gospel according to the Hebrews" or simply "the Hebrew Gospel." Four Church Fathers—Eusebius, Epiphanius, Jerome, and Theodoret of Cyrrhus—attest that the *Hebrew Gospel* was identical with this "Gospel of Matthew."[123] This Hebrew "Gospel of Matthew," as we have seen, is not a Hebrew version of canonical Greek Matthew, nor closely related to canonical Matthew. Theodore of Mopsuestia's accusation that Jerome fabricated the *Hebrew Gospel* is the lone challenge to this tradition among the Fathers;[124] otherwise, the Matthean authorship of the *Hebrew Gospel* was affirmed by a dozen Fathers and not challenged by any ancient writer. The above attestations of Eusebius, Epiphanius, Jerome, and Theodoret explicitly state what was generally and widely affirmed throughout the early church, that the *Gospel of the Hebrews* was originally composed in Hebrew by the Apostle Matthew.

The tradition of an original gospel written in Hebrew was widespread and enduring in early Christianity.[125] Twenty Church Fathers attest to this tradition—Ignatius, Papias, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Pantaenus, Hegesippus, Hippolytus, Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, Ephrem of Syria, Didymus of Alexandria, Epiphanius, John Chrysostom, Jerome, Theodoret, Marius Mercator, Philip Sidetes, the Venerable Bede, Nicephorus, and Sedulius Scottus. References to the *Hebrew Gospel* by Pope Damasus, the Islamic Hadith, the scholia of Tischendorf, and tractate *Shabbat* 116 in the Babylonian Talmud lengthen the list to over two dozen different witnesses. Each source mentions the *Hebrew Gospel* at least once, and most mention it several times. Jerome references the *Hebrew Gospel* twenty-four times. Combined, there are some seventy-five different attestations to the *Hebrew Gospel*, extending from the late first century to the early tenth century. Several of these references appear in Latin authors of late antiquity and the early Middle Ages, and this is significant, for "the period from roughly 550 to 750 was one of almost unrelieved gloom for the Latin classics on the continent; they virtually ceased being copied."[126] It is true that Patristic and ecclesiastical texts fared better during this wintry interlude than did the

123 Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.17.1; Epiphanius, *Pan.* 30.3.7; Jerome, *Pelag.* 3.2; Theodoret, *Haer. Fab.* 2.1.

124 Photius, *Bibliotheca* 177: τοῦτον (i.e., Jerome) δὲ πέμπτον εὐαγγέλιον προσαναπλάσαι λέγει (i.e., Theodore of Mopsuestia), ἐν ταῖς Εὐσεβίου τοῦ Παλαιστίνου βιβλιοθήκαις ὑποπλαττόμενον εὑρεῖν ("[Jerome] ascribed an additional fifth gospel, he [Theodore] says, feigning to have found it in the library of Eusebius of Palestine"). Photius died in the late ninth century (*c.* 890).

125 Contra Resch, *Agrapha. Aussercanonische Evangelienfragmente*, 324–26, who says the evidence for the *Hebrew Gospel* is "verhältnissmässig späte Ausbildung und eng begrenzte Verbreitung." M. Hengel, *The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ*, 73, correctly declares that "The trace of a Jewish-Christian Gospel (or even several) in Aramaic (and afterwards in Greek) runs through the whole of the early church, beginning with Papias . . ."

126 L. D. Reynolds and N. G. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature* (3rd edn.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), 85.

Latin classics. Nevertheless, repeated references to the *Hebrew Gospel* from Latin authors of the period attest to the depth of its roots in ancient church tradition.

Specific witnesses to the *Hebrew Gospel* come from Lyons, Rome, Constantinople, Jerusalem, Alexandria, and as far east as India. Those points are roughly coextensive with the Roman Empire in the same centuries, with the exception of India, which was well beyond its eastern frontier. Twelve Fathers attribute the *Hebrew Gospel* to the Apostle Matthew, and eleven Fathers specify that it was written in Hebrew. No other non-canonical document occupied the "disputed" category in canonical deliberations in the early church as long and consistently as did the *Hebrew Gospel*. To my knowledge no other non-canonical text was cited as frequently and positively alongside canonical texts in the exegesis of early Christianity. More important, witnesses to the *Hebrew Gospel* are as ancient as are Patristic witnesses to any of the four canonical Gospels.[127] The placement of the *Hebrew Gospel* in the disputed category in canonical deliberations attests to the very considerable status that it possessed in widespread Christian communities over long periods of time. The *Hebrew Gospel* was the most highly esteemed non-canonical document in the early church.[128]

The Hebrew Gospel *and the Gospel of Luke*

Finally, I wish to conclude with a particular hypothesis regarding the relationship of the *Hebrew Gospel* and the Gospel of Luke.[129] A careful analysis of the quotations from the *Hebrew Gospel* reveals that three-fifths of them exhibit stronger agreement with Luke than with Matthew and/or Mark. Contrary to many scholarly discussions of this matter, Patristic citations of the *Hebrew Gospel* are not "general Synoptic text types," but

127 Nicholson, *The Gospel according to the Hebrews*, 110: "The reader who has not studied the history of the Canon will nevertheless assume that far more ancient witness can be brought for the authority and authorship of the canonical Gospels than for the authority and authorship of the Gospel according to the Hebrews. He will make a great mistake." Nicholson demonstrates that the second-century witness of Irenaeus, Hegesippus, and Papias to the *Hebrew Gospel* is not inferior, but is in some cases superior, to testimony to the four canonical Gospels of the same period.

128 Parker, "A Proto-Lucan Basis for the Gospel according to the Hebrews," 471: "the Gospel according to the Hebrews was by far the most important aside from the canonical four"; Gla, *Die Originalsprache des Matthäusevangeliums*, 109: "Kein Apocryphum genoss in der Kirche solches Ansehen, wie die Hebräerurkunde"; Nicholson, *The Gospel according to the Hebrews*, 82: "The Fathers of the Church, while the Gospel according to the Hebrews was yet extant in its entirety, referred to it always with respect, often with reverence; some of them unhesitatingly accepted it as being what tradition affirmed it to be—the work of Matthew—and even those who have not put on record their expression of this opinion have not questioned it."

129 For a fuller statement and substantiation of the following thesis, see my *The Hebrew Gospel and the Formation of the Synoptic Tradition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009).

demonstrably closer to the Third Gospel than to any other. It is, of course, possible—and often assumed—that material in the *Hebrew Gospel* was derived from the Synoptics, or Luke. None of the Fathers who quote from the *Hebrew Gospel*, however, make this claim. Rather, the Fathers imply that the *Hebrew Gospel* is independent of the canonical Gospels and prior to them. Moreover, the *Hebrew Gospel* clearly contained material not found in the canonical Gospels. The composite evidence points rather persuasively, in fact, to the conclusion that the *Hebrew Gospel* is one of the *sources* of the Gospel of Luke alluded to in the prologue (Lk. 1.1–4). More specifically, the *Hebrew Gospel* appears to have been Luke's major source for material in Special Luke, i.e., Lucan material not paralleled in either Matthew or Mark. This satisfactorily accounts for the demonstrable increase in Hebraisms in Lucan material that is not derived from Mark or paralleled with Matthew. This proposal further explains why the quotations of the *Hebrew Gospel* correspond predominantly to the Greek text of Luke, for the *Hebrew Gospel* used by the Ebionites or Nazarenes would be a copy with minor corruptions of the same Greek translation of the original *Hebrew Gospel* that Luke used as one of the sources of his Gospel. This Greek translation obviously cannot have been canonical Greek Matthew, for quotations of the *Hebrew Gospel* show no particular affinity with canonical Greek Matthew. More importantly, the proposal explains why quotations from the *Hebrew Gospel* correspond predominantly with material unique to Luke. The correspondence is due to the reasonable inference that Luke's primary source for Special Luke was the original *Hebrew Gospel* itself.

Chapter 9

Trapped in a Forgerer's Rhetoric: *3 Corinthians*, Pseudepigraphy, and the Legacy of Ancient Polemics

Caleb Webster

Introduction

Whether on account of date, style, or both, *3 Corinthians* never attained the widespread revered status of other early Christian or, more specifically, Pauline pseudepigrapha. Though preserved in several languages (Greek, Latin, Armenian, and Coptic), it appears that, after the third century, the text fell out of regular use, except in the Armenian church, where it continued to be used for some time. A few likely explanations for its failure stand out: having a letter from Corinth in addition to a response from Paul seemed suspect to an early audience; *3 Corinthians*' association with the *Acts of Paul* (AP) may have diminished its chances at canonicity;[1] or the letter merely failed, stylistically, to persuade enough readers of its authenticity. Likely, each of these carries some weight in assessing *3 Corinthians*' failure to obtain long-lasting, far-reaching canonicity.

Still, if the authorship of *3 Corinthians* has been generally regarded as suspect, its theology has been consistently regarded as "orthodox." For example, in one of the most exhaustive treatments to date on *3 Corinthians*, Vahan Hovhanessian describes the document as, "a polemical tool used by the orthodox Church to refute the teachings of her Gnostic opponents."[2] Most scholars of the twentieth century, sharing a similar regard for the teachings of the text, would describe it as a forgery coming out of the burgeoning orthodoxy of the second-century church against a particular heresy of the day. As such, it is harmless—problematic in its deception, though pardonable, or even noble, in its quest.

1 For a current synopsis on the relationship of *3 Corinthians* to the *Acts of Paul*, see Gerard Luttikhuizen, "The Apocryphal Correspondence with the Corinthians and the *Acts of Paul*," *The Apocryphal Acts of Paul and Thecla* (ed. Jan N. Bremmer; Kampen, Netherlands: Kok Pharos, 1996), 80–81. I briefly detail this below.

2 Vahan Hovhanessian, *Third Corinthians: Reclaiming Paul for Christian Orthodoxy* (Studies in Biblical Literature 18; Frankfurt: Lang, 2000), 136.

As consistently as scholars have identified the author as "orthodox," they have varied in their identification of the antagonists inspiring the text. Indeed, apart from the ancient heresiologies, few texts can match *3 Corinthians* for its explicitness in describing the beliefs of its opponents. The pseudepigrapher is partially able to accomplish this through the addition of his "Corinthian" letter, as the Corinthians themselves are able to explain the teachings of a certain Simon and Cleobius, that they find problematic, to Paul, saving the pseudepigrapher from having to make his hero write with more confined structure than would seem fitting for the historical Paul (as it is, the letter is already suspiciously focused on one topic). In sharing with "Paul" the teachings of these fictionalized first-century teachers, modern scholars have assumed that the "Corinthians" preserve for us the specific teachings of a second-century "heresy."

The end of the twentieth century and start of the twenty-first have brought us a more nuanced understanding of the development of the Christian church in the first two centuries CE.[3] It is with this increased complexity that I aim to revisit the supposed "heresy" behind the text of *3 Corinthians*. I contend that the reliability of the "Corinthian" list has consistently been overstretched and, that by falling into the insider–outsider dualism of the text, scholars have too often shown themselves still entrapped in the pseudepigrapher's rhetorical hold. To argue this, I will first examine the text and its rhetorical goals, and then explore the ways that scholars have tried to situate the historical groups behind the text.

The Text and its Work

Having been considered canonical for some time in the East, an Armenian manuscript of *3 Corinthians* was "rediscovered" by scholars in the seventeenth century.[4] About a dozen other Armenian manuscripts have since been found, along with six Latin manuscripts, one Coptic, and one Greek.[5] These last two, published in 1904 and 1959 respectively, have proven to be of particular importance, not only because of their antiquity, but also on account of their clues to *3 Corinthians*' textual tradition. Because some previously known Armenian and Latin manuscripts contained a piece of narrative linking the epistolary portions of the text (i.e. the letters from the "Corinthians" and "Paul"), some nineteenth-century scholars surmised that

3 It is not the aim of this paper to recount all the steps taken in scholarship to nuance this discussion. On a dismantling of the originality of orthodoxy, see Walter Bauer, *Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1934). On a similarly groundbreaking treatment of heresy-making in the early church, see Alain le Boulluec, *La notion d'hérésie dans la literature grecque, IIe-IIIe siècles* (Paris: Etudes augustinienenes, 1985).

4 Martin H. Scharlemann, "*Third Corinthians*," *CTM* 26 (1955): 518.

5 Hovhanessian, *Third Corinthians*, 3–10.

3 Corinthians was originally a part of the *Acts of Paul*.[6] When the Coptic manuscript was discovered it seemingly confirmed this postulation, as *3 Corinthians* is, in fact, contained in the *Acts of Paul* in that sixth-century copy. However, the more recent discovery of the Greek manuscript of *3 Corinthians* in the Bodmer collection shifted the view again, it being an earlier manuscript and showing no signs of ever having been a part of the *Acts*.[7] The current prevailing notion of *3 Corinthians*' history is that it was written in Greek in the mid to late second century as an independent text (best represented by the Bodmer Greek), was incorporated into the *Acts of Paul*, and then, later, taken back out of the *Acts* (along with some narrative between the two letters), where it was used for some time in the East, primarily in the Armenian church.[8]

The first section of the original document, then, was a "Corinthian" letter to "Paul." In their letter, the pseudo-Corinthians describe a situation in their church, in which two men—Simon (Magus is perhaps intended) and Cleobius—have come, preaching something that the community has not heard before. They urge Paul to come to Corinth to instruct them regarding this situation. Conveniently, the pseudo-Corinthians describe the content of Simon and Cleobius' teaching for "Paul." The "teachings" of these two men, according to the pseudo-Corinthian letter are as follows:

- There is no need to make use of the prophets (οὐ δεῖν φησιΐν προφηΐταις χρῆσθαι).
- God is not almighty (οὐδ' εἶναι θεὸν παντοκραΐτορα).
- There is no resurrection of the flesh (οὐδεΐ ἀναΐστασιν εἶναι σαρκός).
- The creation of humanity is not of God (οὐδ' εἶναι τὴν πλάσιν τὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων τοῦ θεοῦ).
- The Lord did not come in the flesh (οὐδ' ὅτι εἰς σάρκα ἦλθεν ὁ κύριος).
- He was not born of Mary (οὐδ' ὅτι ἐκ Μαρίας ἐγεννήθη).
- The world is not of God but of angels (οὐδ' εἶναι τὸν κοΐσμον θεοῦ ἀλλὰ ἀγγεΐλων).

If upon reading that list of doctrines your mind begins to reel about which "Gnostic" group best fits the mold, consider yourself in good company (see below).

The second section of *3 Corinthians* is pseudo-Paul's reply to the "Corinthians." "Paul" remarks that the spreading of this false teaching does

6 A. F. J. Klijn describes how early scholars such as Th. Zahn deduced this point in "The Apocryphal Correspondence between Paul and the Corinthians," *VC* 17 (1963): 5.

7 Michel Testuz, *Papyrus Bodmer X–XII. X: Correspondance apocryphe des Corinthiens et de l'apôtre Paul. XI: Onzième Ode de Salomon. XII: Fragment d'un Hymne liturgique* (Geneva: Bibliotheque Bodmer, 1959): 30–45.

8 Luttikhuizen, "Apocryphal Correspondence," 80–81.

not surprise him and gives a "rule of faith," that he says he previously passed on to the Corinthians. Unsurprisingly, this statement contains elements that directly respond to the threatening teaching outlined in the Corinthian letter. Next, pseudo-Paul condemns the proclaimers of the false teachings and reaffirms the actuality of the resurrection of the flesh, using a few resurrection metaphors along the way. "Paul" defends himself by reminding his audience of his sufferings; he blesses those remaining in the rules, and curses those who break them.

Each of these elements has some correlation in the authentic letters of Paul, especially in 1 Corinthians, and it is here that we may briefly examine what benefits were enjoyed by the author in forging a Pauline epistle, instead of writing a straightforward refutation of troubling doctrines in the vein of, say, Irenaeus. There are a few reasons that the pseudepigrapher might have felt drawn to crafting a Corinthian letter in particular. For one thing, in the authentic Corinthian correspondences, we find mention of other letters from the Corinthian community (1 Cor. 7.1) and Paul (1 Cor. 5.9). The writer probably also used the Corinthian debate on the resurrection (chiefly, 1 Cor. 15) as an inspiration for his own discussion, even going so far as to use a seed metaphor similar to Paul's in 1 Cor. 15.35–44 to explain the reality of the resurrection. Still, to determine the advantage of using a pseudepigraphical letter at all, we need to observe a few of the similarities *3 Corinthians* has with traditional polemical writing of the second and third centuries (i.e. Ignatius, Irenaeus, Justin, Tertullian, etc.).

One of these common attributes is the rule of faith. The "rule of faith" would become critical as a means of arguing for the historical validity of one's teachings. Irenaeus, for instance, uses the rule of faith to argue that the teaching of the church is universal and unchanging, in contrast to the false teachings of those he considers outside of it.[9] While this is similar to what takes place in the Pastoral Epistles (e.g. 2 Tim. 1.13: "Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus"), *3 Corinthians* more resembles Iranaeus than his fellow pseudepigrapher, even calling his previous teaching to the Corinthians a rule (κανών), in what appears to be a technical manner. But pseudo-Paul does not just summarize his prior teaching as if it were his own; he actually states that he passed on to the Corinthians the tradition he himself inherited from the apostles.[10] The effect for the letter is the same as the work of the heresiologists: namely, "Paul" gives the correct explication of his own teaching, which itself is to be understood as an extension of the prior message of Jesus and his apostles. This is not far from Tertullian's later assertion that the bishops of each of the churches preserve a tradition of correct belief in line with the teachings of Jesus and his disciples. He writes, "For this is the manner

9 Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, I.X.

10 It is difficult to imagine Paul downplaying his own authority as much as he does in *3 Cor*.

in which the apostolic churches transmit their registers: as the church of Smyrna, which records that Polycarp was placed therein by John; as also the church of Rome, which makes Clement to have been ordained in like manner by Peter."[11] Such "rules of faith" were (and still are) used to demonstrate that, in the face of controversy and debate, the truths of the Christian faith had been faithfully preserved by the tradition of the one advocating the rule (never mind that each rule of faith was/is at least slightly different from any other).[12]

In contrast to a faith that has been passed on by tradition and steadied by a "rule of faith," the heresiologists of the second and third centuries consistently portray the beliefs of their opponents as new and strange. For example, Ignatius describes heresy as a poison that is "mix[ed] up" with Jesus Christ, insinuating that something new and inferior has been added to the true Christian faith.[13] Likewise, Justin Martyr insists on the secondary nature of the teachings of so-called heretics by insisting that these be known by "the name of the men from whom each doctrine and opinion had its origin."[14] Justin's point is that these beliefs stem from the different teachers (Marcion, Valentinus, Basilides, Saturnilus and others), and not from Christ. *3 Corinthians* does this same work rather cleverly. The "Corinthians" comment that the teachings of Simon and Cleobius were foreign to the teaching of Paul. By letting the "Corinthians" note the strangeness of the teachings, the pseudepigrapher has allowed the community itself to speak for the limits of Paul's teaching. Pseudo-Paul then confirms their suspicions by describing the teachers of the doctrines as "falsifiers" (2.3).

The juxtaposition between a carefully preserved, authentic teaching and new, strange ones is more clearly defined in *3 Corinthians* than anywhere in the New Testament and, in this respect, it more closely resembles the thought of second- and third-century heresiologies than its fellow Pauline pseudepigrapha. However, by crafting his own polemics in the form of a Pauline letter, the author is able to employ certain advantages of both forms, heresiology and pseudepigraphon. By having "Paul" interpret his own teachings, there is additional weight to the claim of continuity of belief, so long as the ruse of the letter is accepted.[15] *3 Corinthians* thus condemns its opponents as perverters of Paul's teachings (1.4) and as rejecters of writings of the Hebrew Bible (1.10). The blessing of "Paul," at the end, is reserved

11 Tertullian, *Prescription against Heretics*, XXXII.

12 Everett Ferguson, "Rule of Faith," *EEC* 2:1003–04.

13 Ignatius, *To the Trallians*, VI.

14 Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, XXXV.

15 For this reason, I contend that the author was deliberatively hoping to deceive his audience and not, as some would suggest, writing for a group that would have recognized the fabrication. For a discussion on the purpose of the Pastoral Epistles being to have Paul clarify himself for a second-century audience in debate over his teachings, see Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Paul: Gnostic Exegesis of the Pauline Letters* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1975), 1–10.

for those who adhere to the teachings of the prophets and the gospel. We can observe in this appeal something akin to what David Meade labels "canon consciousness," whereby the pseudepigrapher is aware of a sense of canonicity of Paul's writing and attempts to model this with his own work.[16] *3 Corinthians*, being slightly later than the Pastorals, seems to have even greater, if less effective, "canon consciousness."

Essentially, *3 Corinthians* is engaged in a set of rhetorical activities aimed at "othering," that is, creating a straw man opponent that serves its own purposes. In Simon and Cleobius, the author is clearly creating a fictional target for his polemics. Having noticed the similarities between *3 Corinthians*' method and that of contemporary heresiologists, we can now examine the extent to which scholars have observed the strong polemics and taken them into consideration when analyzing *3 Corinthians*.

The Legacy of Ancient Polemics

Apart from describing its relationship to the *Acts of Paul* (briefly summarized above), the most discussed issue in modern scholarship on *3 Corinthians* is the identity of the particular "heresy" behind the text. The assumption has been that, as a second-century pseudepigraphal work, the text must have been motivated by a second-century "heretical" group that was in some proximity to the writer. The pseudepigrapher, wanting to deliver a major blow to the foundation of this "heresy," placed a rebuke of it on the lips of the most important letter writer in the development of Christianity: Paul.

Over time, people have put forth a wide variety of heresies as the possible target of *3 Corinthians*. In the ancient world, Ephrem identified his fellow Edessene resident, Bardaisan, as the recipient of *3 Corinthians*' rebuke. Ephrem's conclusion was accepted even into the nineteenth century, as the abundance of Armenian texts suggested an Eastern locus of composition. However, the Coptic and Greek copies since discovered, and *3 Corinthians*' mid to late first-century dating, preclude this explanation.[17]

Since the discovery of the Coptic and Greek manuscripts, modern scholarship on *3 Corinthians* has offered a number of interpretations for the motivation behind the author's invective. In 1942 (prior to the publication of the Greek copy), Martin Rist advocated for Marcionism as the refuted heresy, seeing each of the criteria (save that of angelic creation) fulfilled in Marcion. Rist opined that Marcion's disciple Apelles taught a doctrine of angelic creation of the world and that *3 Corinthians*

16 David G. Meade, *Pseudonymity and Canon* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1986), 181.

17 Scharlemann, "*Third Corinthians*," 522. We should note that Ephrem's attestation to *3 Corinthians* proves its use for some time in the wider Eastern church, and suggests that, even though no such copies survive, it was likely translated into Syriac.

is perhaps working specifically against this strand of Marcionism.[18] Rist wrote not only prior to the publication of the Greek manuscript but also prior to the discoveries at Nag Hammadi, and his understanding of Marcionism was heavily indebted to the early Christian polemicists. Still, he reaffirmed his conclusion of a Marcionist target with a second article in 1969, stating plainly, "Marcionism was the one and only target of the author."[19] This second article was partly a response to A. F. J. Klijn's assertion, six years prior, that the pseudepigrapher aimed his rhetoric at Simon Magus, the clue being found in the presence of a Simon among the teachers mentioned in the "Corinthian" letter. Yet, Klijn cautioned, "Nevertheless it is hazardous to think that the correspondence was written against his ideas only. This means that we are not able to say that the correspondence was written against one particular kind of heresy. The correspondence probably describes a tendency in the early church."[20] Unfortunately, as already seen in Rist's response, Klijn's helpful call to view the rhetoric as a tendency of the church, and not as a pinpoint description of a particular sect, has tended to go unheeded.

More recently, Willy Rordorf has suggested Saturnilus (attested alternatively as Saturninus) as the target, again pointing to the apparent overlaps between what is presented in the "Corinthian" letter and what is found in Irenaeus' descriptions of the teachings of Saturnilus (particularly an angelic creation of the world).[21] In his recent dissertation, mentioned above, Vahan Hovhanessian has postulated the Ophites as a potential mark, citing the phrase "faith of the serpent" from *3 Corinthians* 2.20 as a possible connection to the supposed serpentine symbol of the Ophite tradition.[22] Hovhanessian then backs off of the assertion somewhat saying, "The targeted heresy was not a specific Gnostic sect, although the author might have had some of these sects in his mind."[23]

The method each scholar employed to locate the "heresy" was to examine the list from *3 Corinthians* 1.10–15 and check off which of these assertions any particular "heresy" of the second century would have made. The reason that multiple "heresies" have been proposed is that none clearly meets all the criteria (but several meet most of them). For instance, Marcionism does not seem to have credited the creation of the world to angels. Rist argued that Marcion's disciple Apelles did have an angel as the creator of the world,[24]

18 M. Rist, "Pseudepigraphic Refutations of Marcionism," *JR* 22 (1942): 46–50.

19 M. Rist, "*III Corinthians* as a Pseudepigraphic Refutation of Marcionism," *Iliff Review* 26 (1969): 57.

20 Klijn, "Apocryphal Correspondence," 22.

21 Willy Rordorf, "Hérésie et orthodoxie selon la correspondance apocryphe entre les Corinthiens et l'apôtre Paul," in *Orthodoxie et Hérésie dans l'Eglise ancienne* (ed. H. D. Altendorf et al.; Lausanne: Cahiers de la Revue de Théologie et de Philosophie, 1993), 57.

22 Hovhanessian, *Third Corinthians*, 130.

23 Hovhanessian, *Third Corinthians*, 131.

24 Rist, "Pseudepigraphic Refutations of Marcionism," 49.

and Klijn responded that the singular angel of Apelles system still does not fit the plural "angels" mentioned in *3 Corinthians*.[25]

Of course, such argumentation places a lot of faith in the sources recording the beliefs of these various groups. Prior to the discovery of the Nag Hammadi manuscripts, most of the information about the beliefs of the various groups came from the secondary information of the heresiologists. The discovery of the manuscripts has, in some places, greatly undercut the authority of the heresiologists' reports, as there are few places of notable overlap between text and supposed system, and sometimes there are great discrepancies.[26] We should not be surprised by this observation, since the heresiologists, like the author of *3 Corinthians*, are engaged in polemics and not objective classification. Unfortunately, scholars have too often bought into the polemics, and assumed the descriptions accurately portray these groups.

What is clear is that the heresiologists were engaged in battles with various outside groups and internal debates in the second century. Intuitively, they used these external groups as "others" against which they defined their internal theology. We, as scholars, unfortunately fall into the traps of the heresiological polemic when we work under its assertions: namely, that "orthodoxy" represents the earlier, unadulterated voice, having been preserved through a "rule of faith" across the centuries since the time of Jesus; that "heresies" sprang up in the Christian church's history as deviations from the truth; that the "heretics" have misinterpreted the writings of the Hebrew Bible and New Testament; and that the "orthodox" and "heretics" stood at any great distance from one another. All of this mars the historical reality of the early Christian world that was rich with complexity, and we need to understand this when dealing with our ancient texts.

Conclusion

3 Corinthians' rhetoric calls to mind a childhood memory when, walking into a Christian bookstore, I found a tall, rotating stand of Christian tracts that had been put out by some Christian evangelizing publication. Amid the inane warnings against suicide, drug use, homosexuality, evolution and Islam, I came across a particularly frightening little book on the evils of Freemasonry, complete with a demonic, red-eyed satyr on the cover. I could not resist picking it up and quickly reading the extremist cartoon propaganda in which a family's recent tragedy is shown to be a direct result of their naïve involvement with the Freemasons and Eastern Star, and these were shown

25 Klijn, "Apocryphal Correspondence," 22.

26 F. Wisse, "The Nag Hammadi Library and the Heresiologists," *VC* 25 (1971): 205–23. For an excellent discussion on the various techniques employed by the early Christian polemicists to create "others" against which to define their own doctrines, see Karen King, *What is Gnosticism?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 2003), 20–54.

to be drenched in all things unholy: atheism, Satanism, and (gasp!) Islam. As the grandson of proud lodge members, this tract rattled my psyche, and only after much reassuring from my mother was I able to accept that my grandparents were not closet Satanists, or victims of a Satanic plot. Indeed, this tract goes much farther in showing the insecurities, paranoia, and fear of a particular group of evangelizing Christians than it ever will in illuminating the teachings and behavior of Freemasons (or any other group for that matter), and we should hope future generations find better data to inform themselves of our world and beliefs.

Likewise, some caution is in order on the part of scholars to not read too much into the propagandistic texts of early Christianity. True, the texts do tell us some of the teachings against which many ecclesiastical Christians felt the need to contend. However, to assume that a specific "heresy" lies behind the text is to overstretch the sources. Rather, it tells us what beliefs the author of *3 Corinthians* perceived as being under attack. Gerard Luttikhuizen has argued that *3 Corinthians* does not speak against any particular group but against, "the invasion of Gnostic ways of thinking into Christianity."[27] I would argue that *3 Corinthians* does not speak of a "gnosticizing" tendency, but rather speaks to the "anti-gnosticizing," or more simply the "othering" tendency of the polemicists of the second century. In other words, *3 Corinthians* can never be used as an accurate source for beliefs of a Christian sect apart from the pseudepigrapher's. Thus, until we escape the polemics of the pseudepigrapher as well as other heresiologists of this time, early Christian pseudepigrapha will remain justifiable deceptions and we will remain under the spell of their insider-outsider rhetoric.

27 Luttikhuizen, "Apocryphal Correspondence," 91.

Chapter 10

The Place of the *Shepherd of Hermas* in the Canon Debate[1]

David Nielsen

Introduction

In the overall study of the early Christian church, one of the most vexing, troublesome, and provocative areas, as Hans Lietzmann has stated, is that of the history of its canon.[2] Central in the canon debate, and one of the hot-topic issues, has to do with the dating of a "final" canon. Though most scholars agree that the end product took its final form, more or less, during the latter half of the fourth century, there are, however, scholars, past and present, who either ignore or reject this position. Theodor Zahn advocated for the canon being formed in the first century, certainly the earliest position taken by any scholar to date.[3] Adolf von Harnack and Hans von Campenhausen both argued that the canon was formed out of a response to external theological challenges issued by Marcion, Gnosticism, and Montanism in the second century.[4] More recently, there have been many influential studies that ground the formation of

1 In such a highly nuanced discussion, establishing clear definitions is important. I follow Eugene Ulrich by defining scripture as "a sacred authoritative work believed to have God as its ultimate author, which the community, as a group and individually, recognizes and accepts as determinative for its belief and practice for all time and in all geographical areas" and canon as "[that] which constitutes scripture, the list of books accepted as inspired scripture, the list that has been determined, the authoritative list of books which have been accepted as scripture." See Eugene Ulrich, "The Notion and Definition of Canon," in *The Canon Debate* (ed. L. McDonald and J. Sanders; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1992), 28–29.

2 H. Lietzmann, "Wie wurden die Bücher des Neuen Testaments Heilige Schrift?" in *Kleine Schriften* (ed. K. Aland; TU 68; Berlin: Akademie, 1958), 2:2.

3 Theodor Zahn, *Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons* (2 vols.; Erlangen: Deichert, 1888–92).

4 Adolf von Harnack, *The Origin of the New Testament and the Most Important Consequences of the New Creation* (2nd edn.; London: Williams and Norgate, 1925); Hans von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible* (trans. J. A. Barker; Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1972).

the Christian biblical canon in the fourth century,[5] but a considerable amount of doubt remains.[6]

The crucial issue centers on dating. It is certainly true that the boundaries of the canon were fluid in the church prior to the late fourth century; yet, there are nuances here, as well, for those who advocate a second-century date. An oft-neglected piece of important information in the canon debate is the use of the *Shepherd of Hermas* by early Christians. Those who argue for a second-century dating of the canon often provide a caveat with regard to some texts, like the *Shepherd of Hermas*, saying that the church had levels of distinction for their texts, some with an innate "higher authority," and some that edified, but were of a lower stratum.[7] It will be shown here that the *Shepherd of Hermas* functioned as authoritative in ways comparable to other respected, authoritative, and scriptural texts, and should not be placed in a lower, less dignified realm; at times, in some locales, it was even on a par with accepted New Testament and Old Testament writings. The purpose of this paper is not to give a history of research on the canon debate, which can be found elsewhere.[8] Herein, I intend to analyze the question of the date of the canon, using the *Shepherd of Hermas* as a case study, and show that any idea of a fixed canon is not viable until the fourth century. Most of the arguments themselves (and rightly so) have centered on traditional New Testament writings. By focusing on *Hermas*' role during the ancient processes of canonization, I will do two things. First, I will show the overarching use of *Hermas* all over the Roman Empire, and how closely it aligns itself with various, agreed-upon canon criteria. Second, I will conclude by analyzing some of the current assumptions of contemporary scholarship that, as I see it, have

5 Among others, see Albert Sundberg, "Toward a Revised History of the New Testament Canon," in *Studia Evangelia IV* (TU 89; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964) 452–61, and "Canon Muratori: A Fourth-Century List," *Harvard Theological Review* 66 (1973): 1–41.

6 For example, see A. F. J. Klijn, "Die Entstehungsgeschichte des Neuen Testaments," *ANRW* 26.1:64–97, or T. Heckel, *Vom Evangelium des Markus zum viergestaltigen Evangelium* (WUNT 120; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 340–42. Bart Ehrman says that the arguments for a fourth-century date are not compelling (see Bart Ehrman, *Lost Christianities: The Battles for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew* [New York: Oxford, 1998], 241). I hope that by the end of this paper we can talk about the dating of the canon in affirmative, definite terms. See also, among others, B. M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance* (Oxford, Clarendon, 1987), 193–94; G. Lüdemann, *Heretics: The Other Side of Early Christianity* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1996), 314.

7 Peter Balla, "Evidence for an Early Christian Canon (Second and Third Century)" in McDonald and Sanders, *Canon Debate*, 385.

8 For further reading on the subject, see L. McDonald, *The Formation of the Christian Biblical Canon* (rev. and enl. edn.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995); idem, *The Biblical Canon: Its Origin, Transmission, and Authority* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007); H. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995); idem, *The New Testament Canon: Its Making and Meaning* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1985).

not sufficiently taken into account a close study of the *Shepherd of Hermas* with regard to the formation of the New Testament canon. By looking at the corpus of texts from the received non-canonical side, clear implications emerge for describing the history and formation of the New Testament canon.

The Shepherd of Hermas *and Canon Criteria*

Of the thirty-five or so books that were considered for a place in the canon of the New Testament, the *Shepherd of Hermas* was by far the most popular, both in geographical circulation and in exegetical use.[9] No matter which modern paradigm is used to evaluate a text's canonicity, the *Shepherd of Hermas* fits the mold, so to speak, of nearly every category. Such, it should be stated, cannot be said of some New Testament writings.

Of all the factors the church took into consideration, the use of a certain work was one of the most important criteria used for establishing canonicity.[10] In terms of surviving manuscripts, the *Shepherd of Hermas* is the most well-attested Early Christian writing, outside of the Psalms and the Gospels of Matthew and John.[11] In all, there are twenty-eight extant Greek manuscripts, and many more that survive in other languages.[12] It was widely read in the Western Church, and warmly received by early Church Fathers. That it was an authoritative document is seen in its wide popularity, its inclusion into some early canon lists and in the *Codex Sinaiticus*,[13] and the rapid rate at which it spread throughout the empire.[14] Striking evidence of this phenomenon can be seen by comparing it to the manuscript tradition of other New Testament books. Of the twenty-six pre-fifth-century *Hermas* manuscripts known, twelve are dated to the second and third centuries. Matthew has twelve from the same period, and John an astounding sixteen. In random comparison, Luke has only seven manuscripts from the second and third centuries, Ephesians three, and Galatians only one.[15]

9 McDonald, *Biblical Canon*, 401–05.

10 For discussions on this, and other canon criteria, see McDonald, *Biblical Canon*, 401–30, and Metzger, *Canon*, 251–66.

11 L. Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 33.

12 The *Shepherd of Hermas* is attested in ancient translations into Latin, Ethiopic, Coptic (Sahidic, Bohairic, Akhmimic), Middle Persian, and Georgian. For a complete history of its manuscript tradition and reception history, see Carolyn Osiek, *The Shepherd of Hermas: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1999), 1–7.

13 *Hermas* is the last book in this great, fourth-century uncial with the *Epistle of Barnabas* after the book of Revelation. About one-quarter of *Hermas* survives therein.

14 Carolyn Osiek, *The "Shepherd of Hermas": A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1999), 4. Irenaeus, a late second-century Father in Gaul, quotes *Hermas* in his *Against Heresies*, dated to c. 175 CE.

15 For a complete list of the earliest references to all biblical books, see Hurtado's chart in *Artifacts*, 209–27; for *Hermas* manuscripts, see my own table in the Appendix at the end of this paper.

There are many witnesses to, and illustrations of, the fact that, at least early on, *Hermas* was, almost universally, accepted as scripture. The *Shepherd of Hermas*, written very early in the second century, spread rapidly through the empire and was well quoted from Gaul to Egypt.[16] It was known by Tertullian in Carthage (though his opinions changed after his conversion to Montanism), Origen in Alexandria, and Irenaeus in Gaul.[17] Both Clement and Origen quoted from all three divisions of the work (Visions, Mandates, Similitudes), and Tertullian from two (Visions and Mandates).

Irenaeus introduces *Hermas* as γραφῆ, a term "ordinarily understood as scripture[;] . . . the order of references (*Hermas*, Malachi, Paul, Jesus) indicates a recognition of the text as authoritative . . ." Osiek goes on to note that, though we cannot be exactly sure what Irenaeus thought of the text, Eusebius helps us by relating that Irenaeus did, indeed, think it was scripture, for the term "γραφῆ" was much more concretely defined by the mid-fourth century.[18]

Perhaps the overwhelming *Hermas* manuscript tradition in Egypt is a result of the influence exercised by two early leaders in Alexandria. Origen spoke highly of the text during his years in Alexandria, he being the one who originally connected the text's author to the "Hermas" Paul addresses in Rom. 16.14.[19] The most enthusiastic advocate of *Hermas*, however, was Clement of Alexandria, "who frequently quoted the text and explicitly referred to it as divinely inspired."[20]

It seems that the only writers who quote or comment negatively on *Hermas* do so out of personal theological agendas and not necessarily from

16 The traditional dates of *Hermas* are based on the Muratorian Canon's mention that it was written during the bishopric of Pius I of Rome (140–54 CE). However, Quasten notes that *Hermas* references Clement of Rome in the "second vision." Such was thought to be an erroneous inclusion. However, "the two dates are accounted for by the way in which the book was compiled. The older portions would most likely go back to Clement's day while the present redaction would be of Pius' time." See Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* (4 vols.; Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1986), 1:92. While scholarly consensus does not exist as to compositional dating or unity, it is possible that *Hermas* was written around the turn of the century, thus making it older than all other apocryphal texts, and, depending on how one dates John's Apocalypse and other contested books of the New Testament, would certainly qualify it to be considered for canonical status. See McDonald, *Formation*, 228–49.

17 See Osiek, *Hermas*, 4.

18 Osiek, *Hermas*, 5. See also G. W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 322–23; Frederick W. Danker (ed.), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* (3rd edn.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 206–07; Gerhard Kittel (ed.), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (10 vols.; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 749–61. R. M. Grant is also influential in his argument that the millennium after the period of the Fathers was highly influenced by these post-Apostolic writers. See "The Appeal to the Early Fathers," *JTS* n.s. 11 (1960) 13–24.

19 Osiek, *Hermas*, 5.

20 Osiek, *Hermas*, 5. For the most complete list of Clement's quotations, as well as other Patristic writers, see P. Henne, *L'unité du Pasteur d' Hermas* (Cahiers Revue Biblique 31; Paris: Gabalda, 1992), 16–44.

an inherent flaw in the text, or from a theological position advocated by the mainstream church. Its translation into Latin, Coptic (Sahidic, Bohairic, and Akhmimic), Ethiopic, Georgian, and Middle Persian further attests to the widespread popularity of *Hermas* in the first centuries of Christianity.

The existence of this abundant evidence is somewhat perplexing when put next to the realization that *Hermas* is not in our Bibles today. Though it would be a worthy study, the purpose of this paper is not to determine the exact reasons for *Hermas*' ultimate rejection. Because of its astounding popularity from a very early time, we can be sure that the topics of theological debates of the period, and the move to exclude certain sects, motivated those in power not to include the text in the Bible.[21] The underlying feelings of the influential decision makers are significant. Athanasius and Eusebius still recommended reading *Hermas*, even to catechumens. Surely they would not have recommended something detrimental, offensive, or unworthy to be read next to traditional "scriptural" works. Athanasius, who was heavily involved in the theological debates of the fourth century, and whose thirty-ninth festal letter was the first to recognize the order of the New Testament we have today, called *Hermas* "most helpful," while Eusebius writes that "for some it is essential."[22] Didymus the Blind was still quoting it as scripture in the fourth century, and Jerome reports that it was being read publicly in some Greek churches.[23] Lastly, its inclusion in the great Uncial from Sinai attests to the high opinion those who compiled the codex had of the work.[24]

A text's orthodoxy and inspiration were heavily weighed by the church. One of the main arguments (which will be discussed more below) for a fourth-century canon is determining whether a text, or a group's teachings, are in harmony with the *regula fidei* advocated by the bishops.[25] As numerous studies have shown, the early Christian movement was anything but monolithic after the first century.[26] Before the emergence of a "catholic" church, there was a limited amount of flexibility for what would and would

21 See Osiek, *Hermas*, 6. I refer to the debate over apocalyptic revelation, and the effort to stamp out the threat posed by the sect.

22 He used the word ὠφελιμωτάτης. For a more full discussion see Osiek, *Hermas*, 6; Athanasius *Inc.* 3.1; Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 3.3.6.

23 Philippe Henne, "Canonicité du 'Pasteur' d' Hermas," *Revue Thomiste* 90 (1990): 92.

24 The reader must also realize that, as alluded to in the text, Egypt was not the only place where *Hermas* was held in high esteem. Pseudo-Cyprian cites *Sim.* 9.15.5–6 as "*scriptura divina.*" Along with the Codex Sinaiticus, it was also included in the Codex Claromontanus. In the latter, however, it is thought to be an Eastern insertion into the codex of the Western text-type. See Osiek, *Hermas*, 6; as well as B. Metzger and B. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* (3rd edn.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 51.

25 C. Allert, *A High View of Scripture?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2007), 55.

26 See especially W. Bauer, *Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum* (2nd edn.; London: SCM Press: 1971) and B. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

not be allowed to be taught as Christian doctrine. Some of the more radical movements, as many have written, forced the church to decide what was and was not canon, and, then, to use the accepted books in combating these movements. In nearly every introduction to, or discussion of, the New Testament canon, three major heretical movements are listed to show that they had a very large effect on the canonical consciousness of the church. Lee Martin McDonald, among others, has shown that the *regula fidei* acted as the guide by which Christian doctrine would be measured and critiqued.[27]

One very distinct aspect of the *Shepherd of Hermas* is its teaching of the possibility of post-baptismal repentance, something unique for such an early work. Indeed, it clearly contradicts core elements of received canonical books, such as Hebrews and 1 John.[28] Surely the *Shepherd of Hermas* would have been attacked by the bishops if its central doctrine was offensive to them or was seen as contrary to popular belief. Could it be, based on the reception history of *Shepherd of Hermas* and these two books, that *Hermas* was among the authoritative ones, and Hebrews and 1 John were on the fringe of acceptance? This would account for the extremely late date of the final acceptance of these two received "biblical" books, and the early, widespread use of *Shepherd of Hermas* over a huge geographical area. In this reading, *Hermas* would, then, have functioned as scripture in Christian communities and would not have been attacked by the Fathers for teaching heretical doctrine.[29]

Moreover, whether or not a work was somehow affiliated with the apostles greatly influenced whether it would be included in the canon. From the very beginning, apostolic authority played a central role in Christian communities. Even the apostle Paul had to affix his own signature to documents to ensure the recipients of its validity.[30] Naturally, the apostles were entrusted to teach the correct gospel of Christ, so, in essence, they were the bearers of the first real canon of the early church. Though some New Testament writings (e.g., Mark, Luke, etc.) are not directly apostolic, they were believed to have a significant enough link to one of the original disciples for the church to accept it, thus grounding any document and teaching in the church's historical roots.[31]

27 McDonald, *The Biblical Canon*, 48–55.

28 See Heb. 6.4; 10.26–31; 12.16; 1 Jn 3.6; 5.16.

29 As mentioned above, Tertullian's opinion of the work turned south after his conversion to Montanism.

30 F. F. Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988), 255–56.

31 R. Funk, "The New Testament as Tradition and Canon," in *Parables and Presence* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1982), 151–86.

The problem with this criterion is that it is a double-edged sword. It successfully weeds out spurious writings, but also cancels a fair portion of the New Testament as we have received it. McDonald, however, carefully notes that it was a criterion not universally and consistently applied.[32] This is seen with the *Shepherd of Hermas*. It clearly fits the parameters of the other criteria, but falls short here. *Hermas* never mentions an apostolic tie; the closest direct link is its reference to Clement, an accepted bishop, and heir of apostolic tradition. Harry Gamble shows that this category is, or should be, more broad than usually conceived. He lists four ways that a text could have been seen as apostolic: (1) authorship by an apostle, whether real or supposed; (2) authorship by a student of an apostle; (3) origination in the general time of the apostles; and (4) agreement with apostolic teaching.[33] If these subcategories are accepted, then *Hermas* can fulfill the apostolic criterion as per the third and fourth categories. Ultimately, the *Shepherd of Hermas* was not accepted because it lacked a strong, recognized, apostolic tie.[34]

One of the main reasons the *Shepherd of Hermas* was used so much was due to its antiquity. Having been written in Rome in the earliest days of the post-apostolic era, it is no wonder that it spread extremely quickly, thus enabling influential bishops and leaders of churches to recommend and approve it from the start. Though there are many theories on dating and compositional issues relating to the *Shepherd of Hermas*, we can be fairly sure that it was written (or at least began to be composed) sometime around the turn of the first and second centuries.

There are three main theories about the composition date of the *Shepherd of Hermas*. The first is that the author is the same person mentioned by Paul in Romans 16:14, in which Paul asks the church "to salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them." This idea was highly popular with Jerome and Origen, who were trying to attribute an apostolic association to this very popular book that they considered inspired.[35] That the author of the *Shepherd* is the same as the person listed by Paul, is highly unlikely. The man who wrote the work was somewhat wealthy and connected to the ecclesiastical hierarchy in Rome. If it were the same person, Paul would not have mentioned him in passing and listed him as the twentieth in a long list of people to greet.

32 McDonald, *Formation*, 231.

33 Gamble, *New Testament Canon*, 68.

34 This criterion, perhaps more than any other, was the most difficult to establish in ancient times. Many of the New Testament books are anonymous and were only securely attributed to their authors much later. Koester writes that this criterion is useless "when Christian movements that were later condemned as heretical can claim genuine apostolic origin" (H. Koester, "GNOMAI DIAPHOROI: The Origin and Nature of Diversification in the History of Early Christianity," in *Trajectories Through Early Christianity* [ed. J. Robinson and H. Koester; Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1971], 155; quoted in McDonald, *Formation*, 231).

35 It is interesting that Eusebius also believes that *Hermas* was written in the first century, and thus has no problems with regards to its date. See *Hist. eccl.* 3.3.6.

The second theory is that the *Shepherd of Hermas* was written at the end of the first or early in the second century. In Vis. 2.4.3, Hermas is admonished to write the visions he is receiving and to give them to Clement, in order that he might distribute them to the churches. In addition to this mention of Clement, we can add the fact that scholars are quite sure that, at least, two papyri, P. Mich. 130 and P. Iand. 4, can be securely dated, paleographically, to the second century, and, the latter, to the earlier part of the second century.[36]

The last theory dates the *Shepherd of Hermas* to the middle of the second century. This argument is solely based on the Muratorian fragment, which states that "Hermas wrote the *Shepherd* very recently, in our times, in the city of Rome, while bishop Pius, his brother, was occupying the [episcopal] chair of the church of the city of Rome."[37] An in-depth discussion of the Muratorian fragment follows, but we should note, along with Osiek, that the references to Clement and Pius do not have to have an either/or relationship.[38] Though a discussion of the compositional issues related to *Hermas* are outside of the scope of this study, it would be feasible to say that Hermas and Clement were both young men around 100 CE, and that Hermas and his brother could still have been alive during the middle of the second century. It is most likely that *Hermas* was written over a number of years, beginning in the opening years of the second century and coming to its final form during the episcopy of Pius (140–54). It should also be noted that if we, even conservatively, date *Hermas* to *c.* 115 CE, it could well precede some other "canonical" books like 2 Peter, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus.

Given this information about the dating of *Hermas*, we are now prepared to see how it fits into scholarly arguments relating to a second- vs. fourth-century dating of the canon.

Evidence for a Second-century Date

To this point, we have seen why some Early Christians accepted the *Shepherd of Hermas* as scripture. *Hermas* satisfies any modern scholarly paradigm; surely things were not as systematic for the Early Christians. We will now briefly summarize contemporary arguments for a second- or fourth-century canon, respectively, and we will conclude with the implications of *Hermas* on this debate.

The second century is held by many Christians today to be the "crucible" in which the canon was finalized. As Craig Allert has recently written, a high view of scripture without requisite historical investigation would facilitate

36 Metzger, *Canon*, 63. The agreement of classical papyrologists on the matter, at a conference in Dublin in 1984, is referred to by P. J. Parsons, in a letter addressed to Prof. Metzger, dated 28 Oct. 1985.

37 Translation by Metzger, *Canon*, 304–07, lines 73–77.

38 Osiek, *Hermas*, 19.

this belief.[39] As mentioned above, seminal canon scholars like Zahn, von Harnack, and von Campenhausen have won many converts to this view.

The Muratorian Fragment (MF) is also regularly used in one of the other main arguments for a second-century canon.[40] Osiek remarks that there is a circular argument here in that scholars use the MF to date the *Shepherd of Hermas* and the *Shepherd of Hermas* to date the MF. We will do well, therefore, to analyze the fragment and its historical reliability, and to ask whether or not it can be viably used to place the "closed" canon at the end of the second century.[41]

Muratori's initial publication of the fragment, in 1740, led most to opt for a second-century date for the New Testament canon, until Sundberg, in particular, began to argue for a later date for the document.[42] As mentioned, the problem lies in the paradox of MF's mention of the *Shepherd of Hermas*. According to Metzger's translation of lines 73–80 of the fragment:

> Hermas wrote the Shepherd very recently, in our times, in the city of Rome, while bishop Pius, his brother, was occupying the [episcopal] chair of the church of the city of Rome. And therefore it ought indeed to be read; but it cannot be read publicly to the people in the church either among the prophets, whose number is complete, or among the apostles, for it is after [their] time.[43]

The debate over the dating of both the *Shepherd of Hermas* and the MF, and even the closing of the canon of the New Testament, hangs on how one interprets the phrase "very recently, in our times" (Latin *nuperrime temporibus nostris*). Scholars agree that Latin is not the original language of the text, and they have characterized the scribe who wrote the poor Latin in the fragment as, "either unable or unwilling to understand the work which he was copying, and yet given the arbitrary alteration of the text before him from regard simply to the supposed form of the words."[44] The use of the

39 For a full discussion on evangelical views of the Bible and canon formation see, especially, chapters 1, 2, and 6 in C. Allert, *A High View of Scripture?*

40 See McDonald, *Biblical Canon*, 369–78; G. M. Hahneman, *The Muratorian Fragment and the Development of the Canon* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992).

41 I am indebted to Hahneman's brilliant analysis of Hermas and the MF. I generally follow his argument and will only footnote direct quotes in order to avoid repetition. Please see his article "The Muratorian Fragment and the Origin of the New Testament Canon," in McDonald and Sanders, *The Canon Debate*, 405–15; and idem, "More on Redating the Muratorian Fragment," in *Studia Patristica 19* (ed. E. A. Livingstone; Leuven: Peeters, 1988), 359–65.

42 Albert Sundberg, Jr., "Canon Muratori: A Fourth-Century List," *HTR 66* (1973): 1–41; idem, "Toward a Revised History of the New Testament Canon," *Studia Evangelica IV* (Texte und Untersuchungen 89; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964). There are many other factors besides the *Shepherd of Hermas* that call for a fourth-century dating of the MF that cannot be related in this article.

43 Translation by Metzger, *Canon*, 304–07.

44 B. F. Westcott, *A General Survey of the History of the Canon of the New*

words *temporibus nostris* has precedence in Irenaeus as demarcating the difference between apostolic and post-apostolic eras.[45] Furthermore, the adverb *nuperrime* should be translated as an absolute superlative, "meaning 'most recently' in reference to the preceding books in the list, meaning that the *Shepherd* was the most recently written of the books mentioned."[46]

Internal evidence in the *Shepherd of Hermas* also contradicts the claims of the MF. Hermas was, no doubt, a citizen of Rome, and familiar with the structure of the church. He mentions Clement in a leadership role, and not Pius, his supposed brother. If Hermas were related to the bishop, he surely would have mentioned this, in order to make his claims of revelation and authority more binding to other Christians reading it. Also, we know that pseudonymity was a very real practice in the Early Church.[47] We must ask why Hermas would not have written his treatise in the name of his brother, in order to have it be more acceptable to other Christians. It is also quite clear that the author was a freedman who had made a comfortable living after his release.[48] It is highly unlikely that, as the biological brother of Pius, his name would have been Greek and the future bishop's Latin.

The date of the *Shepherd of Hermas* has already been discussed. In relation to the MF, we should note that if Hermas really was close to Pius the bishop, it would also be logical that he would have known the other famous second-century teachers in Rome, including Valentinus, Cerdo, Marcion, and Justin. His mention of Clement, a lack of a monarchical episcopy, and Christian persecution, all suggest a date sometime during the reign of Trajan, who ruled during the height of Roman power from 98–117 CE.[49] All of these factors have led Hahneman to say that, in "the dating of this particular fragment [the MF] of the *Shepherd of Hermas*, it seems clear that the MF is simply mistaken in its claim that the Shepherd was written while Pius was bishop of Rome."[50]

Testament (6th edn.; repr. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), 523. Its poor Latin has now been dated to the fourth or fifth century based on philological analysis.

45 E. Ferguson, "Canon Muratori: Date and Provenance," StPatr *17/2* (1982): 677–83.

46 Hahneman, "Origins," 409; Sundberg, "Canon Muratori," 11.

47 For an excellent discussion see K. Clarke, "The Problem of Pseudonymity in Biblical Literature and Its Implications for Canon Formation," in McDonald and Sanders, *The Canon Debate*, 440–68.

48 The whole work is predicated upon his chance encounters with his former master Rhoda, whom he lusts after; he receives the visions instructing him on the repentance process after experiencing his lustful desires.

49 Hahneman, "Origin," 410.

50 Hahneman, "Origin," 410.

The Shepherd of Hermas *Among Evidence for a Fourth-Century Date*

In relation to the MF, B. H. Streeter has said that "scholars of the sharpest critical acumen have allowed themselves to be terrorized, so to speak, into the acceptance of a date [for the *Shepherd of Hermas*] which brings into confusion the history of the Church in Rome, on the evidence of an authority no better than the Muratorianum."[51] If this key witness, as it were, pointing to a second-century canon, is wrong, where, then, do we go? Mainstream canon scholarship is virtually united on agreeing that the canon of the New Testament came into its final form during the second half of the fourth century. After briefly reviewing the evidence for this approach, it will be seen that the *Shepherd of Hermas* should be recognized as providing even more solid evidence to justify this claim.

While studying the first four centuries of the Christian era it quickly becomes clear that there was a voluminous output of "non-canonical" Christian texts. Harry Gamble notes that "the ongoing production of this type of literature throughout the second and well into the third century requires it to be correlated with the history of the canon" and that "supply corresponds to demand, and if there was a prospect of reception and use, the scope of putatively authoritative literature can hardly have been decided."[52] The mere presence of this entertaining literature does not mean that they, too, were being used by the Church Fathers and cited as scripture, but it suggests a fluidity of, and relaxed opinion toward, some Christian writings, a stance inconsistent with a fixed second-century canon.

One way we can see how a text was being used is by analyzing its surviving papyri. Many studies, of late, have shown that the manuscripts themselves can be used as windows into Early Christian faith and thought.[53] Once again, we see in the papyri that *Shepherd of Hermas* was being used quite often as a liturgical text. The largest manuscripts, Christian or not, from the second through fourth centuries are between 25–35 cm tall (about 10–14 inches).[54] No fewer than four of the twenty-six pre-fifth-century

51 B. H. Streeter, *The Primitive Church* (London: Macmillan, 1929), 205.

52 Harry Gamble, "The New Testament Canon: Recent Research and the Status Quaestionis," in McDonald and Sanders, *The Canon Debate*, 273.

53 See Hurtado, *Artifacts*; B. Ehrman, "The Text as Window: New Testament Manuscripts and the Social History of Early Christianity," in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research* (ed. Michael Holmes and B. Ehrman; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 361–79; E. Epp, "The New Testament Papyri at Oxyrhynchus in Their Social and Intellectual Context," in *Sayings of Jesus: Canonical and Non-Canonical* (ed. W. L. Petersen; Leiden: Brill, 1997); idem, "The Significance of the Papyri for Determining the Nature of the New Testament Text of the Second Century: A Dynamic View of Textual Transmission," in *Gospel Traditions in the Second Century* (ed. W. L. Petersen; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989).

54 Hurtado, *Artifacts*, 164. These texts have a general oblong shape, more or less twice as tall as they are wide.

Hermas texts fit these parameters. These texts beg to be looked at in the light of their public usage. The existence of clear lectionary aids (ekthesis, diereses, sense breaks, accents, etc.) further illustrates the point. Lastly, the abundance of *nomina sacra* in *Hermas* texts show that those producing the manuscripts treated the texts the same as their "canonical" counterparts. The *Hermas* fragments published in the Oxyrhynchus volumes contain eleven different instances of the *nomina sacra*, which is quite remarkable considering the fragmentary nature, and the unpredictability of the texts that have survived. Other larger codices, like Sinaiticus and P. Bod. 38, contain scores more. It is also interesting to note that, each time the abbreviation is used, it corresponds to the proper case grammatically.[55] Once again, we see that the *Hermas* texts contain the same characteristics, in the same abundance, as those biblical texts that would later come to be seen as canonical. Another key development that led to the closing of the canon was the invention of the codex. It is well known that, from very early on, the Gospels and the Pauline epistles began circulating together in codex form. From this, we see that the canon was developing from a very early period, but certainly was not closed to any degree.

During the first four hundred years of the Christian era, the technology was developing that would eventually allow all recognized canonical texts to be gathered together as one. Kraft notes that "once it was possible to produce and view 'the Bible' under one set of physical covers, the concept of 'canon' became concretized in a new way that shapes our thinking to the present day and makes it very difficult for us to recapture the perspectives of earlier times. The 'canon' in this sense is the product of fourth-century technological developments."[56] It seems no coincidence that, during that same time, Constantine commanded fifty sets of scriptures to be made for his new capital city.

Of the many other evidences for a fourth-century canon that could be cited, we will conclude with the emergence of canon lists.

Authoritative canon lists only begin to emerge in the fourth century, and more specifically, the latter half thereof.[57] In relation to the dating arguments in the canon debate, those who advocate a second-century canon have not yet been able to reconcile the fact that these lists do not begin to be found until the fourth century. This is not to say that argument and discussion in the church was not alive before then, but there were no catalogues with "lists of scriptures with defined and established limits."[58] These lists burst on to the scene in the fourth century, with no less than fifteen undisputed lists between

55 For example, if κύριος is used as the subject of the sentence, it would be abbreviated *KΣ* with a supralinear stroke. If in a genitive construction, then *KY*, and so forth.

56 R. Kraft, "The Codex and Canon Consciousness," in McDonald and Sanders, *The Canon Debate*, 233.

57 Allert, *A High View of Scripture?* 131.

58 Hahneman, "Origins," 412.

300 and 405 CE.[59] The important thing to note is that, though these lists are evidence, in and of themselves, of local opinions about scripture (i.e., the lists are not always the same), they show a conceptual shift of consciousness in the minds of the leaders of the church.

The *Shepherd of Hermas* can, again, be used to solidify the argument for a fourth-century canon. As was discussed above, the MF does not fit in any way in the second century. There are no other lists like it during that period, but there is an abundance of examples in the fourth century. Furthermore, as Hahneman notes, "the fragment's statements about the reception of the Shepherd, encouraging the private use, but not the public reading in the Church, can easily be correlated with fourth-century Eastern traditions, but not with late second- or early third-century references."[60] The *Shepherd of Hermas* goes to show that, decidedly, there was no consensus on any kind of New Testament canon before the fourth century, and hardly agreement then, either.

Conclusion

We must be clear to note that, even though there was a general canonical consensus in the accounts of the Catholic church in the fourth century, there was never one unifying, settling vote by a church council. Only with the Reformation did Catholics call the Pseudepigrapha deutero-canonical. Martin Luther denied James, Hebrews, Jude, and Revelation full canonical status, and even called James "an epistle of straw."[61]

We have seen that the MF is traditionally used to date the *Shepherd of Hermas*, as well as to show a set canon. Close historical analysis of the fragment in the milieu of early second-century Rome shows that the facts found in the MF are not facts at all. The MF assigns the *Shepherd of Hermas* to a secondary class of books that were not to be used liturgically, but were still approved for private use. Again, this second-class status does not fit with a second-century date for the MF, but with a fourth-century date. Irenaeus and Clement clearly revere the *Shepherd of Hermas* as scripture and canon, using common introductory formulae and calling it such.[62] Jerome, Rufinus, and, even, Eusebius report that the *Shepherd of Hermas* was being used in the churches, but they begin to look upon the *Shepherd of Hermas* with uncertainty and, at times, disdain. Eusebius places it in his false category (ἀντιλεγόμενα),[63] while Athanasius, in his well-known Festal letter of 367 CE,

59 Hahneman, "Origins," 412; see also Metzger, *Canon*, 305–15. McDonald lists twenty different lists in *Biblical Canon*, Appendix C, 445–51.

60 Hahneman, "Origins," 411–12.

61 McDonald, *Biblical Canon*, 383.

62 Irenaeus, *Haer.* 4.20.2; Clement, *Strom.* 1.1.1; 1.85.4; 6.131.2. Many other citations could be made.

63 E. Kalin, "The New Testament Canon of Eusebius," in McDonald and Sanders, *The Canon Debate*, 386–404.

says that it is still worthy reading for catechetical instruction, even though he did not list it with scripture.[64] From this, we can conclude that, either the Fathers were wrong in their abundant testimony of *Shepherd of Hermas*, or that the MF had no influence upon anyone because it was not written until the latter half of the fourth century.

The *Shepherd of Hermas* was a very ancient document that played an important role in the lives of early Christians. Indeed, as Osiek remarks, "there is no doubt that at some times and places, *Hermas* was considered both scripture, that is, inspired, and canonical, part of the rule of faith sanctioned for liturgical use."[65] Furthermore, Eldon Epp, in discussing the Christian cache discovered at Oxyrhynchus, explains that, any way you construe this data, it is clear that "the *Shepherd of Hermas* was very much part of Christian literature in Oxyrhynchus at an early period." [66]

The many examples used above are by no means comprehensive but have been included to illustrate that, no matter which way one construes the data, or what paradigm of judging canonicity one uses, it is clear that the *Shepherd of Hermas* was an important and influential text of the early church, and is evidence for the canon of the New Testament solidifying its form in the fourth, not the second, century.

The purpose of this paper has been to attempt to show that "non-canonical" books have been important to the church since the time of Christ, and, for scholarly purposes, greatly aid us in studying the formation of the Christian biblical canon. Because of its early popularity and use, the *Shepherd of Hermas* must be properly understood and reckoned with by any who seek to fully understand the era and the processes that led to the final canon of the New Testament.

64 Athanasius, *Ep. fest.* 39.7.

65 Osiek, *Hermas*, 4. Henne, differing from McDonald's criteria of canonicity, advocates a three-point paradigm of judging canonicity: use in liturgical proclamation, belief that the text was inspired, and use of the text in theological discussions. *Hermas* fits all three perfectly. See Henne, "Canonicité," 81–100.

66 E. Epp, *Perspectives on New Testament Textual Criticism* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 757. Hurtado makes an interesting point that "scribal habits are not policed by any sort of authority, so the very presence of these traits in a text . . . is highly significant" (*Artifacts*, 62).

APPENDIX 1: *THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS*: ALL KNOWN GREEK MANUSCRIPTS

Text	Date	Provenance	Material	Form	Dimensions	R/V ?	Selected Bibliography
P. Amh. 190	5/6 C	Egypt	Papyrus	Codex	12 × 14 cm	R/V	AMC 2, 472–77
P. Ber. 5104	5 C	Fayoum	Papyrus	Codex	3.2 × 9.7 cm	R/V	Vigiliae Chr. 24 (1970)
P. Ber. 5513	3 C	Fayoum	Papyrus	Roll	18 × 25 cm	R	Sitzb. Berl. Akad. (1891)
P. Ber. 6789	6 C	Egypt	Papyrus	Codex		R/V	BKT 6. pp. 17–20
P. Ber. 13272	4 C	Hermopolis	Parchment	Codex	20 × 25 cm	R/V	Aegyptus 17 (1937)
P. Ber. 21259	6 C	Egypt	Papyrus	Codex		R/V	BKT 9 163
P. Bod. 38	4 C	Panopolis	Papyrus	Codex	17.5 × 28.5 cm	R/V	Bibl. Bodm. 5; A. Carlini
P. Ham. 24	4/5 C	Egypt	Parchment	Codex		R/V	Sitzb. Berl. Akad.(1909)
P. Har. 128	5 C	Egypt	Papyrus	Codex	7.5 × 10 cm	R/V	JTS 48 (1947), 204–5
P. Iand. 1 4	1/2 C	Hermopolis	Papyrus	Codex		R/V	ZPE 40 (1980), 53–54
P. Mich. 917	3 C	Theadelphia	Papyrus	Codex	12 × 25 cm	R/V	C. Bonner, 1–126
P. Mich. 130	3 C	Fayoum	Papyrus	Roll	8.7 × 12.1 cm	V	HTR 20 (1927),105–116
P. Mich. 6427	4 C	Egypt	Papyrus	Sheet		R	ZPE 14 (1974), 193–6
P. Oxy. 5	3/4 C	Oxyrhynchus	Papyrus	Codex	11.4 × 12 cm	R/V	P. Oxy. 1
P. Oxy. 404	3/4 C	Oxyrhynchus	Papyrus	Codex	5.3 × 7.8 cm	R/V	P. Oxy. 3
P. Oxy. 1172	4 C	Oxyrhynchus	Papyrus	Codex	12.9 × 19.2 cm	R/V	P. Oxy. 9
P. Oxy. 1599	4 C	Oxyrhynchus	Papyrus	Codex	19.8 × 24.5 cm	R/V	P. Oxy. 13
P. Oxy. 1783	4 C	Oxyrhynchus	Parchment	Codexmini	9.3 × 13 cm	R/V	P. Oxy. 15
P. Oxy. 1828	3 C	Oxyrhynchus	Parchment	Codex	2.9 × 4.9 cm	R/V	P. Oxy. 15
P. Oxy. 3526	4 C	Oxyrhynchus	Papyrus	Codex	11 × 18 cm	R/V	P. Oxy. 50
P. Oxy. 3527	3 C	Oxyrhynchus	Papyrus	Codex	10.5 × 19 cm	R/V	P. Oxy. 50
P. Oxy. 3528	2/3C	Oxyrhynchus	Papyrus	Codex	2.9 × 9.6 cm	R/V	P. Oxy. 50
P. Oxy. 4705	3 C	Oxyrhynchus	Papyrus	Roll	8 × 8 cm	R/V	P. Oxy. 69
P. Oxy. 4706	2/3 C	Oxyrhynchus	Papyrus	Roll	5.1 × 10.2 cm	R	P. Oxy. 69
P. Oxy. 4707	3 C	Oxyrhynchus	Papyrus	Codex	6 × 17.5 cm	R/V	P. Oxy. 69
P. Prague 1 1	4/5 C	Egypt	Papyrus	Codex		R/V	P. Prag.1 (A. Carlini)
Codex Athos	15 C	Athos	Parchment	Codex		R/V	K. Lake, Facsimile edn.
Codex Sinaiticus	4 C	Palestine	Parchment	Codex		R/V	K. Lake, Facsimile edn.

Chapter 11

The *Protevangelium of James* and the Composition of the Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex: Chronology, Theology, and Liturgy

George T. Zervos

The decade of the 1940s witnessed the astounding consecutive discovery of several major collections of ancient Jewish and Christian manuscripts in the Judean desert and in Egypt. Since then, the sensationalism surrounding the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Nag Hammadi library has overshadowed a third group of these newly found writings that James M. Robinson identified as "the Pachomian Monastic Library at the Chester Beatty Library and the Bibliothèque Bodmer."[1] The Pachomian library was discovered only twelve kilometers east of the site at which the Nag Hammadi codices had been hidden, roughly the same distance between the monastery of Saint Pachomius and Chenoboskion where the Coptic manuscripts may originally have been housed.[2] These two groups of manuscripts surfaced in such close proximity to each other, in time and place, that Robinson found it difficult to distinguish between them in local reports of "papers" that had come to light in the area of Dishna, the next village up the Nile from Nag Hammadi, about twenty-five kilometers away.[3] It was during his investigation of the Nag Hammadi discovery that Robinson chanced upon a trail of evidence that led him to the conclusion that the remarkable Bodmer and Chester Beatty manuscripts, together, originally formed the bulk of the library of the ancient monastery of St. Pachomius.[4]

1 *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 5 (1990): 26–40. The manuscripts of this collection, now housed at the Chester Beatty Library, were discovered in the 1930s and only later determined to have constituted part of the Pachomian Library. See A. Pietersma, "Bodmer Papyri," *ABD* 1:766–67, for a convenient listing of the Bodmer manuscripts.

2 Ibid., 28.

3 Ibid., 26–27. Robinson viewed the Dishna Plain as "an important center of Egyptian Christianity."

4 C. H. Roberts had surmised the common origin of the Bodmer and Chester Beatty Papyri as early as 1970: "It is possible, though not proven, that the Chester Beatty and Bodmer codices may have formed part of a single church library, accumulated over two centuries or more, and eventually deposited, in the Jewish fashion, in a Genizah" ("Books in the Graeco-Roman World and in the New Testament," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible* [ed. P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans; Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1970], 1:56).

The presence of P.Bodm. V as one of the books of the "Pachomian Monastic Library" was obscured by the excitement produced by such sensational finds as the great Qumran Isaiah scroll, the Coptic *Gospel of Thomas*, and, among the Bodmer papyri themselves, the earliest known substantial copies of the Gospel of John—P.Bodm. II (P66) and P.Bodm. XIV–XV (P75). P.Bodm. V is an exceptionally well-preserved papyrus codex, whose forty-nine pages contain a complete text of the early Christian apocryphon commonly known as the *Protevangelium Jacobi* (*Prot. Jas.*).[5] The diplomatic *editio princeps* of P.Bodm. V was published in 1958 by Michel Testuz, Director of the Bibliothèque Bodmer, who dated the papyrus to the third century. Testuz based this date, first, on his own assessment of the orthography and grammar of the text of the *Prot. Jas.* contained in the papyrus, and, second, on the "kinship" (*parenté*) of the handwriting of P.Bodm. V with that of P.Bodm. II (P66), which was assigned by its editor, Victor Martin, paleographically to the third century, and, more specifically, to around 200 CE.[6]

In the introduction to his 1959 edition of papyri VII, VIII, and IX of the Bodmer collection, Testuz maintained that, in antiquity, these three books had been bound together with six more of the Bodmer papyri in a composite codex that he described as a "*véritable anthologie*" of diverse early Christian writings, first among which was the *Prot. Jas.* (P.Bodm. V).[7] Testuz described

5 Anyone who has worked with original Greek papyri knows what an extreme luxury it is to possess a complete, almost perfectly preserved, literary papyrus that contains the complete text of a document that was itself composed only a century before the papyrus was written. Regarding the discovery of several "whole rolls and codices [on papyrus] . . . miraculously left over from the ancient world," E. G. Turner eloquently stated, "But finds of such relative completeness are rare. Time is a jealous goddess and exacts a heavy percentage on what is preserved" (*The Papyrologist at Work* [Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Monographs 6; Durham, NC: Duke University, 1973], 1–2).

6 *Papyrus Bodmer V: Nativité de Marie* (Cologny-Genève: Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, 1958), 10: "on peut cependant penser que notre manuscript a été éxecuté dans le courante du III^{e} siécle; c'est une évaluation qui paraît prudente, et que confirment les indices fournis par l'orthographe, la grammaire, et la parenté de cette écriture avec celle de l'Evangile de Jean édité par le Professeur V. Martin que l'on date des environs de l'an 200 de notre ère"; cf. V. Martin, *Papyrus Bodmer II* (Cologny-Genève: Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, 1956), 17; Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament* (trans. Erroll F. Rhodes; 2nd edn.; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 1995), 100; and Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament* (3rd edn.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 39–40.

7 *Papyrus Bodmer VII–IX: VII: L'Epître de Jude, VIII: Les deux Epîtres de Pierre, IX: Les Psaumes 33 et 34* (Cologny-Genève: Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, 1959), 8: "Les textes que nous publions ici ne sont pas isolés, mais ils font partie d'un même recueil, constituent une véritable anthologie, avec des ouvrages très divers. Nous avons déjà publié le premier d'entre eux: la Nativité de Marie (Papyrus Bodmer V)." Testuz affirmed the great significance of these manuscripts for the textual criticism of the New Testament: "Avec notre papyrus dont la copie remonte au III^{e} siècle, nous possédons donc maintenant la plus vénérable recension des Epîtres de Jude et de Pierre, et c'est la seule existant sur papyrus," ibid., 7.

his difficulty in deciding which of the Bodmer papyri originally constituted what is now referred to as the "Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex,"[8] but he was confident that he had ascertained its original contents and the order in which the texts had appeared in the codex.[9] Testuz provided a chart (see below) listing the individual documents in what he thought to be their original order in the codex and indicating which of four scribes—A, B, C, and D—copied each one; he also noted the pagination written on each text, the degree of certainty of their connection to the codex, and the condition of each manuscript.[10]

Papyrus	Scribe	Content
P.Bodm. V	A	*Prot. Jas.*
P.Bodm. X	B	*Apocryphal Correspondence* (3rd Corinthians)
P.Bodm. XI	B	*Odes of Solomon* 11
P.Bodm. VII	B	Epistle of Jude
P.Bodm. XIII	A	Melito *On the Passover*
P.Bodm. XII	A	Liturgical Hymn Fragment
P.Bodm. XX	C	*Apology of Phileas*
P.Bodm. IX	D	Psalms 33–34
P.Bodm. VIII	B	1 and 2 Peter

Table 11.1: Testuz's scribes

Within the context of our present investigation, we are very much concerned with the relationship between two of these four scribes (A and C), which is crucial to the dating of both P.Bodm. V and the *Prot. Jas.* itself. According to Testuz, three of the Bodmer papyri, including P.Bodm. V, were written by scribe A in the third century; scribe C wrote only the *Apology of Phileas* after the historical martyrdom of Phileas in the first decade of the fourth century.[11]

8 "Le fil de la reliure a en grande partie disparu, qui établissait la liaison matérielle entre les divers cahiers de papyrus dont le codex est constitué; plusieurs feuillets ont leurs bords abîmes et sont flottants; la numérotation des pages n'est pas continue; des copistes différents ont travaillé a la transcription des œuvres" (ibid., 8).

9 Testuz stated the reasons that led him to his conclusions on the order of the texts: "Plusieurs fois, un ouvrage commence sur la page même où un autre finit . . . ou au moins sur le même feuillet au verso . . . les chiffres ΡΛΕ (135) et ΡΛΣΤ (136) qui se lisent sur un feuillet de l'Apologie de Philéas indiquent bien que le codex était très épais, et ils correspondent au nombre de pages qu'on peut compter précédemment" (ibid., 9).

10 Ibid., 8.

11 *VII–IX*, 8. Testuz claimed that, in addition to the *Prot. Jas.*, scribe A also wrote Melito's O*n the Pascha* and a one-page fragment of a hymn. Scribe B wrote the apocryphal *Paul to the Corinthians*, *Odes of Solomon* XI, the Epistle of Jude, and the Epistle of Peter. Scribe C wrote the *Apology of Philéas*, and scribe D wrote Psalms 33 and 34. Concerning the dates of the papyri, Testuz wrote: "Au moyen des critères paléographiques, nous avons établi que presque tous les ouvrages de ce codex ont été copiés au III^{e} siècle. Il n'y a que l'Apologie de Phileas et les Psaumes 33–34 qu'on a dû transcrire plus tard, probablement au début du IV^{e} siècle. Cela est confirmé par la date traditionnelle du martyre de Philéas

It is at this point that the Belgian Jesuit scholar, Émile de Strycker, entered the discussion with his monumental study of the *Prot. Jas.* that would exercise a significant influence on subsequent scholarly perceptions of this important early Christian pseudepigraphon.[12] After initially having been refused access to the papyrus itself, de Strycker did manage to obtain a complete set of photographs of P.Bodm. V through the "*active obligeance*" of Testuz.[13] De Strycker declared that he examined the photographs of the papyrus and communicated to Testuz his suggested corrections to Testuz's original transcription of the text of P.Bodm. V.[14] De Strycker further claimed, in his 1961 publication, that he had received a letter from Testuz, dated January 25, 1960, which stated that Testuz and Victor Martin had reconsidered the position that Testuz had published in 1959 and were now inclined to distinguish only two scribes for four of the documents of the codex.[15] Thus, according to de Strycker, Testuz now thought that the same scribe wrote both the *Prot. Jas.* and the *Apology of Phileas*, effectively moving the date of the writing of P.Bodm. V to the early fourth century, necessarily after the martyrdom of Phileas.

As far as I know, Testuz did not validate de Strycker's allegation that he had changed his original opinion distinguishing the scribes who wrote P.Bodm. V and P.Bodm. XX. And Victor Martin, who from the beginning had been involved, at least peripherally, with Testuz's research on P.Bodm. V,[16] did not confirm de Strycker's claim that he and Testuz were "inclined" to the opinion that the *Prot. Jas.* and the *Apology of Phileas* were written by the same scribe in the fourth century. In his own publication of P.Bodm. XX—the *Apology of Phileas*—in 1964, Martin not only did not advance that position, but, on the contrary, emphasized the uncertainty of the place of the

(vers 304–307)."

12 *La forme la plus ancienne du Protévangile de Jacques* (*Subsidia Hagiographa* 33; Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1961).

13 "Nous avons exprimé à la Direction de la Bibliothèque Bodmer le désir d'examiner personnellement le papyrus à Cologny. Elle n'a pas estimé pouvoir accéder à notre demande. Mais grâce a l'active obligeance de M. Testuz, la Bibliothèque nous a envoyé un jeu complet d'excellentes photographies, d'un format identique à l'original" (ibid., 24). De Strycker explained, in n. 4, that the refusal of the Bodmer Library to allow him to see the original papyri came "à un moment ou M. Testuz était absent pour maladie."

14 Ibid., 24–26.

15 Ibid., 22, n. 4. After reproducing Testuz's chart of the Bodmer papyri and their scribes, de Strycker wrote, "Ces résultats ne paraissent pas assurés dans tous leurs détails. Par une lettre datée du 25 janvier 1960, M. Testuz veut bien me signaler qu'après un nouvel et attentif examen du papyrus, le Professeur Victor Martin et lui-même ont conçu des doutes sur l'identité des copistes des sections a e f et g. Il ne leur paraît pas exclu qu'il faille attribuer ces différentes parties à autant de copistes différents; mais au total ils inclineraient plutôt à en distinguer deux, l'un (disons A) pour la Nativité (a) et pour *l'Apologie de Philéas* (g), l'autre (disons C) pour Méliton (e) et pour l'Hymne (f). Si cette dernière opinion était confirmée, Il faudrait abaisser la date de la Nativité de Marie, puisque le martyre de saint Philéas n'eut lieu qu'en 304 ou 305."

16 De Strycker, *La Forme*, 22, n. 4; cf. Testuz, *Nativité*, 10.

Apology of Phileas within the codex as opposed to the "assured" place of the other Bodmer texts, among which was the *Prot. Jas.*[17] Martin also continued to advocate Testuz's original assessment that the Bodmer documents were "perhaps originally separate" before they were joined together in the Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex in the first half of the fourth century.[18]

Ironically, this questionable communication between Testuz and de Strycke, concerning the scribes of the *Apology* and the *Prot. Jas.* in the Bodmer Miscellan, seems to have been the primary reason that de Strycker dated P.Bodm. V to the fourth century, as opposed to the third, where Testuz, and even de Strycker himself, had placed it on paleographic grounds. De Strycker readily acknowledged that the paleographic criteria allowed P.Bodm. V to be attributed to the third century, and specifically referred to the papyrus as "dated to the third century."[19] However, in a footnote on the same page as these statements, he foreshadowed his final conclusion that P.Bodm. V was "rather of the first half of the fourth century."[20] Later in his book, De Strycker again referred to his perception of the "latest news" from Testuz that the *Prot. Jas.* was written by the same copyist as the *Apology of Phileas*.[21] De Strycker admitted that P.Bodm. V may have been written before P.Bodm. XX, but concluded that it would "no longer be prudent" to date P.Bodm. V to the third century.[22] By the end of this influential work, P.Bodm. V had become a writing of the "first half of the fourth-century."[23]

Whatever the conclusions of Testuz and Martin actually were concerning the individual scribes who wrote the books of the Bodmer Miscellany, after his alleged correspondence with Testuz, de Strycker proceeded under the assumption that the only two scholars who—up to that time—were known to have physically examined the original P.Bodm. V were leaning towards a fourth-century date for this papyrus. De Strycker published this dubious information on P.Bodm. V in his monograph that would alter the course of

17 "La liaison de plusieurs d'entre eux est assurée par des indices physiques. Toutefois, précisément pour l'Apologie de Philéas, cette certitude fait défaut" (*Papyrus Bodmer XX: Apologie de Philéas évêque de Thmouis* [Cologny-Genève: Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, 1964], 9.

18 "Peut-être indépendents à l'origine" (ibid.). Martin suggested that the unifying element that brought about the collection may have been theological in nature.

19 "Les critères paléographiques permettraient d'attribuer le papyrus au III^{e} siècle," and "datant du III^{e} siècle" (*La Forme*, 14). This apparent development in de Strycker's thought suggests that his original opinion—before the arrival of the "latest news" from Testuz—was that P.Bodm. V was written in the third century. The "latest news" caused him to change his mind.

20 "Plutôt de la première moitié du IV^{e} siècle" (ibid., n. 3).

21 "Nous avons signale plus haut (p. 22, n. 4) qu'aux dernières nouvelles la Nativité de Marie du P. Bodmer pourrait bien être du même copiste que l'Apologie de Philéas" (ibid., 196).

22 "C'est dire que cette partie du codex Bodmer ne saurait dater du III^{e} siècle et qu'elle n'est probablement pas antérieure au règne de Constantin. Sans doute, la Nativité de Marie a des chances d'avoir été transcrite avant l'Apologie; mais il ne serait plus prudent de la dater du III^{e} siècle" (ibid.)

23 "1^{e} moitié IV^{e} siècle" (ibid., 396).

the future study of the *Prot. Jas.*[24] This conclusion, based upon an apparent misunderstanding, would contribute to de Strycker's generally negative posture *vis-à-vis* the significance of the textual witness of P.Bodm. V, and would be a factor in his opinion of the *Prot. Jas.* as a later secondary composition.[25] After de Strycker, and to a large extent because of his influence, the *Prot. Jas.* has been widely viewed as a unitary composition of the second half of the second century that used the canonical Gospels of Luke and Matthew, possibly John, and even Justin Martyr as sources.[26]

By assigning the writing of P.Bodm. V—and by implication the composition of the *Prot. Jas.*—to a later time than was warranted by the evidence, de Strycker reduced considerably the perceived value of this document in the search for the origins of the earliest Christian traditions and narratives.[27] The greater the time interval between the composition of the *Prot. Jas.* and the writing of P.Bodm. V, the more opportunity there would have been for substantial irregularities to find their way into the text of the papyrus. And the later these irregularities are thought to have been included in the papyrus text, the less significant is their witness in the overall evaluation of the composi-

24 Although de Strycker's work was primarily a textual study (*La Forme la plus ancienne du Protévangile de Jacques: Recherches sur le Papyrus Bodmer 5, avec une édition critique du texte grec et une traduction annotée*), he also presented his opinions on such critical issues as the date, provenance, compositional history of the *Prot. Jas.* (ibid., 377–423).

25 Although de Strycker's work has every appearance of being an exhaustive textual and linguistic study of the *Prot. Jas.*, he referenced only a small percentage of the extant MSS of the apocryphon—those found in C. von Tischendorf's 1876 critical text, *Evangelia apocrypha* (Leipzig, 1876; 2nd edn.; repr. Hildesheim 1966), 1–50—and did not take into account over 100 additional extant manuscripts, of which he was aware: *La Forme*, 5–6; cf. idem, "De Griekse Handschriften van het Protevangelie van Jacobus," in *Mededelingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Wetenschappen. Letteren en Schone Kunsten van Belgie*, Klasse der Letteren, Jaargang XXX, nr. 1 (Brussels: Paleis der Academien, 1968), 3–30, and "Die Griechischen Handschriften des Protevangeliums Iacobi," *Griechische Kodikologie und Textuberlieferung* (ed. Dieter Harlfinger; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1980), 577–612. Furthermore, de Strycker's in-depth treatment of the text of P.Bodm. V was not paralleled by the relatively small appendix that he devoted to his opinions on the critical issues concerning this apocryphon that would become so influential in its future treatment, i.e., the redactional question, and the sources and date of the *Prot. Jas.*

26 This writer has pointed out, elsewhere, the influence of the work of de Strycker upon subsequent scholarly assessments of the *Prot. Jas.* Cf., e.g., G. T. Zervos, "Dating the Protevangelium of James: The Justin Martyr Connection," *SBL Seminar Papers, 1994* (SBLSP 33; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1994), 415–34; "Caught in the Act: Mary and the Adulteress," *Apocrypha* 15 (2004): 57–114.

27 De Strycker further marginalized the *Prot. Jas.* by offering a similarly pessimistic appraisal of its text contained in the Bodmer papyrus—its earliest manuscript witness. After presenting a detailed comparison of the text of P.Bodm. V with a limited number of the later manuscripts of the *Prot. Jas.*, de Strycker decided against the reliability of the papyrus text, characterizing it as a "hasty and unintelligent abridgement" of the original text of the *Prot. Jas.*: "la rédaction du papyrus Bodmer est le résultat d'un abrégement hâtif et inintelligent" (*La Forme*, 391).

tional history of the *Prot. Jas.* De Strycker must proclaim the 150-year interval between the composition of the *Prot. Jas.* and the writing of P.Bodm. V to be sufficient time for important faults to "slip into the text."[28]

Subsequent researchers generally have not been kind to de Strycker's later dating of P.Bodm. V. On the one hand, François Halkin reiterated de Strycker's position, as did Oscar Cullman in his contribution on the *Prot. Jas.* in the widely read and very influential Schneemelcher reference collection, the *New Testament Apocrypha*.[29] However, H. R. Smid, who in 1965 republished the Greek text of P.Bodm. V with an accompanying full commentary on the *Prot. Jas.*, rejected de Strycker's reassignment of P.Bodm. V to the fourth century, asserting that the papyrus "was, most likely, written in the third century A.D."[30] Smid also rejected the Greek text of de Strycker, choosing instead that of Testuz.[31] Helmut Koester included P.Bodm. V in his list of third-century manuscripts along with some of the most important early Christian papyri: P45 (four Gospels and Acts), P75 (Luke and John), Oxyrhynchus papyri 654 and 655 (Greek Thomas), and the Rainer papyrus (Unknown Gospel).[32] Keith Elliott, although following de Strycker's conclu-

28 *La Forme*, 18. Concerning PBV, de Strycker wrote: "écrit au III^{e} ou IV^{e} siècle, il ne peut être postérieur à l'original que de 100 à 150 ans. Mais cet intervalle suffit pour que des fautes, mêmes importantes, puissent s'y etre glisses." See above, notes 19–23, where de Strycker finally decided upon a fourth-century date for P.Bodm. V, resulting in a 150-year interval between the composition of the *Prot. Jas.* and the writing of the papyrus.

29 "*L"Apologie' du Martyr Philéas de Thmuis (Papyrus Bodmer XX) et les Actes Latins de Philéas et Philoromus*" (AnBoll 31; Bruxelles: Société des Bollandistes, 1963), 7, n. 6, refers to *La Forme*, 14, 22, and 195–97, for the opinion that "Les critères paléographiques permettraient d'assigner le papyrus à la fin du III^{e} siècle; mais puisque S. Philéas n'a été martyrisé qu'en 306, il faut reculer la copie jusqu'à la première moitié du IV^{e} siècle"; cf. Oscar Cullman, "The Protevangelium of James," in *New Testament Apocrypha* (rev. edn.; ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher; Eng. trans. ed. Robert McLachlan Wilson; Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 1:421. See the exchange between Stephen Shoemaker and this writer at the 2007 session of the Consultation on the Function of Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphical Writings in Early Judaism and Early Christianity in San Diego regarding the disproportionate influence of such scholars as Schneemelcher and de Strycker in the scholarly investigation of the Marian Apocrypha, in J. H. Charlesworth and L. M. McDonald (eds.), *Jewish and Christian Scriptures: The Function of "Canonical" and "Non-Canonical" Religious Texts* (T&T Clark, forthcoming).

30 *Protevangelium Jacobi: A Commentary* (Apocrypha Novi Testamenti 1; trans. G. E. van Baaren-Pape; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1965), 4.

31 "It seemed preferable not to give the text as established in the last critical edition of P.J., i.e. the edition by E. de Strycker . . . it was decided to print two manuscripts side by side . . . naturally the oldest manuscript, which was published in 1958, was to be included" (ibid., 1–2). On p. 5, Smid criticized de Strycker for not using "about one hundred" other known manuscripts of the *Prot. Jas.* text.

32 "Apocryphal and Canonical Gospels," *HTR 73* (1980): 108. Koester asserted that the *Prot. Jas.* predates and was used by Justin Martyr (ibid., 109–111), a position argued also by this writer, "Dating"; Koester included the *Prot. Jas.* in the same category with some of the earliest and most important Christian Apocrypha: the Unknown Gospel, and the Gospels of Thomas, the Egyptians, the Hebrews, Proto-Mark, and Infancy Thomas.

sions on most critical aspects of the *Prot. Jas.*, nevertheless also placed P.Bodm. V in the third century in his own, more recent, published collection of the New Testament Apocrypha.[33]

It is unfortunate that such crucial information on the single most important piece of empirical evidence related to the *Prot. Jas.* was restricted for decades to the ambiguous communications between the few individuals who were initially granted access to the original Bodmer papyri or to photographs of them. Scholarly dialogue regarding the date of P.Bodm. V, from the beginning and up until only recently, was generally limited to the orthography and grammar of the text of the papyrus; under normal circumstances, these constitute secondary means of determining the date of a manuscript—normal circumstances being access by experts to the original papyrus itself. The primary factor in dating a manuscript, its paleography, which ideally should have been the first issue addressed, was left largely unexamined by the only two scholars who published their conclusions on the date of the papyrus based on their personal study of either the original manuscript (Testuz) or of a complete set of photographs (de Strycker).

Neither Testuz nor de Strycker—by his own admission—was equipped to conduct a systematic critical evaluation of the handwriting of P.Bodm. V. As was noted above,[34] Testuz stated that he had arrived at his third-century-CE date for the papyrus as a result of his assessment of the orthography and grammar of its text of the *Prot. Jas.* and the "kinship" of the handwriting of P.Bodm. V to that of P.Bodm. II. He treated the script of P.Bodm. V in less than a page, then recounted the difficulty in dating texts written in "stylized" uncial letters.[35] De Strycker himself conceded that he was not a paleographer, as he expressly "abandoned to the trained papyrologists the task of analyzing in detail the characters of the script of P.Bodm. V."[36] Referring to the hand of P.Bodm. V in general terms as "Biblical Uncial,"[37] he devoted barely one page of his book[38] to what he characterized as "paleography in the strict sense."[39] Nevertheless, even here de Strycker begged the question of the date of the handwriting of

33 *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 49–50.

34 Note 6.

35 Testuz, *Nativité*, 9–10, "Il est très difficile d'évaluer la date de cette écriture d'après les éléments paléographiques. De façon générale, on reconnaît la difficulté qu'il y a à dater les manuscrits en capitales, et nous avons ici des capitales stylisées, dont l'usage a pu se maintenir pendant plusieurs siècles."

36 "Nous abandonnons à des papyrologues exercés la tâche d'analyser en détail les caractères de l'écriture du P. Bodmer 5" (*La Forme*, 196).

37 De Strycker apparently based his relatively superficial assessment of P.Bodm. V as "biblical uncial" on the "album paléographique" of C. H. Roberts, *Greek Literary Hands 350 B.C. – 400 A.D.* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1956); cf. *La Forme*, 195, n. 1.

38 *La Forme*, 196–97.

39 "La paléographie au sens strict" (ibid., 197). On pp. 197–217, de Strycker gave detailed information on the scribe's treatment of the *Nomina Sacra*, numerals, syllabic division of words at the end of lines, and the title and colophon.

P.Bodm. V by limiting his paleographical assessment of the papyrus to a comparison of its script with those of the major fourth-century codices Sinaiticus and Vaticanus.[40] In the final analysis, de Strycker ultimately resorted to dating P.Bodm. V purely on the basis of his perception of its codicological relationship to the other books in the Miscellaneous Codex, especially the fourth-century-CE *Apology of Phileas*.

After these inauspicious beginnings, the study of the Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex would eventually fall into the hands of more experienced papyrologists, who managed to contribute valuable paleographical and codicological information on the codex in spite of being able to study only the photographs of a few individual pages of the manuscripts that had been published.[41] The eminent papyrologist Eric Turner,[42] writing in 1977, did not mention de Strycker when he discussed P.Bodm. V in his extensive technical study of early codices.[43] On the contrary, Turner upheld Testuz's original distinction between the scribes who wrote the "*Nativity of Mary* V Hand 1" and the "*Apology of Phileas* XX Hand 4," and dated the "Nativity (V)" earlier than the "*Phileas* (XX), which is undoubtedly of the fourth century."[44] Since Turner was not allowed access to the papyri themselves, he was obliged to rely upon the "inadequate information" provided by Testuz on the physical aspects of the codex in which they had been bound.[45] Turner ventured, but qualified, the opinion that P.Bodm. V "could not be dated much earlier than the Phileas (XX)."[46]

Turner's most important contribution to our discussion was in presenting the results of his exhaustive codicological investigation of these nine papyri in a table entitled, "Contents of Bodmer Composite Codex (Codices)," which, as he asserted, "repeats, corrects and adds to that given by M. Testuz in P.Bodm. VI–IX, pp. 8–9."[47] According to this table, Turner concluded that a total of six scribes—as opposed to Testuz's four—had written the nine texts

40 Ibid, 196.

41 Photographs of pages 1 and 26, respectively, appeared in the publications of Testuz, *Nativité*, 6, and de Strycker, *La Forme*, ii.

42 In his masterful essay on "The New Testament Papyrus Manuscripts in Historical Perspective," published in 1989, Eldon Epp referred to E. G. Turner as "currently the leading expert on papyri" (in *To Touch the Text: Biblical and Related Studies in Honor of Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J.* [New York: Crossroad, 1989], 264).

43 *The Typology of the Early Codex* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977), 79–80. Turner valued highly the Bodmer Miscellany as a rare example of a "composite codex, the growth of which can be observed."

44 Ibid., 80.

45 Turner complained that he was denied access to the original papyri, although he "visited the Bodmer Library more than once" (ibid.). Turner claimed also to have had access to a photograph of page 22 of P.Bodm. V, which he found "reproduced in a sale brochure for X–XII."

46 Ibid. Turner's dating of P.Bodm. V was based upon his own theory of the composition of this codex, which he admitted to be uncertain. See below, n. 58, and further discussion on p. 80.

47 Ibid., 79–80. See Table 1: Testuz's scribes, p. 179.

making up the Bodmer Codex: scribe 1 wrote the *Prot. Jas.* (P.Bodm. V); scribe 2, the *Apocryphal Correspondence* (P.Bodm. X), *Odes of Solomon* 11 (P.Bodm. XI), and the Epistle of Jude (P.Bodm. VII); scribe 3, Melito's *On the Passover* (P.Bodm. XIII) and the Liturgical Hymn Fragment (P.Bodm. XII); scribe 4, the *Apology of Phileas* (P.Bodm. XX); scribe 5, Psalms 33 and 34 (P.Bodm. IX); and scribe 6, 1 and 2 Peter (P.Bodm. VIII).

Turner presented in his table a meticulous numbering of the quires making up each of the texts of the Miscellany, together with the corresponding page numbers on each quire, and he cross-referenced this information with the "four series of ancient paginations" that are visible among the books in the codex.[48] Turner verified all the links between the individual books of the Miscellany, except for that between the Epistle of Jude (P.Bodm. VII) and Melito's *On the Passover* (P.Bodm. XIII).[49] The first four books of the Miscellany—the *Prot. Jas.* (P.Bodm. V), the *Apocryphal Correspondence* (P.Bodm. X), *Odes of Solomon* 11 (P.Bodm. XI), and the Epistle of Jude (P.Bodm. VII)—are securely linked to each other codicologically, as witnessed by their consecutive enumeration as pages 1–68. But, while the *Prot. Jas.* was written by scribe 1, Turner assigned the following three texts to scribe 2.[50]

Kim Haines-Eitzen, also a trained papyrologist/paleographer, addressed the critical issues surrounding the Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex in her discussion of "private scribal networks and the transmission of early Christian literature."[51] After a thorough examination of the "handwriting and textual characteristics" of the Bodmer papyri in question, Haines-Eitzen confirmed "Turner's identification of scribal hands over that of Testuz."[52]

48 Ibid. A quire is a sheet of papyrus folded in half and bound together with other quires to form a codex. Several sheets can be stacked on top of each other to form double, triple, etc. quires.

49 "The only link that cannot satisfactorily be accounted for on evidence derived from Testuz is that of XIII and VII" (ibid., 80).

50 Kurt Aland and Hans-Udo Rosenbaum confirmed Turner's distinction between the scribes who wrote the *Prot. Jas.* and Melito's homily (*Kirchenväter – Papyri*; vol. 2 of *Repertorium der Griechischen Christlichen Papyri*; PTS 42; Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1995), 374, n. 2.

51 *Guardians of Letters: Literacy, Power, and the Transmitters of Early Christian Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 96–104. Haines-Eitzen was fully aware of the great significance of the Bodmer Codex on many different levels and how this was obscured by the way the codex was handled by its first editors: "The importance of this codex for the light it brings to bear on early Christian scribes, modes of transmission of literature, and the uses of early Christian literature, not to mention its importance codicologically, is entirely disproportionate to the scholarly attention it has received. It is particularly unfortunate that when the texts in this codex were published, beginning in the late 1950's, by Michel Testuz and later Victor Martin, it was only in a piecemeal fashion that obscured both the integrity of the codex as a whole and the wealth of information it offers" (ibid., 96). See n. 43, above, for Turner's similar appreciation of this codex.

52 Ibid., 98–99; cf. 173, n. 87: Apparently, as was the case with Turner before her, Haines-Eitzen's study was also limited to the few plates that had appeared up to that time

She convincingly cited a number of specific paleographic features in the handwritings of the various texts that enabled her to distinguish one from another and, ultimately, to verify Turner's division of the nine texts among a total of six individual scribes.[53] Haines-Eitzen also corroborated the position of Turner that P.Bodm. V—alone among the nine—was written by scribe 1, and further reinforced Turner's contention that the three texts that follow P.Bodm. V—the *Apocryphal Correspondence* (P.Bodm. X), *Odes of Solomon* 11 (P.Bodm. XI), and the Epistle of Jude (P.Bodm. VII)—"are quite clearly written by the same scribe [Turner's scribe 2], and each of the endings and beginnings of these texts fall on the same page."[54] Thus, the links between these three papyri are certain, as is the link between them, collectively, and P.Bodm. V.

Even more importantly, Haines-Eitzen advanced the critical dialogue on the process by which the Bodmer Miscellany was produced. Turner had initiated this dialogue by speculating on whether or not this codex was what he described as "a single composite manuscript."[55] Turner had stated that he could not resolve certain "doubtful questions" about his compositional theory of the Bodmer composite codex because he could not inspect the originals, concerning which Testuz had provided inadequate codicological information.[56] Turner's uncertainty was due, first, to the discrepancy in size between the pages containing Melito's *Homily* (P.Bodm. XIII) and the hymn fragment (P.Bodm. XII), as opposed to those on which the rest of the books of the Miscellany were written, and, second, the absence of the first two pages of the Melito.[57] These two factors render it impossible to determine definitively whether Melito's *On the Passover* began on the same page with the ending of the Epistle of Jude (P.Bodm. VII). The beginning of a new pagination in the Melito and hymn fragment—in combination with the above two factors—indicates the contrary and may suggest a different and separate origin for these two texts from that of the rest of the books in

in the official publications of the Bibliothèque Bodmer: "Reliance on such plates, especially when they are not complete, is particularly problematic when arguments concern issues of paleography." After citing Turner's "unproductive" efforts to gain access to the Bodmer papyri, Haines-Eitzen described her own unsuccessful attempt to obtain photographs of the papyri in the Bodmer Miscellany: "I too contacted the Bodmer Library regarding the possibility of obtaining microfilm of the texts in this codex and was informed that that would not be possible; they did report, however, that a full photographic reproduction of the codex was planned." This would be *Bibliotheca Bodmeriana: La collection des papyrus Bodmer* (Munich: K. G. Saur, 2000).

53 Ibid., 98.

54 Ibid., 99. Brackets are mine.

55 *Typology*, 80.

56 "M. Testuz gives inadequate information [about the originals], often keeping silence about dimensions and the fiber-alternations of gatherings" (ibid.).

57 "Against the view that a single composite manuscript is before us is the larger size of P. Bodmer XIII (14.2 x 16) compared with what would have to be earlier and later gatherings. I have changed my mind more than once as to whether this consideration is finally decisive . . . I incline now to think it is not" (ibid.).

the Miscellany. In the final analysis, Turner could not verify it as "demonstrated that we have in this series a single composite codex that has, as it were, grown in size and content in front of our eyes."[58]

But Turner did lay the foundation for an alternative solution by clarifying certain undoubted links between several groupings of texts, among the nine, at important places in the series: "Such links are indisputable when a work begins in the later leaves of one quire and continues into the next: (V and X in quire 4; X, XI and VII in quire 5; XX and IX in quire 11). The evidence is compatible with such links in quire 9 (joining XIII and XX) and in quire 11 (joining IX and VIII)."[59] The first of the undoubted links is of great concern for our investigation—that between the *Prot. Jas.* (P.Bodm. V) and the *Apocryphal Correspondence* (P.Bodm. X), which, in turn, is indisputably connected to the *Odes of Solomon* 11 (P.Bodm. XI) and the Epistle of Jude (P.Bodm. VII). The physical connection of the manuscripts in this complex (hereafter referred to as the "*Prot. Jas.* complex") is further strengthened by their continuous pagination from 1–68, and, even more so, by the fact of the common handwriting (scribe 2) of the last three texts.[60]

Another secure link in the codex is that between the *Apology of Phileas* (P.Bodm. XX) and Psalms 33 and 34 (P.Bodm. IX).[61] But sandwiched in between these two internally homogeneous groupings of manuscripts within the Miscellany—the *Prot. Jas.* complex on the one hand, and the Phileas–Psalms complex on the other—is the Melito–Hymn complex. And the links that physically unite the Melito–Hymn complex with the two complexes that precede and follow it in the Miscellany are quite insecure.[62] Haines-Eitzen stated the obvious: "The fact that the Melito and hymn fragment is larger in size . . . than all the other texts in the codex may well support the notion that it may have originally been part of a separate composite or individual codex."[63] The combined evidence of the oversized pages of the Melito and hymn fragment complex, and the doubtful links between this complex and those that preceded and followed it, strongly indicates that the Bodmer Miscellany may have been

58 "If it were certain that the codex had grown in this way [as a single composite codex] it would be surprising if any long interval of time separated its constituent parts. The hand of the Melito (XIII) or the Nativity (V) could not be dated much earlier than the Phileas (XX), which is undoubtedly of the fourth century" (ibid.).

59 Ibid.

60 Cf. Haines-Eitzen's comments above in support of Turner's information, p. 99.

61 *Typology*, 80; cf. *Guardians*, 100, "Psalms 33 and 34 are linked securely to the *Apology*, for they begin in the same quire as the *Apology* concludes."

62 *Guardians*, 174, n. 95. Haines-Eitzen argued convincingly against Turner's evaluation of the link between the hymn fragment (P.Bodm. XII) and the *Apology of Phileas* as secure, citing the "defective state of the opening of the *Apology*," "the fact the *Apology* begins with new pagination," and "the size differential" between the two manuscripts.

63 Ibid., 100. Haines-Eitzen continued, "but even this is not definite," on the basis of the uncertain connection between the Epistle of Jude and the Melito.

"produced from earlier collections."[64]

It is most significant for our discussion on the date of P.Bodm. V that the problematic link between the Epistle of Jude and the Melito *Homily* increases the likelihood that P.Bodm. V, along with the three texts that followed it in the codex, originally constituted a separate, self-contained, pre-existing codex. Haines-Eitzen affirmed this in the conclusion to her study of the Bodmer Miscellany, where she attempted to recreate the process by which this codex was constituted. Anchoring her chronological framework for the composition of the codex on the two certain early fourth-century documents in the collection, the *Phileas* (P.Bodm. XX) and Pss. 33 and 34 (P.Bodm. IX)—whose codicographical connection with each other is also certain—Haines-Eitzen asserted: "To these texts, then, were added a series of *older papyri, some in composite form* (*such as the opening four texts* and the Melito and hymn fragment) and some in individual form (such as the Epistles of Peter).[65]

More recent researchers have proposed modifications to the reconstruction theories of the Bodmer Miscellany, but these still support the basic premise that P.Bodm. V was originally part of a separate complex of manuscripts before it was incorporated into the Miscellany and, thus, joined to the fourth-century *Apology of Phileas* and Pss. 33 and 34. Winfried Grunewald envisioned three homogeneous "series" of manuscripts in the codex, the first of which was a combination of the first two "complexes" of Testuz, Turner, and Haines-Eitzen.[66] Grunewald's position was based upon accepting, as secure, the link between the Epistle of Jude (P.Bodm. VII) and the *Homily* of Melito (P.Bodm. XIII), thus combining the *Prot. Jas.* complex with the Melito–Hymn complex.[67] Grunewald further contributed to our discussion by completely disassociating the *Phileas*–Psalms complex from the other documents of the Miscellany by emphasizing the odd pagination of this group from that of the other seven books in the codex.[68]

64 Ibid., 99–100.

65 *Guardians*, 100. Italics are mine. See Victor Martin's similar discussion, *XX*, 9.

66 K. Junack and W. Grunewald, *Die katholischen Briefe, Das Neue Testament auf Papyrus 1* (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1986), 18; cf. J. Van Haelst, *Catalogue des papyrus litteraires juifs et chretiens* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1976), Nr. 138.

67 *Briefe*, 19.

68 Grunewald viewed the Phileas–Psalms complex as the nucleus of the unitary Bodmer Codex to which the other texts of the collection were later added in the middle of the fourth century, maintaining that all the remaining books of the codex—from the *Prot. Jas.* through the Epistle of Jude—were written after the *Phileas*: "dass es sich hier um einen einzigen Codex handelt, der in dieser Reihenfolge vom Protevangelium Iacobi bis zum 2. Petrusbrief ohne grösseren zeitlichen Verzug geschrieben worden ist und so auf etwa die Mitte des 4. Jahrhunderts anzusetzen ist . . ." (ibid., 23–24).

Tommy Wasserman presented a series of arguments that cast doubt upon Grunewald's reconstruction, and, especially, upon its foundation stone, the certainty of the Jude–Melito link.[69] Wasserman also rejected Turner's gradual growth view of the Bodmer Miscellany and regarded as "established" the presence of three, or four, distinct "series" of texts in the codex,[70] thus, essentially, agreeing with Haines-Eitzen's collection hypothesis for the production of the Miscellany.[71] Addressing the question of who was responsible for the order of the various series, especially given that the codex was in disarray when it passed into the possession of the Bodmer Library,[72] Wasserman cited a pertinent statement by Victor Martin to the effect that the Phileas–Psalms complex "was combined by Testuz with the other sections found among the material at the Bodmer Library in the first place, solely because of the similar format and because of his theory concerning the pagination."[73] In view of this information, Wasserman justifiably advocated that, originally, the *Phileas* and the Psalms were secondary to the rest of the collection.[74] This information has significant implications for the date of P.Bodm. V. As was shown above, Turner's tenuous dating of P.Bodm. V

69 "The last gathering of series I [*Prot. Jas.* complex] concludes with a folio containing the end of Jude (verso) and an unpaginated page (recto) with only the title Μελιτονος περι πασχα. The actual text of the Homily begins in the next gathering, of which the two first pages are now lost. There is, therefore, the possibility that the Homily once constituted an independent section, which, at a later stage, was placed after Jude – the new pagination and the different size favour this possibility" (T. Wasserman, "Papyrus 72 and the Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex," *NTS* 51 [2005]: 142–43). Cf. T. Nicklas and T. Wasserman, "*Theologische Linien im Codex Bodmer Miscellani*," in *New Testament Manuscripts: Their Texts and their World* (Texts and Editions for New Testament Study 2; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 162–63. Wasserman, initially, appears to have accepted Grunewald's three-section theory, but left open the possibility that the Jude–Melito link was to be rejected; if this link is not secure, the codex would be made up of four complexes of papyri, rather than three.

70 "Papyrus 72," 144.

71 Ibid., 147.

72 "Papyrus 72," 137–38; "*Theologische*," 161.

73 "Papyrus 72," 145; *XX*, 8–9.

74 "At some point this section was probably added to another collection (sections I and III), possibly at the beginning of the codex" ("Papyrus 72," 147). Wasserman's arguments (ibid., 145) for the links between sections I and II were, (1) P72, which straddles both sections, (2) the "remarkably similar colophons in some of the writings," (3) Testuz's statement that he found "traces of two different bindings in the entire codex," and (4) liturgical connections between certain texts. Cf. "*Theologische*," 165, where Wasserman ultimately rejected both Turner's "single composite manuscript" theory of the codex and Grunewald's similar theory (see n. 68 above), that the *Phileas*–Psalms complex was the nucleus around which the entire codex had been constructed, on the basis of the differences between the colophons of the *Phileas*–Psalms complex and those in sections I and III: "Dies spricht sowohl gegen die These Turners, dass der Codex als Gesamt in einem Zug produziert wurde, als auch gegen den Vorschlag Grunewalds, dass Sektion II mit der Apologie den Nukleus der gesamten Kollektion gebildet habe."

to the late third century was contingent upon his theory of the Bodmer Miscellany as a unitary composite codex. But Turner himself admitted that his compositional theory could not be taken as demonstrated because of the lack of positive evidence of linkage between the *Prot. Jas.* complex and the Melito–Hymn complex. This, viewed against the backdrop of the almost universal scholarly rejection of Turner's theory in favor of the "collection hypothesis," renders his assessment of the date of P.Bodm. V defunct.[75] But, although Turner's theory has been discredited by his own criteria, his dating of P.Bodm. V—which was predicated upon his theory—has continued to hold sway among scholars.

Wasserman, in spite of his firm rejection of Turner's compositional theory, did accept Turner's position that the *Prot. Jas.* complex (Wasserman's Section I), and the 1 and 2 Peter complex (P.Bodm. VIII; Wasserman's Section III) "were probably produced over a short period of time, and included in sequence in the final codex (possibly also in an earlier collection)."[76] Wasserman also echoed Turner's late-third-century date for P.Bodm. V: "the hands of the other scribes who copied the *Nativity* and Melito's *Homily* cannot be dated much earlier than 300 CE."[77] But Wasserman's view of the composition of the Bodmer Miscellany is based primarily upon his argument that P72—which includes both the Epistle of Jude and 1 and 2 Peter—was written by the same scribe.[78] His further suggestion of "an earlier date for P72 (3rd century)"[79] produces an inconsistency in his entire position. How could Wasserman assign a third century date to P72—which contains the Epistle of Jude and 1 and 2 Peter—and place P.Bodm. V in the late third century, when, according to Wasserman's own compositional theory, the Epistle of Jude was written in a physically, and, therefore, chronologically, later part of the securely-linked *Prot. Jas.* complex of manuscripts, fourth in line *after* the *Prot. Jas.*?

Inconsistencies such as these demonstrate that scholarly study of the Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex finds itself in a situation reminiscent of the sudden release and publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Bodmer papyri surfaced at about the same time as the scrolls, but access to the Bodmer texts was restricted for even longer—until a complete set of photographs was published in 2000.[80] Scholarly assimilation of such

75 See above, n. 58.

76 "Papyrus 72," 146. Cf. *Typology*, 80.

77 "Papyrus 72," 147.

78 Wasserman goes so far as to suggest that the scribe of P72 (Testuz's scribe B) may have been the person responsible for collecting all the books of the Miscellany into a single codex (ibid., 148, 154). Cf. Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians*, 97–98, n. 88: "Aland confirms Turner's identification of the Melito hand as different from that of the *Nativity* but is reluctant to ascribe the Epistles of Peter and that of Jude to two separate hands," referring to Aland and Rosenbaum, *Repertorium*, 374, n. 2, and 377, n. 14. Cf. n. 50 above.

79 Ibid., 147.

80 See n. 52 above.

literary windfalls is slow and arduous, and the physical evaluation of the Bodmer papyri is still in its early stages. For decades, scholars have been forced to depend upon whatever information they could glean from the insufficient, even misleading, publications of the few who initially studied the documents, or from a few random photographs that appeared in the official publications. But, even under these unfavorable conditions, there has been marked progress in our understanding of the Bodmer Miscellaneous codex and of the position of P.Bodm. V within it.

Conclusions

What, then, have we learned about the date of P.Bodm. V from the recent re-examinations of the position of our papyrus within the Miscellany after the decades-long distraction of the de Strycker episode? The first theory to fall victim to these investigations was de Strycker's dating of P.Bodm. V to the first half of the fourth century strictly on the basis of his perception that it was written by the same scribe who wrote the *Apology of Phileas*. Now, contrary to de Strycker's opinion, it is the place of the *Phileas* within the codex that has been all but discredited because of its lack of paleographical and codicological connections to the codex as a whole. Instead, the *Phileas*, together with Pss. 33 and 34, constitutes its own complex, or "series," and is irrelevant to the dating of the *Prot. Jas.* Thus, P.Bodm. V has been completely disassociated from the two texts in the Miscellany that are acknowledged to be of the fourth century.

The demise of de Strycker's speculation that the same scribe wrote both the *Prot. Jas.* and the *Phileas* brought the date of P.Bodm. V out of the fourth century and back into the third, where it had been placed originally by Testuz. The next conjectural dating of P.Bodm. V to the late third century was contingent, also, upon uncertain compositional theories of the Miscellany. Turner's single composite codex hypothesis has been completely abandoned. Likewise problematic are the proposed views of the codex as consisting of a larger original complex, possibly including also the Melito–Hymn complex and 1 and 2 Peter, all of which had been written within a short period of time. The status of P.Bodm. V has actually been enhanced by these abortive attempts to affirm the link between the *Homily* of Melito and the *Prot. Jas.* complex. The doubtfulness of this link implies that the *Prot. Jas.* complex had an independent pre-existence of its own, thus reducing the likelihood that the various complexes of manuscripts in the Miscellany were written within a short period of time at the end of the third century before their incorporation into the Miscellany.

P.Bodm. V now appears to be the premier document in the collection and, because of its position of primacy, could very well also be the oldest. Furthermore, P.Bodm. V has been securely linked codicologically to the

immediately following three texts in the Miscellany: the *Apocryphal Correspondence*, *Odes of Solomon* 11, and the Epistle of Jude. All of the three latter books are also securely linked to each other codicologically, and are connected to each other paleographically as well. In addition, it seems that these four texts—the *Prot. Jas.* complex—constitute the largest, and oldest, complex of manuscripts in the Miscellany, and form the basis of the codex, to which the remaining texts of the collection were appended. Indeed, this first collection of papyri, among which P.Bodm. V holds the primacy of position, is the most secure of the complexes making up the Miscellany.

Ironically, P.Bodm. V, itself, is so basic to the Miscellany, and its codicological position so secure, that researchers have expended far less effort in attempting to evaluate it in comparison to the other complexes of texts. This is evident from the lingering disputes among scholars regarding the status of the Melito–Hymn complex and 1 and 2 Peter. Discussion surrounding these two groups of texts—whose status still remains undecided—centers around their relationship either to the *Prot. Jas.* complex, or to an individual document within that complex (the Epistle of Jude). There has been much debate centering on the Melito–Hymn complex and its problematic connection to the Epistle of Jude, and, thereby, to the entire *Prot. Jas.* complex. So, also, 1 and 2 Peter have attracted much attention regarding their possible connection with the Epistle of Jude, either through their, hypothetically, having been written by a common scribe, or through their common designation as, together, constituting P72.

P.Bodm. V, itself, is generally believed to have been written exclusively by the first, and probably the earliest, of the five or six scribes to whom the nine texts are attributed. If a second scribe wrote the *Apocryphal Correspondence*, *Odes of Solomon* 11, and the Epistle of Jude, as is also generally accepted, then the scribe who wrote P.Bodm. V had already completed his work before the other three texts of the *Prot. Jas.* complex were written, and, most likely, before the addition of the Melito–Hymn, 1 and 2 Peter, and *Phileas*–Psalms complexes to the codex. All this supports the fact that the *Prot. Jas.* was written first and was, therefore, the oldest document in the Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex, which was subsequently enlarged by later scribes.

The research cited above regarding the date of P.Bodm. V has been based upon a combination of textual, codicological, and paleographical studies that are partial and limited in nature. Since researchers have tended to focus on individual components of the Miscellany, which they deemed to be important for illuminating the overall compositional history of the entire codex (Jude, Melito, *Phileas*, 1 and 2 Peter), there has yet to be conducted a thorough professional paleographical study of P.Bodm. V to determine its date. As scholars continue to struggle to understand the process by which the Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex was

compiled, the makeup of the codex itself, and, especially for our topic, the number, extent, and original order of the pre-existing groupings that eventually made up the codex, the first order of business is a thorough paleographical study of P.Bodm. V, as well as a review of the remaining papyri in the codex. At this point in this ongoing investigation, we may now return P.Bodm. V, tentatively, to its original place in the third century, pending future paleographical analysis.[81]

81 This study has focused mostly upon the codicological aspects of the Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex; the significant associated theological and liturgical issues will be addressed in future investigations. It was also beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the paleography of P.Bodm. V with the amount of detail that this critical issue warrants. However, it is appropriate to point out that, *a priori*, there is an inherent difficulty in assessing the handwriting of the texts included in the Miscellany. G. Cavallo wrote of a historical seam, around 300 CE, that marks a boundary separating Greek papyri that lend themselves to more accurate dating from those that do not (G. Cavallo and H. Maehler, *Greek Bookhands of the Early Byzantine Period*, A.D. *300–800*, Bulletin Supplement [London: Institute of Classical Studies, 1987]), 1. Quoting E. Turner, "Ptolemaic Bookhands and the Lille Stesichorus," *Scrittura e Civiltà* 4 (1980): 21, on the hazards of dating Greek literary papyri paleographically in the Ptolemaic period beginning in the fourth century BCE, Cavallo extended the range of difficult paleographic assessment also to the Greek bookhands of the post fourth-century-CE period, from 300–800. Greek papyri written during the Roman period up to the fourth century CE, unlike those falling within the preceding and succeeding periods, can be placed within narrower parameters of about a half-century. Thus, by having the tentative date of P.Bodm. V returned from the fourth back to the third century CE, our papyrus has crossed a border into an area that is more conducive to its being assigned a more precise date.

Chapter 12

The Child Mary in the *Protevangelium of James*

Mary F. Foskett

As every reader of the *Protevangelium of James* (*Prot. Jas.*) quickly realizes, the main focus of this early Christian apocryphal text rests squarely on Mary. One of its key interests is the validation and valorization of Mary's virginity, an extraordinary condition that survives not only her 'marriage' to the widower Joseph, but even childbirth. The overarching concern of this ancient narrative is clearly not Mary's childhood. However, insofar as nearly a third of the narrative chronicles the birth, infancy, and childhood of its female protagonist, it clearly deems the story of Mary's birth and youth significant. Moreover, the variant Greek titles of the text, *Genesis Marias*, *Apokalypsis Jacob* (de Strycker) and *Genesis Marias tēs Hagias Theotokou kai Hyperendoxou Metros Iesou Christou* (Tischendorf), as well as the inclusion of *Genesis Marias* (25:4) in its closing verses, indicate the importance of the story of Mary's childhood. The aim of this essay is to examine how the story of Mary's childhood functions in the *Protevangelium*.

Ronald Hock has argued that *Prot. Jas.* may best be understood as an encomiastic *historia* (the term the narrator uses in 25:1; cf. 1:1). Citing Lucian's charge that *historia* was morphing into a form of *egkomion*, Hock sees, in *Prot. Jas.*, evidence of an encomiastic purpose. Its extended focus on Mary's family background, particularly the *topoi* of race (γένος), ancestors (πρόγονοι), parents (πατέρες), upbringing (ἀνατροφή), her "adult pursuits, skills and habits," and, most importantly, her performance of virtuous deeds (the exercise of σωφροσύνη) follow encomiastic conventions and aims.[1] The story of Mary's childhood, with its attendant encomiastic features, sets a rhetorical agenda that the remainder of the narrative meets. Furthermore, close examination of the narrative reveals that the early chapters of *Prot. Jas.* serve to establish not only that Mary is praiseworthy, but that she is a holy child, one whose life has been dedicated to the Lord God. The emphasis on Mary's purity that culminates in the revelation of her unprecedented virginity is tied early on in the narrative to her unique vocation. Finally, although the story of the young Mary serves to portray her as an extraordinary figure, it

1 Ronald F. Hock, *The Infancy Gospels of James and Thomas* (The Scholars Bible 2; Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge, 1995), 17–18.

is not wholly unparalleled in its aims. By reading *Prot. Jas.* 1–8 in the context of ancient childhood stories of famous figures, as well as of other evidence that speaks to the idealization of childhood, readers can gain a better appreciation of the central role that the portrayal of the young Mary plays in the *Protevangelium of James*.

Protoevangelium of James *1:1–8:2*

For readers new to the text, a brief review of *Prot. Jas.* 1:1–8:2 may bring into clearer view significant details in its recounting of Mary's childhood. The *Protevangelium* focuses on Mary's social background and family history: it identifies the names and identity of her parents, Joachim and Anna, tells of their occupation and circumstances, narrates the annunciations of Anna's pregnancy, and records the story of Mary's birth and early years. Joachim, a figure significant enough to be included "in the records (Ἐν ταῖς ἱστορίαις) of the twelve tribes of Israel" is introduced as "a very rich man" (1:1–2). Indeed, so great is his wealth that he doubles his gifts to the Lord, offering one portion on behalf of all the people and the other as a sin-offering for himself (1:2–3). The only "blemish" in *Prot. Jas.*' portayal of Joachim and Anna is their infertility. However, each parent soon receives an angelic message concerning Anna's pregnancy: "Anna, Anna," says the messenger of the Lord, "the Lord God has heard your prayer. You will conceive and give birth, and your child will be talked about all over the world" (*Prot. Jas.* 4:1). Joachim, too, is the recipient of a divine annunciation: "Joachim, Joachim, the Lord God has heard your prayer. Get down from there. Look, your wife, Anna, is pregnant" (*Prot. Jas.* 4:4). With Mary being born to a Jewish family that is wealthy, righteous and favored by the Lord God, *Prot. Jas.* portrays its protagonist in terms compatible with encomiastic history and biography.

As the narrative unfolds, it relates Mary's upbringing (ἀνατροφή). The παῖς is extraordinary: day by day she grows stronger, and, at the early age of six months, she walks! Mary is immediately safeguarded in a bedroom-turned-sanctuary (ἁγιάσμα), where she is kept from coming into contact with anything profane (κοινός) or unclean (ἀκάθαρτος). Here, the story clearly departs from ancient Mediterranean images of young children at home. Whether playing and moving about in the Roman *atrium*—a household space that children, adults, family, servants, and friends regularly shared—or a smaller home, children typically resided in the midst of a busy family dwelling. As Eric Myers notes of houses in Syro-Palestine:

> The interior of the house does not represent private space as distinct from work space . . . the public/private dichotomy simply cannot characterize this space where all manner of household, family, and everyday activities were carried on . . . the house, whether in a village, town, or city, was rarely if ever isolated; rather it was a place of "dynamic arrangements, of access and exclusion, opening and closing, enclosing and disclosing, that shifted and varied

> with the time of day, the activity undertaken, the season of the year, relations between persons occupying or passing through, mechanisms of exchange and commerce, and so forth."[2]

Thus, in the *Prot. Jas.*, Mary is distinctly removed from normal household life. Instead, she enjoys the exclusive company of the "undefiled daughters of the Hebrews" (vs. 6). As the text shifts its attention from the child's giftedness (her walking at such an early age) to the space that she occupies, and the company she keeps there, it underscores Mary's purity, a motif that the *Prot. Jas.*, thereafter, sustains.

Key to understanding the narrative's interest in Mary's purity is the vow that the childless Anna makes when she learns that she will soon conceive. Echoing the biblical Hannah (1 Samuel 1), Anna declares that she will dedicate her child to serving the Lord God. Just as Hannah promised of her future son, Samuel, κἀγὼ κιχρῶ αὐτὸν τῷ κυρίῳ πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας, ἃς ζῇ αὐτός, χρῆσιν τῷ κυρίῳ ("and I lend him to the Lord all the days that he lives, a loan to the Lord;" 1 Sam. 1.28 LXX), Anna vows, in language reminiscent of cultic ritual, Ζῇ Κύριος ὁ Θεός . . . προσάξω αὐτὸ δῶρον αὐτὼ Κυρίῳ τῷ Θεῷ μου, καὶ ἔσται λειτουργῶν αὐτῷ πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς ζωῆς αὐτοῦ ("As the Lord God lives, I will present her as a gift to the Lord my God, and she will be serving him all the days of her life," *Prot. Jas.* 4:2).[3] As the story progresses, Mary's remarkable physical development prompts Anna to confirm her vow: "As the Lord my God lives, you will never walk on this ground again until I take you into the temple of the Lord" (41). From the annunciation of her birth, Mary is set apart as a holy child whose true vocation is that of serving and belonging to the Lord God. The expression of such service only later comes fully to light in the annunciation scene where Mary learns that she will conceive by means of the divine *logos* and give birth to Jesus (*Prot. Jas.*

2 Eric M. Myers, "The Problems of Gendered Space in Syro-Palestinian Domestic Architecture: The Case of Roman-Period Galilee," in *Early Christian Families in Context: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue* (eds. David L. Balch and Carolyn Osiek (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 59–60. Here, Myers cites C. M. Baker, *Rebuilding the House of Israel: Architectures of Gender in Jewish Antiquity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 65.

3 Following H. R. Smid, *Protevangelium Jacobi: A Commentary* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1965) and others, Willem S. Vorster, "The Protevangelium of James and Intertextuality," in *Text and Testimony* (eds. T. Baarda et al.; Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1988), 273–74, notes that "there is a resemblance between the first few chapters of *PJ* and 1 Sam 1 and 2 . . . Joachim like Hannah is reproached for childlessness. He also refuses to eat. Anne, the mother of Mary, is reproached by a woman, and so is Hannah. Before the birth of the child both Hannah and Anne dedicate their children to the service of God. There is a comparison between the grieving of Hannah and the lament of Anne. Both Mary and Samuel are presented in the temple and spend their lives there. . . . The reader is prompted to fill in the story of Mary with his knowledge of the story of Samuel, but also to correct his version by taking seriously the point of the new story and the differences with the pretext. While Samuel is prepared for a 'ministry', Mary is prepared to become the virgin mother of Jesus."

11:5–8). When Mary consents to the message, identifying herself as ἡ δούλη Κυρίου, the servant of the Lord, she confirms what Anna first established, namely, that Mary is wholly dedicated to serving God.

The scene of Mary's first birthday celebration further illustrates the *Protevangelium*'s early interest in Mary's unique vocation. Joachim throws a great banquet that is attended by the "high priests, priests, scholars, council of elders, and all the people of Israel" (vs. 6). The celebration of Mary's birthday, portrayed as a huge event at the family home (which would be typical for a wealthy family), may recall a sensibility known in Rome and other ancient contexts wherein such celebration was seen as largely one "between the individual and the divine forces which protected the individual."[4] Here, Mary is blessed by the priests, who pray that she will be granted "the ultimate (ἔσχατος) blessing, one which cannot be surpassed" (6). The scene plays an obvious role in constructing Mary as a child of both great blessing and holiness. Anna breastfeeds Mary and makes her rest in ἐν τῷ ἁγιάσματι τοῦ κοιτῶνος ("the sanctuary of the bedroom," *Prot. Jas.* 6:10; ἐν τῷ κοιτῶνι τοῦ ἁγιάσματος, "the bedroom of the sanctuary," *Prot. Jas.* 6:14).

When Mary is two, Joachim is ready to bring the young girl to the temple to make good on his and Anna's vow, but Anna urges that the couple wait until the child is three, the age at which children were customarily weaned, "so she won't miss her father or mother" (*Prot. Jas.* 7:2). When three year-old-Mary is later brought to the temple, she is escorted by the "undefiled Hebrew daughters," with each carrying a lit lamp, in order to shield Mary's eyes and heart from being "captivated by things outside the Lord's temple" (*Prot. Jas.* 7:5). At the temple, she is welcomed by the priest, who welcomes and blesses her: "The Lord God has exalted your name among all generations. In you the Lord will disclose his redemption to the people of Israel during the last days" (*Prot. Jas.* 7:8). In a rare instance of childlike behavior, Mary dances on the step of the altar, to the delight of "the whole house of Israel" (*Prot. Jas.* 7:10). Here, in the scene that closes the narrative's depiction of the child Mary, the child is "fed like a dove, receiving her food from the hand of a heavenly messenger" (*Prot. Jas.* 8:2). Mary' purity is confirmed. At the temple, nothing unclean is permitted to pass her lips.

Thus *Prot. Jas.* 1:1–8:2 functions to shape Mary's portrayal as a holy child. It sets the stage for the drama that unfolds as Mary approaches puberty and takes on her identity as the "virgin (παρθένος) of the Lord" (*Prot. Jas.* 8:7), the characterization that dominates the remainder of the narrative. As the *Protevangelium* traces the maturation of its young protagonist, it both recalls and stands apart from other ancient childhood tales that recount the early stories of famous gods and other figures. A brief comparison further illumines *Prot. Jas.* 1:1–8:2 and its role in the narrative as a whole.

4 Beryl Rawson, *Children and Childhood in Roman Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 135.

Storied Children

Stories of the early lives of gods and famous individuals abound in the Greek and Roman worlds. As Thomas Wiedemann has argued, in Greek mythic tradition, child god and adult god did not occupy chronologically distinct stages of life. This was not because "the ancient world was unable to distinguish between adults and children: rather, it is a statement that even from the very moment of his birth, the god . . . had certain characteristics which were to be his throughout his divine 'life.'"[5] Therefore, one aim of such ancient childhood tales of the gods was to illustrate the constancy of their divinity. The same held true in stories recorded in the various lives of the Roman emperors that recounted the performance of childhood miracles. Here, too, tales of birth and infancy played a key role in the presentation of character, especially since character was often considered inherited or innate (although Quintillian allowed for the influence of education on character development). More often than not, a child's behavior, whether admirable or not, was treated as evidence of the subject's character.[6] It was clearly the portrayal of adults, not children for their own sake, which lay at the center of such literature. The result was that orators and biographers skillfully sought "to push back any evidence of (the) subject's virtues – or vice versa – as far back into childhood as possible, so that childhood simply functioned to foreshadow her or his future accomplishments, or failings, whichever the case might be."[7] Therefore, Menander's discussion of how to praise an emperor emphasizes the importance of demonstrating the subject's youthful intellectual qualities and virtues.

In this regard, Wiedemann detects some tension in Roman discourse about famous individuals. If they are exceedingly praiseworthy, might they appear rather superhuman, that is, too exceptional to function as role models? When Pliny the Younger thanks Trajan for his promotion, he includes no reference to Trajan's birth or childhood, let alone any miracle tales. However, Suetonius' *Lives of the Caesars* and the later *Augustan History* do contain tales of childhood miracles and prodigious achievement. Written three centuries apart from one another, these examples demonstrate an interesting consistency in the literary recounting of the childhood tales of the emperors. For example, some of Augustus' biographers showed no hesitation in depicting their subject as superhuman:

> Especially in the years following the conquest of Egypt, Octavian/Augustus was keen to be compared to Alexander. Suetonius notes that already at the time of his birth there were omens "from which his future greatness and eternal good fortune could be clearly seen." . . . There were other signs –

5 Thomas Wiedemann, *Adults and Children in the Roman Empire* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1989), 51.

6 Ibid., 54.

7 Ibid.

> among them the story that his father received a response from a Thracian oracle which only Alexander the Great had received before. Augustus himself revealed his divine nature as a child: one night he disappeared from his cradle and was found at the top of a tower, facing towards the rising sun. Then, when he was just learning to talk and disturbed by the croaking of the frogs at his grandfather's villa, he successfully ordered them to stop (the divine child has power over all aspects of nature). And he (was) acclaimed by a wise and great man when still only a child: none other than Cicero recognized him as a figure he had seen in a dream, sent by Jupiter to rule Rome.[8]

Marcus Aurelius, too, is portrayed as one who exhibited adult-like seriousness, intense academic interest, and remarkable aptitude, even as a young child.

Still, Tony Chartrand-Burke has argued that, whereas "heroes and gods perform wondrous deeds as children because they are not truly human . . . the childhood tales of the Greek poets prove that a figure need not be superhuman to be afforded adultlike qualities in his or her youth. As with the stories of the gods, the biographies of poets depict childhood as a time in which future promise is revealed."[9] Thus, Pindar, Homer, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aeschylus each reveal evidence of their considerable gifts when they are yet children. However, childhood stories of the philosophers are not numerous. Rather, "the most important pre-adulthood event for the typical philosopher, it seems, comes as a young adult at which time he chooses a particular philosophical school."[10] In these instances, understandable emphasis on the importance of educational and philosophical training appears to counter the assumption of fixed character that other childhood tales demonstrate.

In his brief survey of early Christian tales of childhood, Chartrand-Burke confirms the similarity between these and their literary counterparts. He reads, for instance, the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas* as befitting the pattern of the childhood prodigy. Chartrand-Burke concludes that

> (t)he primary purpose behind the tales appears to be to demonstrate a consistence of character; an esteemed figure, therefore, would have ascribed to him or her stories of beneficence, or signs of intelligence, military skill, or whatever quality for which they were known in adulthood, while notorious figures were portrayed as cruel, calculating, or coddled, even as children.[11]

Moreover, whether or not they are portrayed as superhuman, "the one common quality in the childhoods of all these figures is their youthful promise. They all demonstrate wisdom and maturity that belie their age.

8 Ibid., 58.

9 Tony Chartrand-Burke, "The Infancy Gospel of Thomas: The Text, its Origins and its Transmissions" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 2001), 383.

10 Ibid., 387.

11 Ibid., 392.

They excel at school, sometime surpassing even the abilities of their teachers. They are praised for their seriousness. When they play, it is only in games that prophesy their future roles . . ."[12] The *Protevangelium*'s recounting of its protagonist's childhood, then, does not stand in isolation from other ancient literature, nor is its interest in telling childhood tales unique in early Christian writing.

Idealized Childhood

Childhood wisdom and maturity is a recurring theme in ancient biography. However, as Chartrand-Burke argues, it is also an ideal that occurs in non-literary evidence, especially funerary epitaphs.[13] The increasing use of sarcophagi in the second century CE provides useful evidence of non-literary representation of children.[14] Funerary monuments, specifically the "biographical" or "life course" sarcophagi, represented life as a journey. Within such representation, the death of a child was seen as a tragic interruption.

Roman understanding of the life course conceived of childhood in various stages and in varying ways. Varro divided the life span into five segments of fifteen years each, whereas Horace identified four stages of the life course. Rawson argues that what is most clear is that,

> First, there were few rigid age barriers to any stage of development: children moved according to their individual growth and talents and their parents' wishes and resources. Second, there was considerable discussion of and interest in the development of children, spawning different views of age groupings, but all sharing the basic essentials of development, allowing for infancy, childhood and adolescence.[15]

In particular, "Seneca (*Letters* 121) elaborated in some detail on the principle that each age (such as infancy, boyhood) has its own constitution (121/15); the infant is toothless, then its teeth grow, and it adapts to each condition."[16] The age of seven years appears to have signaled the end of early childhood. At age seven, children began school and, at age ten, male citizens could be placed on the grain-dole. At ages twelve and fourteen, girls and boys were eligible for marriage. And while there were coming-of-age ceremonies for boys (as in the donning of the white toga), of key importance for girls was the transition from virgin to wife, a norm that *Prot. Jas.* reproduces.

12 Ibid., 394.
13 Ibid., 371–80.
14 Rawson, 8.
15 Ibid., 136.
16 Ibid., 137.

Thus, parents who buried their children were deprived of the expectation of watching them grow and mature. Given the reality of infant mortality, parents' grief and mourning reflected the age of the deceased child. As Rawson notes, "Legal prescriptions for mourning periods indicate the mortality probabilities at different ages. If baby died in its first year, no formal mourning was prescribed . . . between 3 and 10 the mourning period was gradually increased. The young child did not qualify for full recognition of its existence and individuality until the age of 10."[17] Funerary artifacts, whose epitaphs indicate the death of child, show that deceased children were frequently depicted in terms of adults' hopes for them. In other words, they were remembered as the young adults they would never become.[18] Beside the great pathos that such material evidence expresses, it provides us a glimpse of how adults viewed idealized childhood. Chartrand-Burke comments, especially, on two inscriptions that attribute to children wisdom far beyond their years:

> An inscription from Rome mentions Krities who died at age two and a half; for his intelligence, it is said, he should be compared to someone of gray wisdom. Another inscription for a four-year-old from Isauria declares, ". . . he was very bright in learning, clever in understanding things. He has exercised himself in the finesses of excellence. The god had given all these qualities to him because of his short life. He has bestowed upon a mortal boy an immortal monument."[19]

Together with literary depictions of childhood, these examples of funerary art are poignant expressions of an adult longing to idealize deceased children in at least two ways: as the young adults they would never become, and as children who had, indeed, transcended childhood, who would be remembered, in effect, as small adults.

Thus, Chartrand-Burke concludes that, in the childhood tales of famous persons, adult-like wisdom and excellence at learning are qualities befitting idealized childhood, wherein the subject is praised precisely "for not playing, acting or speaking like a child."[20]

The Child Mary

Our brief overview of the first nearly eight chapters of the *Protevangelium* both resonates with and departs from the protagonists portrayed in other ancient childhood tales of famous figures. Mary is clearly an extraordinary child. As their long-awaited child, she is a great blessing to Anna and

17 Ibid., 104.
18 Chartrand-Burke, "Infancy Gospel of Thomas," 373.
19 Ibid., 378.
20 Ibid., 404.

Joachim, who care for, and celebrate, their beloved infant in ways that befit the image of an ideal family. Yet, she is clearly more than simply the answer to her parents' prayers. Mary's birth is preceded by two divine annunciations, she demonstrates extraordinary strength and agility while yet an infant, she is the recipient of unsurpassed blessing, she is beloved by the priests and all the house of Israel, and she is raised in an environment of ritual purity. Mary's special status cannot be overestimated. Like other literature recounting the childhood of its famous subjects, *Prot. Jas.*' narration of Mary's early life functions to establish her character. The child Mary mirrors the adult she will become.

Yet, unlike her literary counterparts, Mary neither performs childhood miracles nor exhibits wisdom beyond her years. Rather, her elevated status is largely ascribed, deriving from the circumstances into which she is born, the ritually pure conditions in which she is reared, and the ways in which she is received and regarded by those of heightened ritual status themselves. Although Mary is clearly a most special child, she is neither an exemplar of idealized childhood nor a prodigy of wisdom and talent. Rather, the child Mary is as unique as the perpetual virgin she will become.

While *Prot. Jas.* follows encomiastic convention in its presentation of Mary, its purpose is not to promote the images of childhood evidenced in other literature and material evidence. Instead, its early portrayal of Mary aims to establish, in the context of childhood, the kind of unparalleled purity that the virgin exemplifies. In other words, the child Mary cannot be portrayed in the same terms as the virgin. Whereas the later portion of the narrative makes use of the possibility of sexual intercourse to convey access to, or exclusion from, interior bodily space, and focuses on virginity to illustrate the purity Mary sustains, the story of Mary's childhood uses images of interior household space and tightly controlled social interaction to illustrate similar principles of access and exclusion, and to portray Mary's sacred purity. In this sense, the virgin and the child are one and the same; the story of the child functions in a way that is reminiscent of the childhood tales of other famous persons. The real concern of the narrative is the adult Mary. Key dimensions of her portrayal are read back into the story of her origins and early life.

As I have noted elsewhere, the *Protevangelium* portrays the virgin Mary in a manner that is somewhat one-dimensional.[21] Although she consents to the divine annunciation of her impending pregnancy, passes tests of her virginity, exercises virtuous σωφροσύνη (prudence), and demonstrates skills befitting her gender and status, the narrative also portrays Mary as strikingly ignorant of her circumstances ("But Mary forgot the mysteries which the heavenly messenger Gabriel had spoken," *Prot. Jas.* 12:6) and, frequently, mute. She demonstrates little of the wisdom that a reader might come to

21 Mary F. Foskett, *A Virgin Conceived: Mary and Classical Representations of Virginity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002).

expect in a story that glorifies its subject from its opening chapters. Just as she is called a girl and a child (παῖς), but never a daughter, in the first eight chapters of *Prot. Jas.*, neither is she called a woman (γυνή) in the narrative's later chapters. Mary is denied the nomenclature typical of the life course, as well as the wisdom and agency, attributed to other child protagonists. The *Protevangelium* portrays Mary as someone greatly to be praised, but its overarching concern is not the promotion of Mary as an exemplar to imitate.

Whether poised as a child at the cusp of normalcy and exceptionalism, or, as a virgin (παρθένος), at the threshold of sexual and developmental maturity, Mary remains a rather liminal character throughout the *Protevangelium*. In each case, she requires protection to maintain her unusual status. Thus, the narrative exhibits not a little anxiety about the life of this Mary. Both normal childhood and the typical stages of the life course pose a potential threat to the protagonist whose extraordinary story the *Protevangelium of James* recounts.

Chapter 13

Purity, Piety, and the Purposes of the *Protevangelium of James*

Lily Vuong

The purity of Mary, mother of Jesus, is a well-known theme in Christian literature and devotion.[1] Like many popular traditions about Mary's life and character, however, this theme is treated only lightly in the New Testament Gospels.[2] The Gospel of Matthew notes merely that Mary remained a virgin before she conceived (Mt. 1.18, 23; cf. Lk. 1.27, 34). To this, the Gospel of Luke adds an additional detail: it appears to describe Mary as acting in accordance with the Levitical laws governing the ritual purification of the parturient and the redemption of the firstborn (e.g., Exod. 13.2; Lev. 12.2–8; Num. 18.15). In Lk. 2.21–24, Mary's actions after the birth of Jesus are described as follows:

> After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. When the time came for their purification according to the laws of

1 See, e.g., Jaroslav Pelikan, *Mary Through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 113–22.

2 Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke* (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 25–26. For a specific look at the various ways Mary functions in the NT, see the essays collected in Raymond E. Brown (ed.), *Mary in the New Testament* (New York: Fortress, 1978) and Bertrand Buby, *Mary of Galilee: Mary in the New Testament* (New York: Alba House, 1994). See also C. T. Davis, "The Fulfillment of Creation: A Study of Matthew's Genealogy," *JAAR* 41 (1973): 520–35; M. D. Johnson, *The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies with Special Reference to the Setting of the Genealogies of Jesus* (SNTSMS 8; Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1969); X. Léon-Dufour, "L'Annonce à Joseph," *Etudes d'évangile* (Paris: Seuill, 1965), 65–81; K. Stendahl, "Quis et Unde? An Analysis of Mt 1–2," in *Judentum Urchristentum, Kirche: Festschrift für J, Jeremias* (ed. W. Eltester; BZNW 26; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1964), 94–105; G. Graystone, *Virgin of all Virgins: The Interpretation of Luke 1.34* (Rome, Pio X, 1968); P. S. Minear, "Luke's Use of the Birth Stories," in *Studies in Luke-Acts: Essays Presented in Honor of Paul Schubert* (ed. L. E. Keck and J. L. Martyn; Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1966), 111–30; and S. Lyonnet, "Le récit de l'annonciation et la maternité divine de la Sainte Vierge," *Ami di Clergé* 66 (1956): 33–48.

> Moses [τοῦ καθαρισμοῦ οὗτῶν κατὰ τὸν νόμον Μωϋσέως], they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.'"[3]

Nevertheless, beyond these brief references to Mary's virginity and her maintenance of post-partum purification, the NT Gospels display little concern for asserting, defending, or celebrating Mary's purity.

The image of Mary as a woman and mother who embodied exceptional purity, however, is found in one of our earliest so-called "apocryphal" writings about this figure, namely, the *Protevangelium of James* (hereafter *Prot. Jas.*).[4] This work dates from the second or early third century CE,[5] and it exhibits a sustained concern for affirming Mary's purity. The *Prot. Jas.* recounts, for instance, how Mary's virginity is twice tested publicly (*Prot. Jas.* 15:9–13; 20:1–4). She is said to prove that she is a virgin before, during, and after the birth of Jesus (*Prot. Jas.* 11:5; 12–19; 20:1–4). Mary's living spaces and arenas of social interaction are also depicted as free from the common and unclean, and are said to be maintained in this manner throughout her life (e.g., *Prot. Jas.* 6:4–5; 7:4–6): she lives, plays, eats, and associates only with the pure. Accordingly, Peter Brown notes that the "narrative already presented Mary as a human creature totally enclosed in sacred space."[6]

3 Cf. Lev. 12.8 JPS; "And if her means suffice not for a lamb, then she shall take two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons: the one for a burnt-offering, and the other for a sin-offering; and the priest shall make atonement for her, and she shall be clean."

4 For the Greek text and English translations, see Émile de Strycker, *La Forme la Plus Ancienne du Protévangile de Jacques: Recherches sur le Papyrus Bodmer 5 avec une Edition Critique du Texte Grec et une Traduction Annotée* (Subsidia Hagiographica 33; Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1961), 64–191; Oscar Cullmann, "The Protevangelium of James," in *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 1: *Gospels and Related Writings* (ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher; trans. R. McL. Wilson; Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 426–37; Ronald Hock, *The Infancy Gospels of James and Thomas; with Introduction, Notes, and Original Text Featuring the New Scholars Version Translation* (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge Press, 1995), 32–77. All citations of the *Prot. Jas.* below follow Hock's system of splitting the text by chapter and verse, which differs slightly from the division in Cullmann's translation. Translations in this article reflect my consultation with Hock's recent edition, which depends primarily on de Strycker; when alterations are made to Hock's translation, they are my own and are indicated in the notes.

5 For discussions of dating, see de Strycker, *La Forme la Plus Ancienne*, 6–12, 412–18; Cullmann, "Protevangelium of James," 423; Hock, *Infancy Gospels*, 11; P. A. van Stempvoort, "The Protevangelium Jacobi: The Sources of its Theme and Style and their Bearing on its Date," in *Studia Evangelica III* (ed. F. L. Cross; Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Altchristlichen Literatur 88; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1964), 410, 413–15; George Zervos, "Dating the Protevangelium of James: The Justin Martyr Connection," in *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* (ed. E. Lovering; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1994), 415–34; E. Cothenet, "Le Protévangile de Jacques: Origine, Genre et Signification d'un Premier Midrash Chrétien sur la Nativité de Marie," *ANRW* 2.25.6 (1998): 4257.

6 Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation*

Likewise, Beverly Gaventa observes that the "story itself abounds with the language of purity," and she adopts the phrase "sacred purity" to describe how the *Prot. Jas.* characterizes Mary.[7] The *Prot. Jas.*' special interest in Mary's purity, in fact, has been stressed by most scholars who have worked on the text, regardless of the nature of their interest in it.[8]

Even despite the persistent scholarly emphasis on the importance of purity within the *Prot. Jas.*, few have gone beyond a focus on virginity. Rather, research has centered on the *Prot. Jas.*' assertion of Mary's pre- and post-partum virginity (*Prot. Jas.* 13:8 and 15:13; cf. 20:1–2) and its influence on late-antique and medieval Christian traditions.[9] I propose, however, that virginity is just one element of the text's broader interest in purity. Towards exploring the place of purity within the text as a whole, the present article will focus on the beginning of the narrative (*Prot. Jas.* 1:1–8:2), which describes events prior to Mary's departure from the Jerusalem temple (*Prot. Jas.* 8:3–5) and the angelic announcement of her virginal motherhood (*Prot. Jas.* 11:5–9). I will suggest that these chapters display a persistent concern with ritual purity,[10] which may be best understood with reference to the laws about the temple and sacrifice laid out in the Pentateuch (esp. LXX).[11]

in the Early Christianity (Lectures on the History of Religions 13; New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 273.

7 Beverly Gaventa, *Mary: Glimpses of the Mother of Jesus* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1999), 100–22, quote on 109–10.

8 Further examples include Cullmann, "Protevangelium of James," 273–74, 425; Hock, *Infancy Gospels*, 16; H. R. Smid, *Protevangelium Jacobi: A Commentary* (Apocrypha Novi Testamenti 1; Assen: van Gorcum, 1965), 174; Mary Foskett, *A Virgin Conceived: Mary and Classical Representations of Virginity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 141–64.

9 See, e.g., Foskett, *Virgin Conceived*, passim; Mary Foskett, "Virginity as Purity in the *Protevangelium of James*," in *The Feminist Companion to Mariology* (ed. Amy-Jill Levine and Maria Mayo Robbins; (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim, 2005), 67–76; John Dominic Crossan, "Virgin Mother or Bastard Child?" in *Feminist Companion to Mariology*, 37–55; Pieter W. van der Horst, "Sex, Birth, Purity and Asceticism in the *Protevangelium Jacobi*," in *Feminist Companion to Mariology*, 56–66; and George Zervos, "Christmas with Salome," in *Feminist Companion to Mariology*, 77–98.

10 In my dissertation (McMaster University, in progress), I further propose that the first half of the narrative of the *Prot. Jas* is governed by a concern for ritual purity, in relation to the temple and sacrifice, while the second half is shaped by a concern for sexual purity, in relation to virginity and chastity. The narrative pivot between the two halves—namely, *Prot. Jas.* 8:4—focuses on the transitional danger of menstrual impurity.

11 Van Stempvoort, "Protevangelium Jacobi," 415–19; Ron Cameron (ed.), *The Other Gospels: Non-Canonical Gospel Texts* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1982), 108; Smid, *Protevangelium Jacobi*, esp. 9–12. Other scholars who have also noted the *Prot. Jas.*' use and knowledge of the LXX include W. Pratscher, *Der Herrenbruder Jakobus und die Jakobustradition* (FRLANT 139; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987), 224; Cullmann, "Protevangelium of James," 423–24; J. K. Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in English Translation* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 49; Hock, *Infancy Gospels*, 21–25.

My analysis will progress in two parts, corresponding to the two ways in which the beginning chapters of the *Prot. Jas.* convey the ritual purity of Mary. First, I will show how Mary's purity is narratively expressed through the description of how she and her parents interact with the temple and its priests. Second, I will consider how her exceptional purity is evoked, lexically or metaphorically, by the use of terms related to sacrifice to describe her. In conclusion, I will ask whether and how this interest in ritual purity might shed light on the aim(s) and purpose(s) of this early Mariological writing.

1. Ritual Purity Communicated Narratively: Mary, her Parents, and the Temple

The narrative depiction of Mary's extreme ritual purity in the *Prot. Jas.* starts even prior to her birth, and is initially conveyed through descriptions of the actions and concerns of her parents. At the outset, the narrative establishes the righteousness of Joachim, Mary's father, by lauding his generosity in offering temple sacrifices. In *Prot. Jas.* 1:1–3, he is said to have prepared twice as many offerings (δῶρα) as were required—some to atone for himself and the rest to atone for the sins of Israel. Joachim's striking act of sacrificial generosity not only evokes the righteous acts attributed to Job in the beginning of the book of Job (1.5), but is even depicted as trumping them: Joachim, after all, seeks to ensure that his sacrifices atone for the unintentional sins of the nation as a whole.

When the reader of the *Prot. Jas.* first encounters the temple, it is thus as the proper place for the expiation of sin and display of righteousness. Joachim's plan to offer such sacrifices, however, are soon derailed by one of the priests, Reubel,[12] who misinterprets Joachim's childlessness as a mark of his lack of righteousness (*Prot. Jas.* 1:5). The thwarted attempt at sacrifice then sets into motion a series of events—such as Joachim's fasting in the desert (*Prot. Jas.* 1:9–11) and his wife's prayers and mourning in his absence (*Prot. Jas.* 2:1)—that culminates with angelic revelations about the impending birth of Mary to Joachim's wife, the previously barren Anna.

12 Although some MSS ascribe the title of priest to Reubel, some scholars have suggested that it is probable that Reubel was simply a farmer with many children (Hock, *Infancy Gospels*, 33, n. 15; W. Michaelis, *Die Apokryphen Schriften zum Neuen Testament* [Bremen: Carl Schunemann, 1958], 92). Smid contends that "*ho archieereus* was [only] added later" for explanation and clarification (*Protevangelium Jacobi*, 37). In my opinion, Reubel is more likely a priest, given his acute knowledge of the law of the land that forbids Joachim from sacrificing first and the emphasis placed on the temple in the beginning of the narrative (esp. chs. 1–8). Assuming that Reubel is a priest, his dismissal of Joachim would represent the first negative encounter with those associated with the temple. Given that the priesthood and temple are seen in a positive light in *Prot. Jas.* (see discussion below), the author's omission of Reubel's priestly identity may serve as a way to prevent tarnishing the view of the priests as good.

In light of the negative attitudes towards the Jerusalem temple and Jewish priesthood in many early Christian writings of the time,[13] one might expect to find a contrast between sacrifices in the temple, on the one hand, and the way to salvation opened by Mary's motherhood, on the other—a contrast seemingly enabled by the *Prot. Jas.*' introductory appeal to a wayward temple priest (i.e., Reubel) and Joachim's thwarted sacrifice (*Prot. Jas.* 1:5). This makes it all the more striking as the narrative continues to affirm the importance and efficacy of temple sacrifice and priesthood.

When Joachim learns that Anna is pregnant, he is said to go, not to his pregnant wife, but rather to prepare sacrifices to offer in the temple (*Prot. Jas.* 4:5–7; 5:1). In other words—according to the *Prot. Jas.*—as soon as he became aware of his impending fatherhood, he immediately made arrangements to engage in precisely the practices from which the priest Reubel had dissuaded him (*Prot. Jas.* 1:5; cf. 4:5–7). As with the previous reference to his intention of offering twice as many sacrifices (*Prot. Jas.* 1:2), the text again describes him as displaying extraordinary generosity, as centered on and mediated by the temple. He is said to have prepared ten lambs without blemish for the Lord, twelve calves for the priests and council of elders, and a hundred goats for the whole people (*Prot. Jas.* 4:5–7). His sacrifices are, thus, described not only as gifts to the Lord in gratitude, but also as offerings on behalf of the priests, elders, and people—including those who had mistaken him for a sinner.

The next day, after preparing the offerings and, then, greeting Anna, Joachim is said to head to the temple to present his offerings (*Prot. Jas.* 5:1). Prior to doing so, however, he seeks to ensure his righteousness and to confirm the message given to him by the angel, by appealing to high-priestly authority. To determine whether his transgressions have indeed been atoned,

13 For instance, the portrayal of Jewish leaders in the NT Gospels is often negative, which is, of course, in sharp contrast with the positive view of the Jewish priests and those associated with the temple in the *Prot. Jas.* For examples of this negative view, see Sjef van Tilborg, *The Jewish Leaders in Matthew* (Leiden: Brill, 1972); Michael J. Cook, *Mark's Treatment of the Jewish Leaders* (Leiden: Brill, 1978); Anthony J. Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society: A Sociological Approach* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989); Donald A. Carson, "The Jewish Leaders in Matthew's Gospel," *JETS* 25 (1982): 161–74; Jack Dean Kingsbury, "The Developing Conflict Between Jesus and the Jewish Leaders in Matthew's Gospel: A Literary-Critical Study," *CBQ* 49 (1987): 57–73; Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "The Jewish Leaders in the Gospel of Mark: A Literary Study of Marcan Characterization," *JBL* 108 (1989): 259–81. The animosity held for the Jewish priesthood and its sacrificial cult can also be seen in the polemical writings on the Christian claim of the superiority of the Christian cult (spiritual sacrifice) over the Jewish cult (carnal sacrifice) by the early church. As the Christian interpretation of the LXX book of Malachi is often used to support the superiority of the Christian cult *vis-à-vis* Judaism, Justin Martyr cites LXX Mal. 1.10–12 in his *Dialogue with Trypho* (ca. 160 CE) to argue for God's rejection of the sacrifices offered by the Jewish priests and the sole validity of sacrifices made exclusively by Christian priests (esp. *Dial.* 41). Tertullian (*c.* 160–*c.* 225) also maintains the Christian polemic against the temple cult and argues for the replacement of carnal sacrifices with Christian spiritual sacrifices (*Adv. Jud.*, esp. ch. 5).

Joachim looks into the high priest's πέταλον (lit. "leaf" or "disk," probably a leaf of metal made of gold) to see whether it will disclose any sin (*Prot. Jas.* 5:1).[14] It is, thus, made clear that the initial characterization of Reubel was not meant to reflect negatively on the Jewish priesthood as a whole; rather, by means of the actions of Joachim, the efficacy and power of both the temple and its priesthood are confirmed.

The positive assessment of the priesthood is echoed in the *Prot. Jas.*' description of the events directly following the birth of Mary. The text describes a banquet held in honour of the infant Mary on her first birthday, at which the priests confirm Mary's special status through their blessings (*Prot. Jas.* 6:6).[15] The priests' acceptance of Mary is underlined by the fact that she is blessed twice: first, by the priests when she is presented to them (*Prot. Jas.* 6:7),[16] and, then, by the high priests, more specifically (*Prot. Jas.* 6:9).[17] Reinforcing the reference to the high priest's πέταλον (*Prot. Jas.*

14 Hock has suggested that the polished disc may have served as a mirror, used to obtain divine revelation; he speculates that the mirror would show either a distorted or unaltered image, depending on whether one was sinful or sinless (*Infancy Gospels*, 39). Timothy Horner, by contrast, proposes that this reference to the *petalon* alludes to the oracular power of Urim and Thummim ("Jewish Aspects of the *Protoevangelium of James*," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 12.3 [2004]: 319–20). On the Urim and Thummim, more generally, see Exod. 28.30; Lev. 8.8; Josephus, *Ant.* 3.215–16; Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1995), 66–114; Anders Runesson, "Judgment," *NIDB* 3:459. On the connection of the high priest with prophetic powers, see also Num. 27.2; Josh. 6.6; 1 Sam. 14.41.

15 Of course, the theme of Mary's blessedness also occurs in the NT Gospels. The Gospel of Luke is the most explicit in the reference to Mary being blessed: "Greetings favoured one! The Lord is with you" (Lk. 1.28); 'Do not be afraid Mary, for you have found favour with God' (Lk. 1.30); "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb" (Lk. 1.42); "Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed" (Lk. 1.48).

16 The first blessing (*Prot. Jas.* 6:7) asks God to "give her a name renowned forever among all generations" (*Prot. Jas.* 6:7; καὶ δὸς αὐτῇ ὄνομα ὀνομαστὸν αἰώνιον ἐν πάσαις ταῖς γενεαῖς). This blessing receives a response from all the people (λαός) of "so be it, Amen!" (*Prot. Jas.* 6:8; contrast Mt. 27.25, where "all the people" (πᾶς ὁ λαός) are said to reject Jesus). Initially, it might strike readers as odd that the first blessing has requested God to "give her a name" when Anna has already chosen the name Mary for her child, but in the MT and LXX, "to give a name renowned" often rendered something different than simply the selection of a name—i.e., the one blessed with a name renowned was ensured fame and remembrance (as, e.g., Isa. 56.5). Additionally, the priest's blessing may not seem unusual, especially in the context of a narrative that portrays the temple and the priesthood in a positive way: once again, the hands of those associated with the temple perform the "renaming" and blessing of Mary.

17 The second blessing (*Prot. Jas.* 6:9), asks God to "look on this child and bless her with the ultimate blessing, one which cannot be surpassed" (ἐπίβλεψον ἐπὶ τὴν παῖδα ταύτην καὶ εὐλόγησον αὐτὴν ἐσχάτην εὐλογίαν ἥτις διαδοχὴν οὐκ ἔχει). This blessing serves to foreshadow Mary's future role as the mother of Jesus; significantly, this role is here granted high-priestly blessing and consent. The response of "So be it, Amen!" by all the people reconfirms that the entire Jewish nation stands as witnesses to Mary's special blessedness.

5:1), the description of this banquet also functions to confirm the connection between priests and prophecy: the priests are depicted as foretelling Mary's special role in salvation-history (*Prot. Jas.* 7:7–8). That Mary's role stands in continuity—rather than contrast—with the temple is further suggested by her later entrance, as a child, into the temple as her dwelling-place (*Prot. Jas.* 7:9–8:2).

This concern for the temple, moreover, is paired with an interest in asserting her mother Anna's proper maintenance of ritual purity. After the birth of Mary, Anna is said to act in accordance with the Levitical laws governing post-partum purification. According to *Prot. Jas.* 5:9, when the prescribed days were completed, Anna cleansed herself of the flow of blood.[18] In particular, she appears to follow the precepts outlined in Lev. 12.5–7, which stipulate that a woman who "bears a female child . . . shall be unclean two weeks, as in her menstruation" (12.5) and that "her time of blood purification shall be sixty-six days" (12.5), after which she must have sacrifices offered on her behalf in the temple so as to become "clean from the flow of blood" (12.7).[19]

Like Joachim, Anna is depicted as going beyond the requirements of Levitical law: she even waits to breast-feed Mary until after her post-partum pollution has completely passed.[20] According to *Prot. Jas.* 5:9, it was only then that she offered her breast to the child εδωκε μαστὸν τῇ παιδί) and gave her the name "Mary."[21] When understood against the background of Lev. 12.5–7, the *Prot. Jas.*' account of the decision by Anna to wait the prescribed days before feeding her child suggests a perceived need to go beyond what is normally necessary in order to ensure the purity of this particular child.[22]

18 *Prot. Jas.* 5:9: (Πληρωθεισῶν δὲ τῶν ἡμερῶν ἀπεσμήξατο ἡ Ἅννα τῆς ἀφέδρου αὐτῆς). Compare Lk. 2.22 (on which, see above).

19 For more on these laws, see Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16* (AB 3; New York: Doubleday, 1991), 742–68; Tarja Philip, *Menstruation and Childbirth in the Bible: Fertility and Impurity* (Studies in Biblical Literature 88; New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 111–22.

20 Contrast, however, the description of Mary's actions after the birth of Jesus in *Prot. Jas.* 19:16: "And after a short time, the light withdrew, until the baby appeared; and it came and took the breast of its mother Mary"; Καὶ πρὸς ὀλιγον τὸ φῶς ἐκεῖνο ὑπεστέλλετο, ἕως ἐφάνη βρέφος· καὶ ἦλθεν καὶ ἔλαβε μαστὸν ἐκ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ Μαρίας.

21 Gaventa further notes that the *Prot. Jas.* tells the reader nothing of how Mary was fed prior to the completion of Anna's purification rite (*Mary*, 112). If the implication is that Mary was not fed at all during this period, the infant Mary would have demonstrated a miraculous feat. The text may leave open this possibility, namely, that Mary is so exceptional that she can survive without food. Alternately, the reader may be meant to assume that Mary, as a child of a wealthy family, would have been fed by a wet-nurse during the time of Anna's post-partum impurity.

22 Notably, the rabbinic laws concerning post-partum purification—as developed by Tannaim roughly contemporaneous with the composition of the *Prot. Jas.*—also go beyond the Levitical prescriptions. According to *m. Niddah* 3.1, for instance, a woman who is deemed unclean as a result of post-partum impurities is deemed unclean for the prescribed number of days (seven and thirty-three for males; fourteen and sixty-six for

The special status of this child is further suggested by the resonance of Anna's actions with Lev. 12.4, which states that the parturient cannot touch any holy thing until after the completion of her purification.

The *Prot. Jas.*' description of the events surrounding the birth of Mary is thus marked by a focus on establishing her parents' piety, which is even upheld in the face of adversity. What is significant, for our purposes, is that their piety is narratively conveyed with primary reference to the temple, its priests, its laws, and the apparent assumption of the efficacy of sacrifice to cleanse sin: Joachim and Anna are depicted as faithfully participating in the temple cult and sacrifices, according to what are presented in the *Prot. Jas.* as the Jewish laws and customs of their time.

2. Ritual Purity Communicated Metaphorically: Mary as Temple Sacrifice

Even as the narrative of the *Prot. Jas.* shifts its focus from Mary's parents to Mary herself, the temple continues to be a prominent theme, albeit in a different manner: Mary is described in language resonant with a sacrificial offering. This characterization of Mary is presaged even prior to her birth. According to *Prot. Jas.* 4:2, when Anna was given news of her pregnancy, her first instinct was to promise her child to the Lord as a gift.[23] The use of the term δῶρον in this passage serves to draw a parallel with the sacrificial offerings (δῶρα) said to be prepared by Joachim in *Prot. Jas.* 1:2 and 5:1; the promise is, thus, couched in terms that suggest that the giving of Mary is Anna's own sacrifice to the Lord. That this sacrifice, too, is connected with the temple is later made explicit when Mary is dedicated as a child to the temple (*Prot. Jas.* 7:1).[24] As with Joachim, then, Anna's faith in God is described as inextricably linked to the giving of offerings to God, with the mediation of priests and in the setting of the temple. In addition, the image of Mary as akin to a sacri-

females), even in cases of miscarriages or abortions, if there is blood. Despite the intensified concern for post-partum impurity, however, nothing is said—to my knowledge—about any situation in which a mother would be banned from feeding her infant during this period of ritual impurity.

23 *Prot. Jas.* 4:2: 'I'll offer it as a gift to the Lord my God, and it will serve him all the days of its life'; προσάξω αὐτὸ δῶρον κυρίῳ τῷ θεῷ μου, καὶ ἔσται λειτουργῶν αὐτῷ πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς ζωῆς αὐτοῦ.

24 It is, perhaps, not coincidental that this vow recalls the biblical stories of Samson (Judg. 13.5) and Samuel (1 Sam. 1.11)—both of which feature (male) children for whom the Nazirite vow was made by their mothers, even prior to their conception. The parallel proves especially interesting, since Nazirite vows were open to women, as well as to men (e.g., 1 Sam. 1.11), and entailed maintaining a level of purity beyond normal ritual purity: separation and abstention from wine and wine products, and regulation from cutting the hair for the Lord (Num. 6.1–21). Compare also Lk. 1.15, which seems to depict John the Baptist as a Nazirite from birth.

ficial offering serves to lay the groundwork for the celebration of this figure as uniquely pure and worthy.

The *Prot. Jas.*' description of the childhood of Mary, moreover, is marked by the assertion of Anna's extraordinary concern for maintaining her daughter's ritual purity. Anna is said to make efforts to prevent Mary from even walking on common ground, by turning her bedroom into a "sanctuary" (ἁγίασμα) and by preventing anything "common" (κοινός) or "'impure" (ἀκάθαρτος) to pass through it (*Prot. Jas.* 6:4).[25] According to the *Prot. Jas.*, Anna thus ensured that the normal, ritual impurities of everyday life did not encroach upon Mary during her childhood.

Although this passage, *Prot. Jas.* 6:4, represents the only point in the text where the terms κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος are used, the choice of terminology may be significant. The term κοινός occurs about twenty times in the LXX and OT apocrypha. Significantly, for our purposes, it is used in the context of ritual impurity in 1 Macc. 1:47 and 1:62, where it describes the sacrifice of unclean beasts and the eating of unclean food.[26] In *Prot. Jas.* 6:4, the choice of this term may be, similarly, intended to denote ritual pollution, particularly in light of the appeal to laws concerning purification already in *Prot. Jas.* 5:9.

This connection is even clearer in the case of the term ἀκάθαρτος, which occurs over a hundred times in the LXX and OT apocrypha—always in reference to ritual impurity. The term occurs, for instance, in contexts such as the assertion of a need to distinguish between the clean and unclean, and the outlining of laws concerning purification offerings.[27] In the LXX, the Greek, ἀκάθαρτος, usually renders one of four Hebrew terms: (1) אלח , (2) טהר, (3) טמא, and (4) תועבה. Although it is used only of unclean spirits or demons in the NT Gospels (Mt. 10.1, 12.43; Mk 1.26, 6.7; Lk. 4.33, 6.18), it does refer,

25 *Prot. Jas.* 6:4: "And so she turned the bedroom into a sanctuary and did not permit anything profane or unclean to pass the child's lips"; Καὶ ἐποίησεν ἁγίασμα ἐν τῷ κοιτῶνι αὐτῆς, καὶ πᾶν κοινὸν καὶ ἀκάθαρτον οὐκ εἴα διέρχεσθαι δι' αὐτῆς. Hock has taken the liberty of translating the pronoun αὐτῆς as "the child's lips" based on the feminine gender of the pronoun, which has proved problematic for the traditional translation of "it" as a reference to her bedroom. His argument is also based on de Strycker's observation ("Le *Protévangile de Jacques*: Problèmes Critiques et Exégétiques," in *Studia Evangelica III* [ed. F. L. Cross; Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Altchristlichen Literatur 88; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1964], 91, n. 3), that Anna was closely monitoring Mary's diet. I have left the translation of the pronoun simply as "it" because it renders a translation that involves careful monitoring of everything and anything that came into contact with Mary, not simply what passed through her lips.

26 Most times that the word κοινός is used in the LXX, it translates into the Hebrew terms אחד or רחב (e.g. Prov. 1.14; 21.9, etc.). In the NT, κοινός is used eleven times in terms of ritual impurity (e.g. Mk 7.2, 7.5; Acts 10.14, 10.15, 10.28, 11.8; Rom. 14.15 (×3); Heb. 10.29; Rev. 21.27).

27 In fact, in every instance that ἀκάθαρτος occurs in the LXX (approx. 137 times), it is used in reference to the laws of ritual impurity, i.e., to qualify certain foods, acts, diseases, bodily flows, etc., as rendering one impure, unclean, or defiled (see esp. Lev. 11–15).

at times, to ritual purity in other NT writings, such as the Pauline Epistles (1 Cor. 7.14; 2 Cor. 6.17), the book of Acts (10.14, 28; 11.8), and Revelation (18.2). Its use in this important passage within the *Prot. Jas.* may, thus, serve to reinforce the depiction of Mary's purity as encompassing the avoidance of the types of ritual impurity outlined in Levitical law.

If so, then the concern for ritual purity may also extend to what are depicted as Anna's choices regarding the companions of her daughter. According to *Prot. Jas.* 6:5, Anna only allows the "undefiled daughters of the Hebrews" (θυγατέρας τῶν Ἑβραίων τὰς ἀμιάντους) to keep Mary company and amuse her. Consistent with the traditional scholarly emphasis on the theme of virginity within the *Prot. Jas.*, scholars have typically assumed that *Prot. Jas.* 6:5 denotes the limitation of Mary's companions to virgins.[28] Attention to the semantic range of the term and to the narrative context of its use in the *Prot. Jas.*, however, suggests that this interpretation may not capture the full meaning here intended.

Unlike the terms κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος, the term ἀμίαντος is used at multiple (and, arguably, significant) points in the *Prot. Jas.* The phrase "undefiled daughters of the Hebrews" appears in *Prot. Jas.* 7:4. In addition, *Prot. Jas.* 10:2 refers to "undefiled virgins from the tribe of David" (τὰς παρθένους τὰς ἀμιάντους ἀπὸ τῆς φυλῆς τοῦ Δαυίδ), and Mary is described as "undefiled (ἀμίαντος) before God" in *Prot. Jas.* 10:4. In one case, this term is used to describe an object rather than a person: in *Prot. Jas.* 10:7, it is said that "undefiled (ἀμίαντον) threads" are used for the weaving of the temple veil.[29]

Within the OT apocrypha and the NT literature, the term ἀμίαντος is used in two ways: (1) with specific reference to virgins or virginity (e.g., Wis. 3:13; 8:20; Heb. 13.4) and (2) with reference to the maintenance of ritual purity more broadly, particularly by abstaining from the impure (e.g., Wis. 4.2; 2 Macc. 14.36; 15.34; Heb. 7.26; 1 Pet. 1.4). I propose that the description of Mary's companions in *Prot. Jas.* 6:5 draws on both meanings. The reader may be meant to understand Mary's companions as sexually pure in the sense of being virginal—the feature that is asserted to become most characteristic of Mary herself (e.g., *Prot. Jas.* 8:7). The narrative context of *Prot. Jas.* 6:5, however, also suggests another layer of meaning: just as Mary's home is said to be free from anything κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος in *Prot.*

28 E.g. Hock, *Infancy Gospels*, 43, n. 65. This assumption is particularly evident in Hock's translation of παρθένους τὰς ἀμιάντους as "true virgins" at *Prot. Jas.* 10:2. There, he chooses to emphasize the importance of true virginity as the criterion for determining suitable companions for Mary. See also, de Strycker, "Protévangile," 91, n. 4, who also suggests that the reference to the "undefiled daughters" referred simply to a group of virgins who were probably contemporaries of Mary.

29 In the high priest's description of the kind of threads used to weave the veil, Hock translates τὸ ἀμίαντον as "the white [threads]" (*Infancy Gospels*, 51); cf. de Strycker (*La Forme la Plus Ancienne*, 112–13) and Cullmann ("Protevangelium of James," 430) who both leave the translation simply as "l'amiante [fils]" and "amiant [threads]," respectively. The decision to translate τὸ ἀμίαντον as "undefiled [threads]" is my own.

Jas. 6:4, so the implication in *Prot. Jas.* 6:5 may be that her companions are "undefiled," in the sense of not being in a state of ritual pollution (e.g., menstrual impurity), when they interact with Mary.[30]

If so, then the reference to the undefiled status of Mary's companions extends the text's earlier concern for asserting that Mary was not subject to any impurity as a result of Anna's post-partum state of pollution (*Prot. Jas.* 5:9); here, too, the implication may be that Mary was kept away from the impurities resulting from the blood-flow of women. When we read *Prot. Jas.* 6:5 in terms of the text's persistent concern for the temple and ritual purity—rather than only through the lens of later Christian views of Mary as virgin mother—it may be more plausible to understand Mary's companions as "undefiled" *both* by virtue of being virginal *and* by virtue of not associating with Mary during the period of their own menstruation.[31]

The image of Mary as a pure temple offering is also evoked during the text's description of her second birthday (*Prot. Jas.* 7:1–3). Here, Anna and Joachim discuss whether or not they should take Mary to the temple in fulfillment of Anna's vow (*Prot. Jas.* 7:1; cf. 4:2), and they decide to wait until she is three years old (*Prot. Jas.* 7:2–3).[32] This discussion occasions the reassertion of the reasons for their special treatment of Mary: from the comments attributed to them, it is clear that she has been brought up in order to fulfill the promise that Anna made to God. Accordingly, Joachim fears that the "Lord will be angry"[33] and that their "gift will be unacceptable" (καὶ ἀπρόσδεκτον ε)/σται τὸ δῶρον ἡμῶν; *Prot. Jas.* 7:1). In other words, Mary's parents are again portrayed as being concerned, above all, with completing their vow and, thus, maintaining their personal righteousness, as well as contributing to the maintenance of Israel's covenantal obligations, as centered on the temple.

30 The text's concern for menstrual purity, in particular, is clear from *Prot. Jas.* 8:4, where the related verb μιαίνω is used to describe the reason why Mary is asked to leave the temple.

31 Later in the narrative, when "true virgins from the tribe of David" are summoned by the high priest to weave a veil for the temple, in *Prot. Jas.* 10:3, the term ἀμίαντος is, again, used to describe the girls allowed to participate in this important task, as well as those who are allowed to be in contact with Mary. If I am correct to suggest that the *Prot. Jas.* uses the term ἀμίαντος to denote ritual purity, in general (i.e., not just virginity), this may help to explain why the high priest is depicted as having such a difficult time finding girls who meet this requirement—i.e., to weave the temple veil, those chosen must not only be virgins and bear Davidic lineage, but, also, not be menstruating at that particular time.

32 Horner has argued for the significance of the reference to Mary turning three years of age, based on his analysis of the *Prot. Jas.* in relation to the Mishnah. He observes that Mary's move to the temple is placed at the age of three, which corresponds to the age at which, according to *m. Niddah*, a girl is considered a *Ketannah* and, therefore, vulnerable to sexual defilement, since her hymen can no longer regenerate (Horner, "Jewish Aspects," 321).

33 In his translation, Hock renders μήπως ἀποστείλῃ ὁ δεσπότης ἐφ᾽ ἡμᾶς καὶ ἀπρόσδεκτον ἔσται τὸ δῶρον ἡμῶν, in *Prot. Jas.* 7:1, as "or else the Lord will be angry with us and our gift will be unacceptable"(*Prot. Jas.*, 45). The verse, translated literally, reads: "lest the Lord will send upon us and our gift will be unacceptable."

The reference to Mary as a "gift" (δῶρον), in *Prot. Jas.* 7:1, picks up on the sacrificial discourse throughout the beginning chapters of the *Prot. Jas.*, as well as serving to remind the reader of Anna's vow in *Prot. Jas.* 4:2, in particular. As noted above, the beginning of the text twice described Joachim's desire to offer proper sacrifices; in *Prot. Jas.* 1:2 and 5:1, moreover, the term used for these offerings is the same term—namely, δῶρον—that is used to describe Mary's status as a "gift" in *Prot. Jas.* 4:2 and 7:1, alike.

As in the case of the language of purity in the *Prot. Jas.*, this word-choice resonates with the legal terminology of the LXX. The term δῶρον occurs eighty-one times in LXX Leviticus and Numbers alone—all in relation to sacrificial offerings.[34] When providing instructions on how to prepare the various kinds of sacrificial offerings, both LXX Leviticus and Numbers most often use the adjective ἄμωμον ("unblemished") to describe the required state of sacrificial offerings. Significantly, for our purposes, however, the adjective καθαρός ("pure") also occurs in association with the proper state of sacrificial gifts to be offered in the temple.[35] If we read the *Prot. Jas.*' description of Mary's childhood in this context, such discourse lends a level of symbolic meaning to the careful manner in which Mary is prepared and protected before she is offered to the temple: Mary is pure, and must have no blemish upon her, in order to be fit as an offering to God.

The text's account of Mary's arrival at the temple further enhances the image of this figure as akin to a pure and worthy sacrifice. In addition to the two blessings given to her on her birthday, Mary is, then, given a third blessing by the high priest: "The Lord God has exalted your name in all generations. In you, upon the end of days, the Lord will reveal his redemption (τὸ λύτρον) to the children of Israel" (*Prot. Jas.* 7:7–8).[36] It may be significant that the term used for "redemption" (i.e., λύτρον) here is the same as that used in LXX Numbers (e.g., 3:12, 46, 48, 49; 18:15) to refer to the rite of the redemption of the firstborn. This correspondence may appear, at first sight, to be incidental. Closer analysis, however, highlights the ways in which the narrative of the *Prot. Jas.* resonates with the complex of biblical, early Jewish, and early Christian traditions surrounding child-sacrifice, as richly explored by Jon Levenson, with reference to the binding of Isaac (Gen. 22).[37]

34 I.e., forty-two times in LXX Leviticus, and thirty-nine times in LXX Numbers. The term δῶρον is, also, used to mean sacrifice, or is associated with sacrifice in LXX Gen. 4.4, Deut. 12.11, 1 Chron. 16.29, Neh. 13.31, Job 20.6, Sir. 7.9, Isa. 18.7, 66.20, and Jer. 40.1 (33.1). In Mt. 5.23, 5.24, 8.4, 23.18, and 23.19, the term δῶρον is similarly used in the context of Jesus' explanations and references to the laws concerning sacrifices and offerings on the altar for the Lord.

35 See, e.g., LXX Gen. 8.20 (on burnt offerings involving clean birds and animals); LXX Num. 19.9 (on the red heifer rite); LXX Lev. 4.12 (on purification offerings); LXX Lev. 6.11 (on burnt offerings); LXX Lev. 14.4, 49 (on purification of lepers).

36 *Prot. Jas.* 7:7–8: Ἐμεγάλυνεν κύριος ὁ θεὸς τὸ ὄνομά σου ἐν πάσαις ταῖς γενεαῖς. ἐπὶ σοὶ ἐπ' ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν φανερώσει κύριος τὸ λύτρον τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραήλ.

37 Jon Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child-Sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993), esp. 174–75, 218–19.

The account of Mary's early life in the *Prot. Jas.*, in fact, echoes certain elements of the biblical story of Isaac. Not only does the text begin with the problem of the barrenness of a righteous couple (*Prot. Jas.* 1:5; cf. Gen. 16.1–2; 18.11), but explicit appeal is made, in *Prot. Jas.* 1:8, to Abraham as an inspiration for Joachim's hope that God might grant him a child. Moreover, the description of the "great feast" (δοχὴν μεγάλην) that Joachim gives in honour of Mary's first birthday, in *Prot. Jas.* 6:6, parallels the description, in LXX Gen. 21.8, of the great feast" (δοχὴν μεγάλην) held by Abraham on the day of Isaac's weaning.[38] In addition, in *Prot. Jas.* 6:12, Anna rejoices over the success of her pregnancy by proclaiming that Mary has come from the "fruit of his [i.e., Joachim's] righteousness" (καρπὸν δικαιοσύνης αὐτοὺ; *Prot. Jas.* 6:12): righteousness begets righteousness, and, in return for Joachim's pious participation in the temple cult, and unshaken devotion to God, Anna has been blessed with a child. Inasmuch as "righteousness" (צדקה; δικαιοσύνη) is a term strongly associated with Abraham in early Jewish and Christian tradition,[39] the intention may be to draw further parallels between Isaac and Mary, particularly with regard to their status as children miraculously born to the barren wives of righteous men. As the narrative of the *Prot. Jas.* unfolds, the parallel deepens: it becomes clear that God has given Mary to Anna and Joachim as a reward for their righteousness, but that, in turn, they must be willing—like Abraham—to offer their child as a gift back to Him. It is perhaps not coincidental, then, that the *Prot. Jas.*' description of the life of Mary recalls the pattern of the "beloved son," as exemplified by the life of Isaac: she too experiences humiliation (i.e., due to public accusation and testing; *Prot. Jas.* 10:10–13; 20:1–4; cf. Joseph's private allegation at 13:6–10) but also eventual exaltation (i.e., as the mother of the messiah; *Prot. Jas.* 20:10).

As we have seen, moreover, themes of sacrifice are prominent within the narrative of Mary's life, as told in the *Prot. Jas.* Mary, herself, is characterized as a gift to God and described in language that is strikingly and persistently sacrificial. Arguably, the assertion of Mary's status as her mother's temple offering simultaneously serves to foreshadow the sacrifice of her own son, Jesus.

38 In fact, the parallel is almost exact, except with Joachim's name replacing that of Abraham. Compare LXX Gen. 21.8 (καὶ ἐποίησεν Ἀβραὰμ δοχὴν μεγάλην) with *Prot. Jas.* 6:6 (καὶ ἐποίησεν Ἰωακεὶμ δοχὴν μεγάλην).

39 R. W. L. Moberly, "Abraham's Righteousness (Genesis 15:6)," in *Studies in the Pentateuch* (ed. John A. Emerton; Leiden: Brill, 1990), 103–30.

Conclusion

As noted above, the interest in Mary's purity in the *Prot. Jas.* has, typically, been interpreted in terms of later Christian understandings of female purity as centered on virginity and chastity. What is missed, in the process, is the place of ritual purity in its account of the conception, birth, and childhood of Mary, on the one hand, and its overarching interest in the temple and sacrificial systems, on the other. Arguably, in fact, the *Prot. Jas.*' depiction of Mary cannot be wholly understood apart from some awareness of biblical and early Jewish ideas about ritual purity.

As we have seen, the *Prot. Jas.* is emphatic about Mary's purity, and it goes to great efforts to demonstrate the precise nature and scope of this purity. Its account of the birth, infancy, and childhood of Mary makes clear her close connection to the temple: she belongs more to God and the temple than to her own parents. It is asserted, moreover, that Mary lives, plays, eats, and associates with nothing profane and with no one in a state of ritual pollution. The text's emphasis on Mary's ritual purity is evident in Anna's vow to offer her as a "gift" (*Prot. Jas.* 4:2), and the description of her childhood home as akin to a sanctuary (*Prot. Jas.* 6:4), as later extended by the account of her time living in the temple itself (*Prot. Jas.* 8:2) and being "fed there, like a dove, receiving her food from the hand of an angel" (*Prot. Jas.* 8:2).[40] Multiple priestly blessings (*Prot. Jas.* 6:7; 6:9; 7:7–8) further serve to strengthen the connections between Mary and the temple, even as they also foreshadow her role outside of it, as the virgin mother of the messiah (*Prot. Jas.* 7:7–8).

How, then, might this concern for ritual purity shed light on the aim(s) and purpose(s) of the *Prot. Jas.*? In past research on this text, scholars have speculated about a range of possible (and overlapping) motives for its composition—specifically: (1) to "fill in" the gaps left by the NT Gospels' accounts of the life of Mary and birth of Jesus;[41] (2) to interpret the infancy stories of Matthew and Luke;[42] (3) to interweave oral and written tradi-

40 *Prot. Jas.* 8:2: (ὡσεὶ περιστερὰ νεμομένη καὶ ἐλάμβανε τροφὴν ἐκ χειρὸς ἀγγέλου). The imagery of the dove may strengthen the metaphor of Mary as a sacrificial gift, inasmuch as turtledoves were the only birds allowed to be offered in sacrifice according to Levitical law (e.g., Lev. 12.6, 8; 15.14, etc.). As is well known, the term περιστερά plays a special role in the NT Gospels, where it is associated with innocence (e.g., Mt. 10.16) and with the descent of the Holy Spirit (e.g., Mk 1.10; Lk. 3.22; Jn 1.32), or Spirit of God (e.g., Mt. 3.16), during Jesus' baptism. It may not be coincidental then that the dove also serves, in *Prot. Jas.* 9:6, as the sign that God uses to determine the widower of Israel who is worthy to act as a guardian for Mary after her departure from the temple.

41 E.g., Cullmann, "Protevangelium of James," 414, 416–18; Hock, *Infancy Gospels*, 3; Elliott, *Apocryphal New Testament*, 46; Hans-Josef Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels: An Introduction* (trans. Brian McNeil; New York: T&T Clark, 2003), 64.

42 E.g., Cothenet, "Protévangile," 4260; W. S. Vorster, "The Protevangelium of James and Intertextuality," in *Text and Testimony: Essays on New Testament and Apocryphal Literature in Honour of A. F. J. Klijn* (ed. T. Baarda et al.; Kampen: J. H. Kok,

tions about Mary;[43] (4) to provide a biography for Mary;[44] (5) to respond to Jewish and/or "pagan" attacks on Mary's character;[45] and (6) to praise Mary as an exemplary figure.[46] Those scholars who have emphasized Mary's purity as a dominant and unifying theme in the *Prot. Jas.* have tended to favour the last two possibilities (i.e., #5 and #6), suggesting that the text was composed primarily for apologetic and/or encomiastic aims.[47]

Attention to the text's concern for ritual purity appears to confirm Hock's contention that the primary purpose of the *Prot. Jas.* is encomiastic.[48] In my view, the emphasis on Mary's ritual purity functions, above all, to contribute to the praise of this figure by explaining what made her worthy to be selected for the role of the mother of the messiah. In the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, Mary is described as a virgin, and is depicted as remaining in this state, despite being with child (Mt. 1.18–25; Lk. 1.26–35). These early Gospels, however, offer very little by means of explanation for why Mary was chosen to be the virgin mother of the messiah; even the references to Mary's virginity in Matthew and Luke can be interpreted as the result of her selection for this role, rather than the reason *per se*. In the *Prot. Jas.*, by contrast, Mary's worthiness is established through her parents' piety, her miraculous

1988), 268–69; Elliott, *Apocryphal New Testament*, 51. Although some scholars (e.g., Cameron, *Other Gospels*, 108–9) have raised the possibility that the *Prot. Jas.* drew on gospel harmonies (e.g. Tatian's *Diatessaron*) rather than—or together with—the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, this possibility has yet to be explored in any sustained fashion.

43 It seems plausible that stories were being circulated about Mary and her childhood in the second century CE, in much the same manner as stories about Jesus, concerning aspects of his life not described in written accounts like the canonical Gospels, may have circulated orally, at first, and, only later, in written forms (e.g., *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*). See Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels*, 64; Hock, *Infancy Gospels*, 3.

44 Although the details provided in the *Prot. Jas.* concerning Mary cannot be regarded as authentic historical records of her life, Klauck suggests that this text was shaped by the biographical literature of late antiquity and probably sprung from the need to provide Mary with her own biography. See further, Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels*, 64–72.

45 I.e., to Jewish and/or "pagan" polemics against claims concerning the special circumstances surrounding Jesus' birth, as well as Mary's virginity and social status. See further, Smid, *Protevangelium Jacobi*, 15–17; Cothenet, "Protévangile," 4268; van Stempvoort, "Protevangelium Jacobi," 410, 413–15; Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels*, 66; Elliott, *Apocryphal New Testament*, 49–50; Horner, "Jewish Aspects," 330; John L. Allen, "The Protevangelium of James as an 'Historia': The Insufficiency of the 'Infancy Gospel' Category," in *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* (ed. E. Lovering; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1991), 515–17.

46 Hock, for instance, acknowledges the polemically motivated nature of the work but suggests that apologetic aims do not suffice to explain the whole narrative. Instead, he suggests an encomiastic purpose as the primary reason for the creation of the narrative, pointing to parallels with the Greco-Roman genre of the encomium (esp. with reference to Hermongenes' *Progymnasmata*). See further, Hock, *Infancy Gospels*, 16; also Cullmann, "Protevangelium of James," 425.

47 E.g., Gaventa, *Mary*, 100–22; Foskett, *Virgin Conceived*, 141–64.

48 Hock, *Infancy Gospels*, 16.

conception, her maintenance of extreme ritual purity throughout infancy and childhood, and her special connection to the temple. Repeated assertions of her special status and place in salvation-history, moreover, are placed in the mouths of the priests of the temple, and, particularly, the high priest.

At the same time, the text's emphasis on Mary's ritual purity may point to a secondary aim of answering doubts and rumours (whether Jewish and/or "pagan" and/or inner-Christian) about the unusual circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus (e.g., Origen, *Against Celsus* 1.32). Already, in the Gospel of Luke, we find hints of a concern to underline the propriety of Jesus' birth, by appealing to his mother's fidelity to the Levitical prescriptions for post-partum purification and the redemption of the firstborn (see Lk. 2.21–24 and above). In the *Prot. Jas.*, this concern is taken even further, and it is extended from Jesus onto Mary: here, as we have seen, ample efforts are made to demonstrate that Mary's mother acted in accordance with the Levitical purity laws surrounding childbirth (*Prot. Jas.* 5:9)—to such an exaggerated degree, in fact, that Mary herself was pure enough to dwell in the temple as a child (*Prot. Jas.* 8:2) and, even, to be uniquely exempt from the requirement to observe post-partum purification after the birth of her son (*Prot. Jas.* 19:16).

Lest anyone doubt the possibility that Mary could conceive as a virgin, the *Prot. Jas.* narratively demonstrates that this event stands in continuity with the miraculous conception of children from the barren matriarchs and righteous patriarchs of the biblical past. Above, we noted that the tale of Mary's own conception, birth, and childhood resonates with the tale of the conception, birth, and childhood of Isaac in LXX Gen. 21.1–7. In addition, the *Prot. Jas.* makes an extended intertextual appeal to the story of the conception, birth, and childhood of Samuel, particularly as told in LXX 1 Samuel.

On one level, such parallels may help to account for the preoccupation with the temple and sacrifices in the first chapters of the *Prot. Jas.* In 1 Sam. 1.1–2.11, for instance, the temple cult and sacrifices also play an important role. According to 1 Sam. 1.14, the priest Eli was initially mistaken about the piety of the barren Hannah—much like the priest Reubel is said to be mistaken about the piety of the childless Joachim in *Prot. Jas.* 1:5. Nevertheless, both Hannah and Elkannah are described as actively participating in the temple cult and as making the proper sacrifices; Samuel's father, Elkannah, even offers sacrifices beyond what is required, by offering double portions for Hannah (1 Sam. 1.3–5)—an action that, according to *Prot. Jas.* 1:2 and 4:5–6, was later paralleled and surpassed by Mary's father Joachim. Other parallels include those between Hannah's vow of Samuel to the temple in 1 Sam. 1.11 and Anna's vow of Mary to the temple in *Prot. Jas.* 4:2, and between Samuel and Mary as, both, dwelling in the temple (*Prot. Jas.* 8:2; 1 Sam. 1.27–28). Taken together with the assertion of the ritual purity of Anna and Mary, alike, these intertextual appeals function to defend Mary (and, by extension, Jesus) from any charges of impurity and impropriety.

Even this seemingly apologetic aim, however, contributes to the encomiastic purpose of the text as a whole, wherein the Jerusalem temple and Jewish priesthood function as means by which to express Mary's pure and blessed status. References and allusions to ritual purity, sacrifice, the temple, and priests, after all, all contribute to the elevation of Mary, and to the exploration of her special role in salvation-history. This is perhaps most explicit in the priestly blessing of Mary in *Prot. Jas.* 7:7–8, which functions to express the text's understanding of the nature of salvation through Jesus. Consistent with the repeated emphasis on the continuities between Mary, Israelite history, and Jewish law and piety, this blessing foretells that the salvation that comes through Mary will result in the redemption of Israel as a whole.[49] Precisely due to her exceptional piety and purity, Mary is, thus, said to become an active participant in bringing about the redemption of her own people, by means of her motherhood of the messiah.

49 This view that Jesus would make salvation possible to the whole of Israel is also expressed, in the second century CE, by *T. XII Patr.* For instance, in *T. Levi* 18:1–11, God's anointed priest, Levi, is told by an angel that he will be the agent of redemption by "announcing the one who is about to redeem Israel." In *T. Benj.* 9:2, God is said to have "sent forth his salvation through the ministration of the unique prophet"; cf. *T. Dan.* 5:10; *T. Gad.* 8:1; *T. Benj.* 4:2. See further, M. de Jonge, "The Future of Israel in the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs," *JSJ* 17.2 (1986): 196–211; idem, "The Transmission of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs by Christians," *VC* 47.1 (1993): 1–28.

Chapter 14

Thecla Desexualized: The Saint Justina Legend and the Reception of the Christian Apocrypha in Late Antiquity

Brian Sowers

In the third century, Methodius of Olympus christianized Plato's *Symposium* and wrote a dialogue in which ten Christian virgins praise chastity rather than love. His eighth speaker, Thecla, the proto-martyr of her sex, has the following to say about women of her day, "Wise men have said that our life is a festal assembly, and that we have come as though into a theater to show the drama of truth, that is, of righteousness." We open our discussion of ancient Christian women with this passage because it encapsulates two challenges the scholar of antiquity faces as he endeavors to better understand narratives about ancient women in general and Christian women in particular. First, the "words" of these women are often penned and nearly always transmitted by men who were highly selective in the passages they discussed and copied. Narratives of this type often tell us more about the lives, perspectives, and agendas of their male authors than their female subjects.[1] Second, modern readers risk merely staring at their ancient subjects, using them, as Thecla says, as foils for truth—we moderns might call that history—or for righteousness, perhaps the equivalent to our ethics. The rare and often vague glimpses we get of ancient women can easily be reduced to factoids in our attempts to reconstruct broader social histories or the concerns of specific religious communities; we risk spending more time analyzing our subjects as though under a microscope than actually looking with them at the world in which they lived. Male-generated accounts of women, of which Methodius' *Symposium* is an ideal example, typically focus on specific female characteristics, such as a woman's sexual identity, with the result that our understanding and appreciation of the diversity of early Christian women frequently becomes distorted. In our attempt to contextualize, then, we often first decontextualize the women whose lives

1 There are some obvious exceptions, in particular the vast amount of literature that has survived, often accidentally, in the sands of Egypt. See Roger S. Bagnall and Raffaella Cribiore, *Women's Letters from Ancient Egypt, 300 BC–AD 800* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006).

and thoughts we want so very dearly to recover.[2] Recovering ancient women is an arduous task—the most cynical of us might even say an impossible one—since so many of their affairs and opinions are irrecoverably lost and the little that is preserved has inevitably passed through the editorial hands of others. For this reason, the archaeological record provides us with the best opportunity to observe an unbiased day in the lives of early Christian women, but rarely does this evidence give us extended narratives written by, or about, those women. While we might be able to walk in their shoes or see snapshots of their daily lives, the stories of ancient women—both those they told and those they lived—remain unheard.

It is fitting, then, that we begin with Thecla, a woman who, second only to the virgin mother, was subject to endless scrutiny by early Christian men.[3] To make matters more complicated, Thecla may not even not be a historical figure. The earliest literary account of Thecla's life and ministry written by an anonymous author, perhaps a woman, freely mixes church tradition and oral legend woven into a coherent narrative suitable to the author's ideological agenda.[4] Thecla, one of the most influential women in the first four centuries of Christian history, resists historical recovery; as a product of the collective imaginations of Christian storytellers, she has no historical story and, therefore, never voiced stories of her own. Yet it defies belief that a voiceless fabrication such as Thecla could have almost single-handedly transformed the literary landscape of narrative fiction during Christianity's dawn. Generations of readers and writers, those same individuals who crowded the streets of Seleucia to celebrate the cult of Saint Thecla, found the story of her life so inspiring that they remixed Thecla's in their own writings, like the dozens of Alexandria's, Antioch's, and Seleucia's dotted across Alexander's moldering empire.[5]

In this session on the function of Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphal writings in early Judaism and Christianity, it is my intent to introduce

2 This does not necessarily imply the reverse: that the communities responsible for the generation and proliferation of these writings are unrecoverable.

3 Gregory of Nazianzus famously includes Thecla as the woman in his list of early apostle-martyrs (*Or*. 4.69), and her cult could be found from Rome to Syria.

4 For Thecla's legendary and oral beginnings, see Dennis R. MacDonald, *The Legend and the Apostle: The Battle for Paul in Story and Canon* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1983) and Virginia Burrus, *Chastity as Autonomy: Women in the Stories of the Apocryphal Acts* (Studies in Women and Religion 23; Lewiston, NY and Queenstown, MD: Edwin Mellen Press, 1987). While it is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the gender of the author of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, MacDonald, *The Legend and the Apostle*, argues persuasively that the story itself promotes female interests. More recently, Stephen J. Davis, *The Cult of Saint Thecla: A Tradition of Women's Piety in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), extends this promotion of female religious expression well into the fifth century.

5 Of course, the Thecla legend spread beyond the Greek East. The manuscript tradition (Lipsius and Bonnet's MSS A, B, C) contains a variant account placing Thecla at Paul's martyrium in Rome. See Davis, *The Cult of Saint Thecla*, 46–47.

one such literary colony, the *Conversion of Saint Cyprian*, founded in the streets of Syrian Antioch, perhaps by an anonymous reader of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*. Home to Libanius and John Chrysostom, Antioch had a deep and convoluted literary, social, and religious history, so the *Conversion of Saint Cyprian*, a short hagiography on the conversion of a local magician, is often left unread and underappreciated in favor of fourth-century Antioch's most prolific and provocative authors. Because the magician Cyprian is a recondite figure, despite the story's contribution to Western literature as the source behind the Faust legend—vestiges of Cyprian persist in Goethe, Marlowe, and Calderon—my initial task will be to introduce and contextualize the narrative. Next, I hope to demonstrate that the Cyprian account depends upon, but in the same stroke diverges from, the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*. This divergence, I suggest, reveals social anxieties unique to urban Christianity in general and to Antioch in particular. Finally, I will provide a model which allows us to understand better the process whereby the creative inspirations of late-antique authors were so transfixed by the cult and legend of Thecla that her character was revised, remixed, and, in the case of the Cyprian hagiography, desexualized to fit fourth-century contexts quite different from the second-century ones behind the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*.

Written sometime at the end of the fourth century, the *Conversion* is cut from the same cloth as most late-antique hagiographies.[6] An apparently famous magician in his day, Cyprian of Antioch is hired to seduce a young Antiochene girl, Justa.[7] When the three demons Cyprian initially sends

6 This paper focuses on the *Conversion of Saint Cyprian*, only a third of the whole legend. In the fourth century, the Cyprian legends circulated in three accounts: the *Conversion*, which contains the immediate events leading to and following from Cyprian's conversion; the *Confession*, in which Cyprian defends his conversion's credibility and gives a detailed account of how he became a magician; and the *Martyrdom*, where Cyprian and Justina are arrested, tried before the imperial governor Eutolmius, and beheaded in Nicomedia. The legend as a whole, which unites the *Conversion*, *Confession*, and *Martyrdom* accounts, is frequently referred to as the *Martyrdom of Saint Cyprian*, making it easy to confuse the whole legend and the third account. Edgar Goodspeed, "The Martyrdom of Cyprian and Justa," *AJSL* 19.2 (1903): 65–82, refers to the three accounts as the *Acts of Cyprian and Justina*, the *Repentance of Cyprian*, and *The Martyrdom of Cyprian and Justina*, which hardly resolves the difficulty. The compilation of the three accounts most likely occurred in the fifth century. Soon thereafter, Aelia Eudocia, wife of Theodosius II, wrote a hexameter paraphrase of the legend. Although only parts of her *Conversion* and *Confession* survive, Eudocia's *Martyrdom* is one of the best surviving ancient poems from the hand of a female poet. For more on Eudocia's version, see Brian P. Sowers, "Eudocia: The Making of a Homeric Christian" (Ph.D. diss., University of Cincinnati, 2008), 134–275, and Claudio Bevegni (ed.), *Storia di San Cipriano* (Milan: Adelphi, 2006). Bevegni and Sowers provide the only complete translations of Eudocia's version, in Italian and English, respectively. A useful introduction of the legend in general remains P. Tino Alberto Sabattini, "S. Cipriano nella tradizione agiografica" *Revista di studi classici* 21 (1973): 181–204.

7 The standard edition of the *Conversion* is Theodore Zahn, *Cyprian von*

against Justa return rebuffed and humiliated, Cyprian recognizes the arrival of a more powerful practice, Christianity, and so converts to this more efficacious practice. Like many late-antique hagiographies, the *Conversion* explains through a pro-Christian lens, to a presumably pro-Christian audience, how the local community became Christian. This aetiological function of late-antique narratives is well known; however, recently, Peter van Minnen has suggested that late-antique hagiography's aetiological function should not debase its historical value.[8] Rather than reveal the true story of Antioch's Christianization, for example, the *Conversion of Saint Cyprian* reflects the social and religious concerns of its author, at the very least, and, possibly, also his or her intended audience.[9] The *Conversion*, similar to many other early hagiographies, suggests that Antioch became Christian as a direct result of the actions of a dynamic figure, Cyprian, who used miracles, and the "mass conversions" that followed them, to transform the city.[10] With the new-found stability, in the wake of the Edict of Milan, stories about dynamic figures like Cyprian—typically, local or itinerant holy men and women—became so inextricably woven into the fabric of specific fourth- and fifth-century populations, urban and rural alike, that they were made manifest in the cults of the saints and martyrs.[11]

Antiochien und die deutsche Faustsage (Erlangen: A. Deichert, 1882), although Margaret D. Gibson, *An Arabic Version of the Acts of the Apostles and the Seven Catholic Epistles* (Studia Sinaitica, 7; London: C. J. Clay, 1899), 64–78, prints a Greek version of the *Conversion* as well. All passages cited in this essay will be taken from Zahn's edition.

8 Peter van Minnen, "Saving Hagiography? Egyptian Hagiography in its Space and Time," *Church History and Religious Culture* 86 (2006): 57–91.

9 Of course, the social, religious, and political context of early Christian narratives is a complex and contentious topic among scholars of early and earliest Christianities. It is not my intention here to attempt to cut this modern Gordian knot, as it were. Suffice it to say, I read the Cyprian account(s) as a window into a particular urban tradition among late-antique Christianities.

10 That religious movements do not generally grow as a result of one-time mass conversions is a thesis initially argued by sociologist Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996; repr. as *The Rise of Christianity: How the Obscure, Marginal Jesus Movement Became the Dominant Religious Force in the Western World in a Few Centuries*, San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997), 3–27. To demonstrate that the growth of Christianity was steady, and not unusual, Stark compares it to the growth of Mormonism in the United States; compare also Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Mormonism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005) and, as a follow-up to his earlier argument, Rodney Stark, *Cities of God: The Real Story of How Christianity Became an Urban Movement and Conquered Rome* (San Francisco: HarperSanFranciso, 2006). Although his work has not been widely accepted by ancient or early church historians, Stark's skepticism concerning Christianity's growth echoes that of many scholars of the Greco-Roman Mediterranean.

11 Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), provides a model for the Western half of the empire. Similar models obtain for the East; compare Stephan J. Davis, *The Cult of Saint Thecla* and Wendy Mayer, *St. John Chrysostom: The Cult of the Saints* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2006).

Antioch was no exception, and the cult of Cyprian and Justa soon spread beyond the city's limits and reached as far as the eternal city itself, Rome.[12]

Yet the story of Cyprian and Justa, their conversions, and the ensuing transformation of Antioch, hardly reflects historical reality; like Thecla in the second century, Cyprian and Justa are fabrications of fourth-century imaginations. The character of Cyprian is constructed out of a variety of historical and legendary figures, including his namesake Cyprian of Carthage, Pythagoras, and Apollonius of Tyana, whose life had been popularized in Philostratus' third-century account.[13] How the anonymous author of the *Conversion* wove his seemingly disparate sources into a consistent whole is the topic for another day.[14] My intention in this essay is to explore the sources behind the female protagonist of the *Conversion*, Justa. The most notable source for Justa's depiction is the figure of Thecla herself. Simply put, Justa mirrors Thecla in at least two substantial ways: in the details of her conversion, and in her encounter with a suitor/rapist. To demonstrate this dependence, we begin with the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*.

In a missionary journey to Asia Minor after his expulsion from Antioch, Paul comes to the city of Iconium, where a local Christian, Onesiphorus, welcomes the apostle into his home. Here, the local Christian community comes together to celebrate a meal, and to hear Paul preach. From her bedroom window, a young woman, Thecla, hears Paul's message, a

12 Mayer, *St. John Chrysostom*, provides a general introduction to the cult of the saints in Antioch. On the role of the Cyprian cult in Antioch, in particular the challenges of reconstructing it, see Sowers, *Eudocia*, 134–96. The best surviving shrine to the cult of Cyprian and Justa—one of the earliest examples of the cult of the saints—comes from Rome. Under the Church of Ss. Giovanni e Paolo, a small fourth-century *confessio* dedicated to a female saint and two male saints, is thought, based on the evidence of an inscription at the site, to have been Justa, Cyprian, and Theoctist. See Cynthia Hahn, "Seeing and Believing: The Construction of Sanctity in Early-Medieval Saints' Shrines," *Speculum* 72.4 (1997): 1093–95; Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image Before the Era of Art* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 80–83; and Pio Franchi de' Cavallieri "Dove furono sepolti i Ss. Cipriano, Giustina e Teoctisto?" *Note hagiografiche* 8 (1935): 335–54. Not everyone is convinced that the *confessio* was dedicated to Cyprian, Justina, and Theoctist. June Hager, *Pilgrimage: A Chronicle of Christianity through the Churches of Rome* (London: Cassell Paperbacks, 2001), 52–53, provides the most recent argument to the contrary.

13 Students of the so-called *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, most notably Arthur D. Nock, "Hagiographica II: Cyprian of Antioch," *JTS* 28 (1927): 411–15; M. P. Nilsson, "Greek Mysteries in the Confession of St. Cyprian," *HTR* 40 (1947): 167–76; and M. P. Nilsson, "Mantique et mystères antiques d'apres la Confession de Saint Cyprien," *Revue Archéologique* 35 (1950): 205–07, were the first to examine the various sources behind the Cyprian legend. H. M. Jackson, "A Contribution toward an Edition of the *Confession* of Cyprian of Antioch: The *Secreta Cypriani*," *Le Muséon* 101 (1988): 33–41, provides a full account of the advancements to Cyprian studies by the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*.

14 See Sowers, *Eudocia*, 212–56. At a later date, I plan to explore the interrelationship among the various sources behind the creation of the Cyprian legend in greater detail than do Nock and Nilsson. Although interesting, that discussion has little bearing on the *Conversion*'s dependence upon the apocryphal Acts.

celibate revision of the Sermon on the Mount, and desires to join the new religion, a desire which she expresses by alienating herself from her family and breaking off her engagement with an Iconian elite, Thamyris. Because Paul's teaching was so counter-cultural—he was, after all, encouraging local women to renounce the social institution of marriage—Thamyris persuades the Iconians to arrest him. Undaunted, and still eager to convert, Thecla visits Paul in prison and, as a result, shares the verdict meted out by the local governor, who expels the apostle from the city, and condemns Thelca, at her mother's behest, to the pyre. God preserves Thecla's life by sending rain to extinguish the fire, and Thecla leaves Iconium in search of Paul. When she finds the apostle, Thecla cuts her hair in a masculine style and joins Paul's entourage on their way to Antioch, where Thecla catches the attention of a local aristocrat, Alexander, in a scene frequently echoed in other Christian literature. At first Alexander assumes that Thecla is either Paul's slave, or that he is her pimp, so he asks the apostle about her. Paul, however, denies any knowledge of Thecla, and Alexander attempts to rape her. Thecla is, presumably, caught off guard: she looks around for Paul, only to find that he has abandoned her. She asserts to Alexander that she is a woman of some consequence from Iconium, and, when she finds that her words have fallen on deaf ears, she tears Alexander's clothes, and throws his crown, the mark of a Galatarch, to the ground.[15] Humiliated, Alexander drags Thecla to court on the charge of sacrilege, whereupon she is condemned to death. Although a female contingent of Antiochenes led by Tryphaena, a member of Caesar's household, sides with Thecla, she nonetheless finds herself in the arena facing lions, bears, bulls, and man-eating seals. Reminiscent of her escape from the burning pyre, Thecla is again rescued from death; in both instances, either God's direct intervention or a comparably miraculous event saves Thecla's life. In this case, Tryphaena faints from fear, and the civic authorities, fearing imperial retribution, abandon their attempts, and allow Thecla to remain in Tryphaena's house, where she preaches the gospel. Eventually, Thecla rejoins Paul's missionary team and is sent as a missionary, first to Iconium and, eventually, to Seleucia, where, according to some versions of the story, she spends the rest of her life.

The *Conversion of Cyprian*, also, opens with the story of a young girl, Justa, who overhears the gospel preached by a local Christian, Praulios, while listening at her window, and desires to see the man and learn more about the religion. After a brief exchange with her pagan mother, Justa prayerfully returns to her bedroom and takes up the life of a proto-anchorite. That night, Justa's parents see a vision of Christ, and, subsequently, convert. The contemporaneous conversion of both Justa and her family alleviates the possibility for domestic tension which so frequently directs the social drama within early Christian fictions, including the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* and

15 MacDonald, *The Legend and the Apostle*, 41.

the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas*.[16] Furthermore, the conversion of Justa and her family never elicits civic attention. The Antioch depicted in this narrative appears to be predominantly Christian, a fact particularly striking, since the story is set a decade or so before the Great Persecution under Diocletian and the tetrarchs.

Facing neither domestic nor civic scrutiny, Justa manifests her new religious fervor by traveling regularly between her house and the church. That urban women attended church services is hardly remarkable; it does, however, put Justa, like many women in early Christian narratives, in a vulnerable position—she is susceptible to the gaze of men. The obvious parallels to Paul and Thecla become even more apparent at this point in the narrative. During one of her frequent trips through the city, Justa catches the attention of Aglaidas, an Antiochene aristocrat. When Justa rejects his marriage proposal, Aglaidas attempts to rape her, but she is able to fight off her assailant by throwing him to the ground, scratching him, pulling out his beard, and tearing his clothes. Rebuffed and humiliated, Aglaidas hires the magician, Cyprian, to seduce her. What follows, is a series of spiritual attacks against Justa, during which Cyprian sends three increasingly powerful demons to torment her. Against each demon, Justa performs the sign of the cross and, thereby, thwarts Cyprian's attempts to seduce her. On a social level, Justa can hardly be called liminal; she maintains her ties with family and church, whereas Cyprian and Aglaidas, on the other hand, often find themselves on the fringe of the greater Antiochene community, which appears to be either Christianized or, at least, sympathetic to the Christians. As the story draws to a close, Cyprian realizes the supremacy of God's power, and faces off with Satan, as the latter makes one final play for mastery of Cyprian's soul. In this sense, Cyprian follows a long tradition, beginning with Simon Magus, of the magician turned convert, and is an archetype for the Faustus legend.[17] That Satan intends to kill Cyprian seems

16 The term "social drama" is borrowed from anthropologist Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1974); *Process, Performance and Pilgrimage: A Study in Comparative Symbology* (New Delhi: Concept, 1979); "Social Dramas and Stories About Them," in *On Narrative* (ed. W. J. T. Mitchell; Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 137–64; and Victor Turner and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978). Caroline Bynum, "Women's Stories, Women's Symbols: A Critique of Victor Turner's Theory of Liminality," in *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (ed. C. Bynum; New York: Zone Books, 1991), 27–51, uses Turner's model of social drama to trace the narrative trajectories of hagiographies in the Middle Ages. Bynum's approach—which questions whether women, in general, tell stories that follow Turner's model—if applied to anonymous texts from the early generations of Christianity, would call into question any suggestion that they were written by women.

17 The incipient stages of the Simon Magus legend can be observed in the Acts of the Apostles (8:18–24), but the legend reaches its zenith in the *Acts of Peter*, in which Simon Magus and St. Peter face off, in a battle of supernatural forces. Of course, Simon Magus' name was closely associated with early heresies, particularly Gnosticism. This tra-

certain, until the magician remembers the powerful way in which Justa had repelled the demons. Cyprian immediately performs the sign of the cross, the sight of which compels Satan to flee in fear. Cyprian is then free to convert. Once he has convinced Antioch's Christian community that his conversion is genuine, Cyprian quickly rises through the ranks of the ekklesia, brings many of the city's unbelievers into the fold, and, soon, receives the bishopric of the city. As bishop, Cyprian changes Justa's name to Justina, and puts her in charge of Antioch's growing ranks of virgins.

The anonymous author of the *Conversion* relied upon the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* for the development of two scenes: Justa's conversion, and her initial, violent encounter with Aglaidas. We will begin with Justa's conversion scene. From her windowsill, Justa hears Praulios preach the gospel:

> There was a certain man there, Praulius, the bearer of Christ, a very holy man, a wise minister of God who was crowned with good cheer and faith, who studied the prophetic books, always singing the good faith and the holy voice of the prophets. The noble maid continuously heard him—for there was a light-bearing window nearby—while she looked from her chamber into the house of the minister. (*Conversion* 1)[18]

Like Thecla, Justa desires to see Praulius and to learn more about Christianity: "The arrow of divine love put (all) this into the heart of the maiden, and she was no longer able to hide her burning passion within but desired to see the appearance of the very pious man as well as to learn the whole truth from his mouth" (*Conversion* 1).[19] The parallels here between the *Conversion* and the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* are twofold. First, the design of the conversion scene in the Cyprian account almost exactly mirrors the corresponding scene from the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*: Thecla hears Paul's message from her bedroom window and desires both to see and hear him more. Second,

dition is absent in the *Acts of the Apostles*, which is to be expected from a first- or second-century narrative, as well as in the *Acts of Peter*, but it can be observed in Justin Martyr (*First Apology*, 26), Irenaeus (*Against Heresies*, 1.23.1–4), Hippolytus (*The Refutation of All Heresies*, 6.11.1–19), and the Clementine *Recognitions* 2.5.26–29). A. Tuzlak, "The Magician and the Heretic: The Case of Simon Magus," in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World* (ed. P. Mirecki and M. Meyer; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 416–26, and Alberto Ferreiro, *Simon Magus in Patristic, Medieval and Early Modern Traditions* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), have some of the best, and recent, discussion on Simon Magus.

18 The corresponding scene from the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* is as follows: "And while Paul was thus speaking in the midst of the assembly in the house of Onesiphorus, a virgin (named) Thecla—her mother was Theocleia—who was betrothed to a man (named) Thamyris, sat at a near-by window and listened night and day to the word of the virgin life as it was spoken by Paul" (*Acts of Paul and Thecla* 7; trans. Wilson).

19 The corresponding scene here is: "she did not turn away from the window but pressed on in the faith rejoicing exceedingly. Moreover, when she saw many women and virgins going in to Paul she desired to be counted worthy herself to stand in Paul's presence and hear the word of Christ; for she had not yet seen Paul in person, but only heard his word" (*Acts of Paul and Thecla* 7).

Justa's response to the gospel parallels Thecla's: after speaking briefly with her mother, she prayerfully returns to her bedroom and takes up the ascetic lifestyle. The conversion narrative parallels end here, however. As I have already suggested, Thecla's conversion scene serves as a major moment of crisis in the social drama underlying the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*. As a result of Paul's message, Thecla breaks off her engagement with Thamyris, locks herself in her room, and embarks upon a series of quasi-romantic adventures. The corresponding scene in the *Conversion*, on the other hand, follows a very different trajectory. Justa's parents convert along with her, thereby alleviating any social tension. This scene is a central one in the *Conversion*—with the exception of a few episodes on the way to, or at, the Antiochene ekklesia, Justa remains within her parents' house. Although Justa's conversion parallels Thecla's, their ensuing, post-conversion adventures are quite dissimilar.

The second clear allusion to the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* comes during Justa's encounter with Aglaidas:

> There was a certain Aglaidas a wealthy man, extremely well born, who excelled in cunning and whose heart was possessed by the lawless desire for idols. Upon seeing the very lovely girl habitually rushing to the houses of almighty God, he was distracted in his thoughts, and he sent many men and women, begging her parents that he would marry the holy maid to share his bedchamber. But she was accustomed to send away all the young men and women, because she had the Lord Christ as her only suitor . . . But because he held only lust in his heart and was struck with blindness, he hid himself to try to grab the girl. But she immediately performed the powerful sign of Christ, threw the wretch on his back, and with her hands tore Aglaidas' body as well as his cheeks with their curly foam. She rent his beautiful clothes and in all she caused laughter, since she ran the same course as glorious Thecla. After she did these things, she returned to the house of God. (*Conversion* 3)[20]

The author of the *Conversion* doubtless has the apocryphal acts in mind. The final product actually conflates two different episodes from the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, with the result that Aglaidas takes on a hybrid role of Thamyris and Alexander. He resorts to violence, like Alexander, but his anger arises when Justa rejects his marriage proposals, like Thamyris. Interestingly, Aglaidas sends a number of Antiochene citizens to advance

20 The corresponding scene from the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* is as follows: "But immediately as they entered a Syrian by the name of Alexander, one of the first of the Antiochenes, seeing Thecla fell in love with her, and sought to win over Paul with money and gifts. But Paul said: 'I do not know the woman of whom thou dost speak, nor is she mine.' But he, being a powerful man, embraced her on the open street; she however would not endure it, but looked about for Paul and cried out bitterly saying: 'Force not the stranger, force not the handmaid of God! Among the Iconians I am one of the first, and because I did not wish to marry Thamyris I have been cast out of the city.' And taking hold of Alexander she ripped his cloak, took off the crown on his head, and made him a laughing-stock" (*Acts of Paul and Thecla* 26).

his cause with Justa's parents. In a society where arranged marriages were the norm, it is remarkable that the author never mentions the opinions of Justa's parents. Justa, herself, rejects Aglaidas' offers of marriage, and asserts her preference for the celibate life.[21] To guarantee that a reader will recognize the Thecla allusion, the author explicitly tells us that Justa imitated Thecla, when the former fought off Aglaidas. Rather than resort to the local authorities, as both Thamyris and Alexander do, Aglaidas turns to more nefarious means: the magician, Cyprian. This development is, in part, a product of the *Conversion*'s anachronistic presentation of Antioch: while the city hardly seems pagan, its depiction is, I suspect, influenced by broader social concerns on the part of the author and his/her audience.

It is my contention that the author of the *Conversion* follows a centuries-long tradition of social conservatism regarding the role of early Christian women, and that this conservatism is evidenced in the differences between Justa's character and her intertextual model, Thecla. Essentially, Justa is nothing more than a desexualized Thecla. This might seem problematic at first. As we have already seen, erotic imagery is hardly absent from the *Conversion*, particularly in scenes centered around Justa. In the conversion episode, for example, Justa's response to the gospel is openly erotic: "The *arrow of divine love* put (all) this into the heart of the maiden, and she was no longer able to hide her *burning passion* within but *desired* to see the appearance of the very pious man as well as to learn the whole truth from his mouth (*Conversion* 1)." Rather than being free of sexuality, Justa's conversion scene abounds in it. In this narrative, the author uses erotic imagery to describe the gospel message, characterizing the gospel as "arrows of divine love" which pierce Justa's heart, instead of retelling the actual gospel message, an abbreviated version of the life of Jesus. These piercing arrows lead Justa to feel overcome with a burning passion, one that she is unable to control. Moreover, this burning passion, although in reality sparked by the love of Christ, burns initially for the preacher, Praulios—Justa desires to see what he looks like and to hear the gospel from his very mouth. Many of the images used here are either direct echoes from the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* or seem to be based heavily on them.[22] Justa's window-side conversion is not the only overtly sexual scene in the story. Aglaidas' attempt to rape Justa is, at its basest level, sexual, and the demonic attempts against Justa also contain sexual imagery, although, in the latter examples, sexual

21 A young woman's choice between marriage or celibacy was protected by law under the Theodosian emperors (*Cod. theod.* 9.25:2). Compare Geoffrey S. Nathan, *The Family in Late Antiquity: The Rise of Christianity and the Endurance of Tradition* (London: Routledge, 2000), 131.

22 The clearest connection is the emphasis on the physical presence of the apostle. Thecla, the narrative emphasizes, had not seen Paul in the flesh, although she greatly desired it. In the same way, Justa desires to see Praulios face to face.

content is, typically, limited to Justa's prayers to remain a virgin. In many ways, these prayers parallel Thecla's semi-erotic prayers in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*.[23]

When we compare the use of sexuality in the fourth-century *Conversion of Saint Cyprian* to the reception of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* within the first four centuries of Christianity, however, a few notable differences emerge. As early as Tertullian, Thecla's story posed a threat to the established order promoted by many Christian communities.[24] This threat centered around what we might call Thecla's tranvestism—she dresses in men's clothing, and cuts her hair like a man. By the story's end, Thecla's sexual transformation is complete; she travels alone, preaches the gospel, and, in later accounts, performs miracles. The influence of these motifs in the fourth and fifth centuries was so profound that John Anson and Stephen Davis see, in the Thecla account, the origin of the female transvestite in early Christian literature.[25] That this was a concern to, at least, a few urban figures from the fourth century is certain. For example, Athanasius of Alexandria encouraged the young women in his churches to follow Thecla's example only with respect to her chastity. [26] All other Theclan activities, including cross-dressing, masculine hairstyles, and masculine behaviors, were strongly discouraged.[27] Alexandria provides us with a unique glimpse into the drastic difference between the urban and rural use of Thecla. If Athanasius' suggestions regarding the appropriate urban emulation of Thecla were the urban norm, then the Alexandrian countryside was a different world altogether.[28] Women frequently traveled alone, both to the Thecla cult in the Egyptian wilderness, and to the main Thecla cult in Seleucia, and their stories survive in a compilation of Thecla miracles, appended in the fifth century to the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*.[29] The miraculous, the bizarre, and, indeed, the transvestite increasingly persist in rural Christianity, the

23 See *Acts of Paul and Thecla* 31.

24 The much-discussed passage is Tertullian, *Baptism* 17. See Davis, *The Cult of Saint Thecla*, 12–17; MacDonald, *The Legend and the Apostle*, 17–21; Burrus, *Chastity as Autonomy*, 67–72.

25 John Anson, "The Female Transvestite in Early Monasticism: The Origin and Development of a Motif," *Viator 5* (1974): 1–32 and Stephen J. Davis, "Crossed Texts, Crossed Sex: Intertextuality and Gender in Early Christian Legends of Holy Women Disguised as Men" *JECS* 10 (2002): 1–36.

26 This concern for female decorum continued after Athanasius' life. A pseudepigraphic work, the *Canons of Athanasius*, ed. W. Riedel and W. E. Crum (London: Text and Translation Society, 1904), teaches that, in every Christian house, there should be a virgin (*Canon* 98).

27 Virgins were often encouraged not to go out in public (Athanasius, *First [Coptic] Letter to Virgins* 1.13; Evagrius Ponticus, *Epistle* 7).

28 Athanasius' use of the Thecla story for his teachings on chastity is thoroughly discussed by Davis, *The Cult of Saint Thecla*, 83–112.

29 Davis, *Cult of Saint Thecla*, and Scott F. Johnson, *The Life and Miracles of Thekla: A Literary Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

most famous example of which is that of St. Mary (or St. Marinos), who lived most of her life in a monastery disguised as a man.[30]

Urban Christianity, by which I mean the more structured and controlled institution that slowly evolved over the fourth and fifth centuries, could hardly ignore Thecla; hers was the second-most popular female cult in the empire, next, only, to that of the Mother of Christ. The *Conversion of Saint Cyprian*, I suggest, evidences many of the same anxieties about female decorum which Athanasius voices. Justa, in this regard, could serve as a useful teaching tool for Antioch's growing number of urban virgins (numbering approximately 6,000 in the late fourth century). Like Thecla, Justa preserves her chastity, but, unlike her model, she remains within the protection of her father house. Furthermore, deviant or overtly masculine behaviors, so common in female characters in late-antique hagiographies, are absent from the *Conversion of Saint Cyprian*. Justa never dresses like a man, never travels alone, never performs miracles, and never preaches the gospel. In many ways, then, Justa is Athanasius' model Theclean imitator. She follows all of the good behaviors, i.e., those behaviors in keeping with the male urban ideal, while rejecting transvestism and other such socially questionable activities.

Conclusions

Late antiquity was a period of intense literary dynamism. Christian authors experimented with new and exciting genres, while, at the same time, revising, reworking, and in some instances, rewriting numerous prose fictions from earlier generations. The *Acts of Paul and Thecla* evidences both literary developments. During the fourth and fifth centuries, an anonymous editor appended a series of miracle episodes to the original second-century account, and the author of the *Conversion of Saint Cyprian* borrowed heavily from the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* in his or her creation of the Saint Justina character. At the same time, this selective literary borrowing indicates an awareness for broader social concerns, primarily those within the urban centers of the eastern half of the, then, crumbling Roman empire. Wonderworkers and anchoretic figures, although appropriate for the countryside or desert, could pose a serious threat to the religious, social, and, indeed, political prerogative of the urban church. Thecla was central to this debate. Whereas Athanasius directly addresses how his community should appropriately emulate the first female martyr, the *Conversion of Saint Cyprian*, on the other hand, takes a less direct approach, by creating an alternative role model, Justina, who imitates Thecla, but only inasmuch as her life conforms to urban, specifically, Antiochene, values. The result of this process of intertextual assimilation was a Thecla, desexualized.

30 See Davis, "Crossed Texts," and Anson, "The Female Transvestite."

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