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Early Jewish Prayers in Greek

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Preface

During the past few decades a great amount of scholarly work has been done on the various prayer cultures of antiquity, both Graeco-Roman and Jewish and Christian.¹ In Jewish studies this burgeoning research on ancient prayer has been stimulated particularly by the many new prayer texts found at Qumran, which have shed new light on several long-standing problems.² The present volume intends to make a modest contribution to the ongoing scholarly debate on ancient Jewish prayer texts by focusing on a limited set of prayer texts, scil., a small number of those that have been preserved in Greek. There are many Jewish prayer texts in Greek, those in the Greek apocrypha and pseudepigrapha,³ those in Josephus,⁴ those in Philo,⁵ but these will not be dealt with here. The prayers that have been inserted into the Greek versions of the book of Esther also fall outside the scope of the

¹ For bibliographies the reader is referred to G. Freyburger & L. Pernot (eds.), *Bibliographie analytique de la prière grecque et romaine (1898–1998)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), with the supplementary volume F. Chapot & B. Laurot (eds.), *Bibliographie analytique de la prière grecque et romaine. Supplément années 1999–2003* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008). M. Harding, “The Lord’s Prayer and Other Prayer Texts of the Greco-Roman Era: A Bibliography,” in J. H. Charlesworth, M. Harding & M. Kiley (eds.), *The Lord’s Prayer and Other Prayer Texts of the Greco-Roman Era* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1994) 103–257. See also the bibliographies on the many individual prayers in M. Kiley et al. (eds.), *Prayer from Alexander to Constantine: A Critical Anthology* (London: Routledge, 1997). There is also a good bibliography in H. Löhr, *Studien zum frühchristlichen und frühjüdischen Gebet* (WUNT 160; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003) 532–614.

² See, e.g., J. Tabory (ed.), *From Qumran to Cairo: Studies in the History of Prayer* (Jerusalem: Orhot, 1999); E. G. Chazon (ed.), *Liturgical Perspectives: Prayer and Poetry in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (STDJ 48; Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2003); D. K. Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, & Festival Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (STDJ 27; Leiden: Brill: 1998).

³ See N. B. Johnson, *Prayer in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha* (SBLMS 2; Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature, 1948). Johnson’s book was out of print but is currently available through the SBL Press as a print-on-demand edition.

⁴ See T. Jonquière, *Prayer in Josephus* (AJEC 70; Leiden: Brill, 2007).

⁵ See J. Leonhardt, *Jewish Worship in Philo of Alexandria* (TSAJ 84; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001).

present book, not only because they will receive their own treatment in a commentary on the Greek Esther but also because this volume focuses on prayers that show signs of independent use in Jewish life. The same caveat applies of course to the prayers in the book of Judith and other apocryphal and pseudepigraphical works which appear to have been written as part of their narrative contexts. The Prayer of Azariah, however, which is part of the Greek Daniel, is dealt with here because it is clear from its contents that its setting in Daniel is not original; it is loosely tied to the context;⁶ and it may be safely assumed that originally it circulated independently, as is also the case with the Prayer of Manasseh that is dealt with in the present commentary as well. The Prayer of Jacob, too, is an independent composition that was preserved on a Berlin papyrus (PGM XXIIb). Other independent prayer compositions on papyrus are the communal prayer on Pap. Egerton 5 (now in London), and the prayer for protection against unclean spirits on Pap. Fouad 203 (now in Cairo). An excerpt from the narrative text entitled the “Prayer of Joseph”, although not itself a prayer, is included as an appendix because it sheds light on interpretive traditions related to the Prayer of Jacob. All these will be dealt with in the present work. A special case is the inscription on a tombstone from Rheneia which consists of a Jewish prayer for vengeance, a unique prayer on stone that could not be left outside this volume. The largest set of independent prayers is that of the six synagogal prayers that have been incorporated in a christianized form into the late fourth-century Church Order called *Apostolic Constitutions* and are now generally regarded as originally Jewish compositions. Altogether these are twelve prayer texts, with a chronological range from the second century B.C.E. to the third or fourth century C.E. Since most of the scholarly attention tends to be paid to the material in Hebrew and Aramaic (mainly the prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls, the rabbinic literature, and the corpus of mystical Hekhalot treatises), these Greek prayers from Jewish diaspora communities deserve a treatment in some more detail than they have hitherto received.

The assembled collection reflects a wide range of early Jewish prayers in terms of contents and geographical provenance. Such diversity is an important dimension of the commentary in itself. Seen from the lenses of later rabbinic Judaism, the prayers offer a syncretistic diversity. Including such a

⁶ In this respect it differs from the other prayer inserted in the same chapter, the elaborate song of praise by the three young men who were saved from the burning oven (Dan 3:52–90 LXX and Theodotion), which probably represents an adaptation of an existing hymn of praise as a result of deliverance for the purposes of inclusion in the book of Daniel and therefore falls outside the scope of this commentary.

range of prayers allows evaluation of early Jewish prayer not through the more narrow retrospective standpoint of evolved Judaism or Christianity in the present day, but provides a glimpse across the broad spectrum of Jewish belief and practice in Graeco-Roman antiquity. So for example, considering the Prayer of Jacob found in the Greek magical papyri, with its view of human angelification resulting from the prayer ritual, side-by-side with one of the Hellenistic Synagogal prayers, AC 7.35.1–10, which includes an early version of the angelic praise of the Qedushah, provides a broader perspective on the role of angels in the ritual life of Jewish antiquity than has been considered. Contrasting views of Jewish theodicy are on display in the prayers from Rheneia set alongside the Prayer of Manasseh.

Many studies have been shaped by the interests of a particular religious tradition or a confessional tilt.⁷ One trend, for instance, has been to isolate the origins of a particular prayer tradition whether in Judaism or Christianity.⁸ In scholarship on early Jewish prayer, a focus has been to isolate the origins and development of the fixed prayer forms of the Amidah, though the relation of Jewish prayer to other aspects of Jewish observance in antiquity has also been explored.⁹ Christian liturgical scholarship has focused on the origins of eucharistic and baptismal prayers which are presumed to be rooted in Jewish prayer practices.¹⁰ Other scholarship on prayer in antiquity has considered only biblical prayers, whether in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament or New Testament.¹¹ Our collection is broader in scope.

⁷ For more bibliography on the topics mentioned in notes 8–11, see note 1.

⁸ See, for example, R. A. Werline, *Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism: The Development of a Religious Institution* (SBLEJL 13; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1998) and the three volumes on the origins and development of penitential prayer edited by M. J. Boda, D. K. Falk, and R. A. Werline, *Seeking the Favor of God*, currently being published in the same series.

⁹ The classic study of J. Heinemann remains of seminal importance to the field, *Prayer in the Talmud: Forms and Patterns* (R. Sarason, transl.; SJ 9; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1977). His view that the statutory prayer crystallized gradually has been challenged by the work of Ezra Fleischer; see especially, “The Kedushah of the Amidah and other Kedushot: Historical, Liturgical, and Ideological Aspects,” *Tarbiz* 67 (1998): 301–50 [Hebrew].

¹⁰ P. F. Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

¹¹ M. Greenberg, *Biblical Prose Prayer as a Window to the Popular Religion of Ancient Israel* (Berkeley: University of California, 1983); P. D. Miller, *They Cried to the Lord: The Form and Theology of Biblical Prayer* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1994); S. Balentine, *Prayer in the Hebrew Bible: The Drama of Divine-Human Dialogue*

The authors could offer only so much commentary upon each prayer and interrelate them without going beyond the mandate of the commentary series. Thus there are a number of issues arising from our work on these prayers that suggest avenues for further research, from the significance of Greek as the language of Jewish prayer to the nature of Jewish-Christian interaction that resulted in some of the prayers' adoption in Christian contexts, particularly in light of recent scholarship that has posited various and later "parting of the ways."¹² Most of the scholarship done on early Jewish prayer, including this commentary, has been done within an historical-critical methodological framework. Methods from the social sciences might also fruitfully be employed to explore various ritual contexts and the composition of the prayers and the nature of their use as written texts in oral cultures. These issues and more, we hope may be investigated by scholars who are interested in the results of this commentary.

The two authors of this commentary had the privilege of being able to spend a fellowship year (2006/7) on this project. Together we were able to work on this commentary at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study (NIAS) in Wassenaar. The beautiful surroundings and the intellectually stimulating atmosphere at NIAS have made this not only a fruitful but also an enjoyable year. We thank the superb staff of NIAS for the various forms of support, especially the library staff (Caroline Hagedoorn, Dindy van Maanen, and Erwin Nolet) without whose unfailing help this project could hardly have been brought to completion. We also wish to express our great gratitude to the many colleagues who gave us their expert advice on a wide variety of matters; we list them in a random (i.e., alphabetical) order: Mark Boda (McMaster Divinity), Gideon Bohak (Tel Aviv), George Brooke and the members of the Ehrhard Seminar (Manchester), Esther Chazon (Jerusalem), Edward Dabrowa (Cracow), Daniel Falk (Oregon), David Fiensy (Grayson), Dineke Houtman (Kampen), Jaap Mansfeld (Utrecht), Troy Miller (Memphis), Joseph Mueller (Marquette), Hindy Najman (Toronto), Stefan Reif (Cambridge UK), David Runia (Melbourne), Eileen Schuller

(Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993); J. Koenig, *Rediscovering New Testament Prayer: Boldness and Blessing in the Name of Jesus* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1998; orig. pub., San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1992); O. Cullmann, *Gebet im Neuen Testament* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1994).

¹² E.g., J. Lieu, *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); A. Yoshiko Reed, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of Enochic Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

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Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by D.N. Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
AC	<i>Apostolic Constitutions</i>
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AJEC	Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity
ANET	<i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament</i> . Edited by J. B. Pritchard. 3 rd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969.
APOT	<i>The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by R. H. Charles. 2 vols., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913.
ARW	<i>Archiv für Religionswissenschaft</i>
AzTh	Arbeiten zur Theologie
BAC	Biblioteca de autores cristianos
BCH	<i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</i>
BDAG	Bauer, W., F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3 rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium
BHH	<i>Biblich-historisches Handwörterbuch: Landeskunde, Geschichte, Religion, Kultur</i> . Edited by B. Reicke and L. Rost. 4 vols. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962–1979.
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BS	Biblische Studien
BZ	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CIJ	<i>Corpus inscriptionum judaicarum</i> . Edited by J.-B. Frey, Rome: Pontificio istituto di archeologia cristiana, 2 vols., 1936–1952.
ConBNT	Coniectanea biblica: New Testament Series
CRINT	Compendia rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CSCO	Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium. Edited by I. B. Chabot et al. Paris, 1903.
DACL	<i>Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie</i> . Edited by F. Cabrol. 15 vols. Paris: Letouzey, 1907–1953.
DDD	<i>Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible</i> . Edited by K. van der Toorn, B. Becking, and P. W. van der Horst. 2 nd ed. Leiden: Brill, 1999.
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert

- DK Diels-Kranz (*Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, eds. H. Diels & W. Kranz, 3 vols., Zürich-Hildesheim: Weidmann, 1989)
- DNP *Der neue Pauly: Enzyklopädie der Antike*. Edited by H. Cancik and H. Schneider. Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1996–.
- DSD *Dead Sea Discoveries*
- EDSS *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*
- ErIsr *Eretz-Israel*
- FAT Forschungen zum Alten Testament
- GCS Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten [drei] Jahrhunderte
- GLAJJ *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*. Edited by M. Stern, 3 vols., Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences, 1974–1984.
- GLS Grove Liturgical Study
- HSM Harvard Semitic Monographs
- HSS Harvard Semitic Studies
- HTR *Harvard Theological Review*
- HUCA *Hebrew Union College Annual*
- IDB *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. Edited by B. A. Buttrick. 4 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 1976.
- IG *Inscriptiones graecae*. Editio minor. Berlin, 1924–
- IJO *Inscriptiones judaicae orientis*. Edited by D. Noy, A. Panayotov, W. Ameling, 3 vols., Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004.
- IPM Instrumenta patristica et mediaevalia
- JACE Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, Ergänzungsband
- JBL *Journal of Biblical Literature*
- JE *The Jewish Encyclopedia*. Edited by I. Singer. 12 vols. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1901–1906.
- JECS *Journal of Early Christian Studies*
- JHS *Journal of Hellenic Studies*
- JIGRE *Jewish Inscriptions of Graeco-Roman Egypt*. Edited by W. Horbury and D. Noy, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- JIWE *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe*. Edited by D. Noy. 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993–1995.
- JJS *Journal of Jewish Studies*
- JQR *Jewish Quarterly Review*
- JSHRZ Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit
- JSJ *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods*
- JSJS Journal for the Study of Judaism, Supplement
- JSP *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*
- JSQ *Jewish Studies Quarterly*
- JTS *Journal of Theological Studies*
- KT Kleine Texte für Vorlesungen und Übungen
- LSTS Library of Second Temple Studies
- MGWJ *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*

MKNAW	Mededelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandsche Akademie van Wetenschappen
<i>Mnem.</i>	<i>Mnemosyne</i>
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
<i>NRTb</i>	<i>La nouvelle revue théologique</i>
NTAbh	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OrChrAn	Orientalia christiana analecta
OTL	Old Testament Library
<i>OTP</i>	<i>Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> . Edited by J. H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1983–85.
PACS	Philo of Alexandria Commentary Series
PG	Patrologia graeca [= Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca] Edited by J. P. Migne. 162 vols. Paris 1857–1886
<i>PGL</i>	<i>Patristic Greek Lexicon</i> . Edited by G. W. H. Lampe. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968.
<i>PGM</i>	<i>Papyri graecae magicae: Die griechischen Zauberpapyri</i> . Edited by K. Preisendanz & A. Henrichs. 2 vols. Stuttgart: Teubner, 1973–74.
<i>Phil</i>	<i>Philologus</i>
PTA	Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen
PTS	Patristische Texte und Studien
PVTG	Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti Graece
<i>PW</i>	Pauly-Wissowa (= <i>RE</i>)
<i>RAC</i>	<i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</i> . Edited by T. Klauser et al. Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1950–.
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
<i>RBLG</i>	<i>Repertorio bibliográfico de la Lexicografía griega</i> Edited by P. Boned Colera. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1998.
<i>RE</i>	<i>Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (= <i>PW</i>)
<i>REJ</i>	<i>Revue des études juives</i>
<i>RevQ</i>	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
<i>RGG</i>	<i>Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i>
<i>RGRW</i>	Religions in the Graeco-Roman World
<i>RHE</i>	<i>Revue de l'histoire ecclésiastique</i>
<i>RRJ</i>	<i>Review of Rabbinic Judaism</i>
<i>RTL</i>	<i>Revue théologique de Louvain</i>
<i>SC</i>	Sources chrétiennes. Paris: Cerf, 1943–.
<i>SCS</i>	Septuagint and Cognate Studies
<i>SEJC</i>	Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity
<i>SGRR</i>	Studies in Greek and Roman Religion
<i>SIDIC</i>	<i>Service internationale de documentation judéo-chrétienne</i>
<i>SJ</i>	Studia judaica
<i>SJLA</i>	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity

<i>SPbA</i>	<i>Studia Philonica Annual</i>
<i>SPhilo</i>	<i>Studia Philonica</i>
<i>SR</i>	<i>Studies in Religion</i>
<i>SSU</i>	Studia Semitica Upsalensia
<i>STDJ</i>	<i>Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah</i>
<i>StPB</i>	Studia Post-Biblica
<i>SVF</i>	<i>Stoicorum veterum fragmenta</i> . H. von Arnim. 4 vols. Leipzig, 1903–1924
<i>SVTP</i>	Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha
<i>TBN</i>	Themes in Biblical Narrative
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by G. Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964–1976.
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by G. J. Botterweck and D. E. Green. 15 vols. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1974–2006.
<i>TSAJ</i>	Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism
<i>TWNT</i>	<i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</i> . Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1932-79.
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>VC</i>	<i>Vigiliae christianae</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
<i>WUNT</i>	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>
<i>ZPE</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

I. The Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers
in the *Apostolic Constitutions*

Introduction

A. *The Apostolic Constitutions*

A.1. *Nature and origin of the Apostolic Constitutions*

The so-called *Apostolic Constitutions* (henceforth AC) is a fourth century church order.¹ The document is a collection of materials on ecclesiastical law that is widely believed to have been compiled in Syria in the final decades of the fourth century, probably by the same (semi-)Arian author who also interpolated the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch and wrote the Arian commentary on Job. The work consists of eight books and deals with the following subjects: Christian behaviour (bk. 1); ecclesiastical hierarchy (bk. 2); widows (bk. 3); orphans (bk. 4); martyrs (bk. 5); schisms (bk. 6); Christian morality and initiation (bk. 7); charismata, the eucharist, ordinations, and discipline (bk. 8). Many other important subjects are discussed as subthemes throughout the work.

Being a compilation of older material, it has incorporated three major sources: the *Didascalia Apostolorum*² (books 1–6); the *Didache*³ (bk. 7.1–32); and the *Traditio Apostolica* (or *Diataxeis of the Holy Apostles*) by Hippolytus⁴ (bk. 8.3–45). Other, minor sources include rules pertaining to Christian initiation (bk. 7.39–45); a list of bishops (bk. 7.46); Christian prayer formularies (bk. 7.47–49); a document on charismata (bk. 8.1–2);

¹ The best recent discussion of the AC is the almost 200 pages of introduction to the Sources Chrétiennes edition by M. Metzger, *Les Constitutions Apostoliques*, vol. 1 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1985), 13–93, and vol. 2 (1986), 10–110. Vol. 3 (1987) contains the text and French translation of books 7 and 8 into which the prayer texts under discussion here have been incorporated. See further also D. A. Fiensy, *Prayers Alleged to Be Jewish. An Examination of the Constitutiones Apostolorum* (BJS 65; Chico: Scholars Press, 1985), 19–41; B. Steimer, *Vertex Traditionis. Die Gattung der altchristlichen Kirchenordnungen* (BZNW 63; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1992), 114–133; E. M. Synek, “*Dieses Gesetz ist gut, heilig, es zwingt nicht ...*” *Zum Gesetzesbegriff der Apostolischen Konstitutionen* (Vienna: Plöchl-Druck, 1997). Steimer and Synek have good bibliographies of the older publications on the AC.

² First half of the third century, Syria.

³ End of the first or beginning of the second century, Syria.

⁴ Beginning of the third century, Rome.

and the so-called *Apostolic Canons* (bk. 8.47). As will be seen in the next chapter, the prayers in bk. 7.33–38 are believed to have been based upon a Jewish liturgical prayerbook. The whole is pseudepigraphically presented as “regulations” (*diatagai*) addressed by “the apostles and presbyters to all believers from among the nations” and mediated in this publication by Clement (1, *Prol.*).

Since some of his major sources are known to us (scil. the *Didache* and the *Didascalia*), we are in a position to see the compiler at work. He does not take over the text of his sources unaltered. We can observe omissions, additions, insertions, corrections, etc.⁵ Sometimes these are minor; at other times they are major redrafts.⁶ Especially prominent are the many biblical quotations – sometimes whole chains of quotations, e.g., 7.1 – and allusions inserted by the compiler into his sources. But also otherwise he often partly but drastically rewrites and rephrases the text of his predecessors, of which 2.30–41 is a good example (there a long passage from the *Didascalia* on the roles of deacons, priests, and bishops has been drastically recast, among other things by the insertion of many biblical quotes).⁷ The longer interpolations are especially important because they enable us to get to know the compiler’s own ideas and his preferred vocabulary. Metzger neatly sums up the results of his analysis of AC as follows:

[L]a compilation a été formée:

1. par la collection de trois documents principaux, *Didascalie*, *Didachè* et *Diataxeis* (“*Tradition apostolique*”), qui forment comme la trame de tout l’ouvrage;
2. par l’insertion, dans cette trame, de traditions euhologiques, conciliaires et autres;

⁵ Since the *Didascalia* is by far the most extensive source used by the compiler, F. X. Funk has presented the text of both documents (the *Didascalia* in its Latin version) on facing pages in order to facilitate comparison in his monumental work, *Didascalia et Constitutiones apostolorum* (2 vols; Paderborn: Ferdinand Schoeningh, 1905). Funk underlined the passages where the compiler deviated from his sources.

⁶ For our purposes it is important to see, e.g., that the prayers in *Didache* 9–10 have been thoroughly modified in AC 7.25–27. See also the remark in H. van de Sandt & D. Flusser, *The Didache: Its Jewish Sources and its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity* (CRINT III/5; Assen: Royal van Gorcum – 2002), 27: “The basic text of the *Didache* has been amended thoroughly [sc., by the compiler of the AC]” (with many examples).

⁷ See Funk, ed., *Didascalia et Constitutiones apostolorum*, vol. I, 112–133.

3. par l'intégration d'extraits et de citations d'autres écrits, principalement la Bible et la littérature clémentine;
4. par des interpolations nombreuses, d'importance variable et provenant de la main du compilateur.⁸

An important feature of the AC is the attention paid to the continuity and discontinuity between Jewish and Christian institutions. By his incorporation of the *Didascalia* the compiler adopts that document's theory of two Lawgivings: the first one was that of the Decalogue, the second one concerned the cultic and ritual rules that were only given as a punishment after Israel's sin with the Golden Calf.⁹ This Second Legislation was only of a temporary nature according to the *Didascalia*, and it was abrogated by Jesus Christ. The compiler of the AC would at first sight seem to be less radical in his rejection of the Second Lawgiving. Especially in AC 6.19 he states clearly that Christ did not abrogate the Law of Moses since both the Law and the Prophets are good, holy and salvificatory, and Law and Gospel are not contradictory.¹⁰ On the other hand, at the same time the author states that this good and holy Law is only what God spoke to Israel before the idolatry with the Golden Calf, i.e., the Decalogue. The other commandments are inventions of foolish people (cf. AC 6.27.7); they are *desmoi* (bonds, restrictions) or *epeisakta* (alien things, brought in from outside). "Die Tendenz des Redaktors geht aber gegenüber der *Didasc[alia]* dahin, auch in den *desmoi* etwas (relativ) Positives zu sehen. Die Positivität, die er ihnen abgewinnt, liegt darin, daß auch sie von Gott kommen und erzieherische Zwecke erfüllen sollen."¹¹ This tension between the negative ("inventions of foolish people") and relatively positive (God's pedagogical aims) attitude towards the non-Decalogue parts of the Torah is never solved in the AC. The most recent authority on this subject summarizes this 'Mittelweg' of our compiler as follows: "Bejahung der Tora gegenüber allen Tendenzen, die Kontinuität zum Erbe Israels in Frage zu stellen, bei gleichzeitigem Verzicht auf volle Toraobservanz im traditionellen jüdischen Sinn in Fortführung der in der Apostelgeschichte

⁸ I, 31. For a list of interpolations see H. Leclercq, "Constitutions Apostoliques," *DACL* 3 (1914): 2735–36.

⁹ See, e.g., P. W. van der Horst, "I Gave Them Laws that Were not Good": Ezekiel 20:25 in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity," in his *Hellenism – Judaism – Christianity: Essays on Their Interaction* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994), 122–145, esp. 138–140; in the second edition (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 135–156, esp. 147–150.

¹⁰ See on this theme now especially Synek, "*Dieses Gesetz ist gut*" 33–39.

¹¹ Synek, "*Dieses Gesetz ist gut*" 53.

breit ausgeführten Entscheidung zur Dispens von der Beschneidung und Teilen der Reinheitstora.”¹²

The compiler also identifies the Law of Moses with the law of nature, a procedure found already before his time in authors such as Philo of Alexandria (e.g., *Opif.* 3).¹³ The order of nature and creation is the order of the Torah of Moses. It is therefore, in a sense, inborn or implanted (*emphytos*, 8.9.8; 8.12.18) in all humankind; it is “an aid to the natural” (*boêtheia tou physikou*, 6.19.2). But that, of course, does not apply to the Torah material that is part of the Second Legislation. To suggest on the basis of all this that the AC could be regarded as a ‘Christian Talmud,’ as has recently been done,¹⁴ is, therefore, not warranted, it would seem. In spite of the parallels of both a structural and a conceptual nature that can be pointed out, the differences between the two corpora remain too great to justify such a designation.¹⁵ It should also not be forgotten that the judaising Christians in the compiler’s environment were one of the main targets of his polemics.

Even though the compiler presents his document as the “proceedings” of a meeting of the apostles in mid-first century Jerusalem, its late fourth century Syrian provenance underlies no doubt for the following reasons.¹⁶ Firstly, the names of the months derive from the Syro-Macedonian calendar. Secondly, the AC’s main sources are of Syrian provenance (*Did.*, *Didasc.*). Thirdly, the AC presupposes the existence of a sizeable Christian community in a large city with an episcopal see, Antioch being the most likely candidate in view of various elements in credal formulas and liturgical practices that are known to be of Antiochian provenance (especially the so-called ‘Clementine Liturgy’ in 8.5–15)¹⁷ and because the polemics against judaising forms of Christianity fit in exactly with what we know from other sources concerning Christianity in Antioch in the late fourth century. Fourthly, theo-

¹² Synek, “*Dieses Gesetz ist gut*” 54. The reference is to the so-called Apostolic Decree in Acts 15.

¹³ M. Bockmuehl, “Natural Law in Second Temple Judaism,” *VT* 45 (1995): 17–44, on Philo especially 39–42; H. Najman, “The Law of Nature and the Authority of the Mosaic Law,” *SPhA* 11 (1999): 55–73; J. W. Martens, *One God, One Law: Philo of Alexandria on the Mosaic and Greco-Roman Law* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2003), esp. 118–121.

¹⁴ Synek, “*Dieses Gesetz ist Gut*” 79.

¹⁵ Synek’s formulation “Kirchenordnung als Toraauslegung” (84) is less problematic.

¹⁶ See on this in more detail esp. Metzger, vol. I 54–62.

¹⁷ See, e.g., F. van den Paverd, *Zur Geschichte der Messliturgie in Antiocheia und Konstantinopel gegen Ende des vierten Jahrhunderts* (Orientalia Christiana Analecta 187; Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1970), 155–6 *et aliter*; see Index 549.

logical formulations and descriptions of ecclesiastical institutions reflect a post-Constantinian situation. Many liturgical, heortological and symbolic details strongly suggest a date around 380 C.E. For details the reader may be referred to Metzger's treatment, but for the present purpose – the study of the Jewish prayer texts in the AC – they are not relevant and need no further scrutiny, the more so since the location in Antioch and the dating in or around 380 is well-nigh a *communis opinio* among specialists in the field of church orders.¹⁸ For similar reasons it is not necessary to enter the discussion of whether or not the compiler is identical to the Arian, semi-Arian or Neo-Arian interpolator of the Ignatian correspondence and the author of the Arian commentary to Job in the name of a certain Julian (which, if so, would confirm a late fourth century Antiochian provenance, and likely it is).¹⁹

A.2. *The manuscripts of the AC*

The textual transmission and the manuscript situation of AC has recently been excellently described by Marcel Metzger in his new critical edition of this document in the *Sources chrétiennes* series.²⁰ In the following paragraphs we will mainly summarize the results of his research.

There are twenty-three manuscripts, varying in age from the second half of the eighth to the beginning of the eighteenth century, of which some of the more recent ones are based upon the *editio princeps*.²¹ Moreover, there is an important Latin fragment of the 5th-6th century, but we can leave that out of account because it does not cover the passages that are the subject of the present investigation. Of the Greek manuscripts as well, some can be disregarded for the same reason: they do not contain the chapters with the prayer texts. Then we are left with the following nine manuscripts:

¹⁸ E.g., Steimer, *Vertex traditionis* 120: “In der Forschung besteht bezüglich dieser Frage schon lange Konsens.”

¹⁹ For the commentary on Job see D. Hagedorn, *Der Hiobkommentar des Arianers Julian* (PTS 14; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1973); at pp. XLI-LII Hagedorn argues for the identity of the author of the commentary with that of the compiler of the AC. Although most scholars observe a (Neo-) Arian tendency in the AC, Metzger now again denies it, II: 10–39.

²⁰ Metzger, I: 63–93. There is also a description of the manuscripts in F. X. Funk's *Didascalia et Constitutiones apostolorum*, vol. I, xxiv–xxxv.

²¹ By F. Turrianus in Venice 1563. The text of this edition has been reprinted in J. D. Mansi's *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, vol. I (Florence: A. Zatta, 1759), 257–596, and in J. P. Migne's *PG*, vol. I (1857): 509–1156.

- a (Vaticanus gr. 839), 10th cent.
- c (Athous Vatopedinus 171), 10th cent.
- d (Vaticanus gr. 1506), 11th cent.
- e (Vaticanus gr. 2089), 11th cent.
- h (Hierosolymitanus S. Crucis 3), 10th/11th cent.
- s (Atheniensis B. N. 1435), 12th cent.
- v (Vindobonensis Palatinus, Hist. gr. 73), 10th cent.
- y (Vindobonensis Palatinus, Hist. gr. 64), 16th cent.
- z (Parisinus B. N. gr. 931), 16th cent.

F. Turrianus' (= Torres') *editio princeps* of 1563 was mainly based upon ms a, though he consulted two other mss as well.²² P. A. de Lagarde's 1862 edition²³ took also v, y and z into account as far as the prayer texts were concerned. F. X. Funk's epoch-making edition of 1905 was based upon knowledge of most of the manuscripts now available, although he still did not use c and s, and he has also been criticized for underrating the importance of some mss (notably d and m) and for systematically relegating readings with an Arian ring to the apparatus instead of printing them in the text.²⁴ M. Metzger's new edition of 1985/87 is certainly the most complete and thorough in terms of manuscript coverage and the most reliable edition so far. Metzger offers, as one of his reviewers wrote, "the only satisfactory discussion of the AC's manuscript tradition available,"²⁵ even though the same scholar added that Metzger's edition is a complement to Funk's rather than a replacement. Metzger's textual decisions are informed and mostly sound, and his critical apparatus is the most complete one we have.

On the basis of the textual affinities among the various mss, Metzger conveniently groups them into four families: R, H, N, and M. None of the above mentioned mss belongs to family R. To family H belong mss a, c, h, y, and z. It contains three of the oldest and most important mss (Metzger calls the late mss y and z 'Mischtexte' since they alternate in their affinity between a on the one hand and c and h on the other). Mss d, e and s belong to

²² Prior to Turrianus' edition, C. Capelli published some fragments of a Latin translation of the AC based upon ms a (Ingolstadt 1546); see B. Steimer, *Vertex traditionis* 114.

²³ P. A. de Lagarde, *Constitutiones apostolorum* (Osnabrück: Otto Zeller, 1966; reprint of the Leipzig 1862 edition).

²⁴ See C. H. Turner's series of articles in *JTS* 13 (1911/12): 492–510; 15 (1913/14): 53–65; 16 (1914/15): 54–61, 523–538; 21 (1919/20): 160–168; 31 (1929/30): 128–141. Also Metzger, I: 76, and Steimer, *Vertex traditionis* 123.

²⁵ T. A. Kopocek in a review of Metzger in *JTS* 38 (1987): 210.

family N and reflect another stage of textual development, but these mss go back to a very early archetype (probably from the fifth century). Family M comprises ms v (together with other mss) and has an intermediate position between the two other families as far as textual affinity is concerned, although the dependence upon family H seems to preponderate. In a sense this ms can thus also be regarded as a ‘Mischtext.’ The families N and H seem to go back to ancient archetypes. So where H and N agree, we may be very close to the ‘Urtext.’ At page 78 of vol. I of his edition Metzger draws up a *stemma codicum* in which all the relationships between mss and families are clearly presented. Apart from the affinities among mss, some of them exhibit also their own specific tendencies: a expands the number of biblical quotations and applies corrections of a theological nature; c, d, e, h, and s also have a tendency towards theological corrections;²⁶ v, y, and z realise ‘Mischtexte.’ All this has to be taken into account when problems of textual criticism are discussed. There are not many serious problems, fortunately.

B. History of Research on the Jewish Prayers

It is over a century ago that the Jewish scholar Kaufmann Kohler²⁷ was the first to draw attention to the Jewish character of some of the prayers in books 7 and 8 of the AC.²⁸ It was his intention in that contribution to demonstrate the antiquity and Essene origin (in the Persian period!) of what he called the ‘Grundtypus’ of the synagogal liturgy,²⁹ and for that reason he

²⁶ These corrections are mainly aimed at playing down the arianising or subordinationist tendencies of the compiler.

²⁷ On Kohler as a scholar of Jewish liturgy see R. Sarason, “On the Use of Method in the Modern Study of Jewish Liturgy,” in W. S. Green (ed.), *Approaches to Ancient Judaism*, vol. 1 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1978), 97–172, here 109–112.

²⁸ In his otherwise strange article “Über die Ursprünge und Grundformen der synagogalen Liturgie,” *MGWJ* 38 (1893): 441–451, 489–497. In a groundbreaking study by F. X. Funk (*Die apostolischen Konstitutionen. Eine litterarisch-historische Untersuchung* [Rottenburg: n.p., 1891]), which appeared only two years before Kohler’s first contribution, there is not yet to be found the slightest suspicion of the Jewish origin of these prayers.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 448: “[D]er Grundtypus aller unserer Gebete [reicht] auf die vormacedonische, also persische Kulturepoche zurück.” Persian influences played an important role in this process and these were mediated by the Essenes (“die essäischen Genossenschaften,” 448). He assumes that Aristotle’s pupil Theophrastus once attended an Essene morning service in Jericho (451)! At p. 492 he calls the Pater Noster “ein

mentions only in passing ‘die christlich-essenische Liturgie’ (447) in AC 7.35 and 8.12 without giving any substantiation for his reasons to regard these prayers as essentially Jewish. But later he would expatiate on precisely that aspect. In an article he contributed ten years later to *The Jewish Encyclopedia*,³⁰ he set out to demonstrate that not only the two passages mentioned above, but also various others in these two books were of Jewish origin and that these prayers contain older versions of several *berakhot* of the Amidah (the Eighteen Benedictions) in an only slightly christianized form (he refers to 7.26; 33; 34; 35; 36; 37; 38; 8.12; 37). In particular the prayers of book 7 were regarded by him as a modified form of the Seven Benedictions for Shabbat and festivals.³¹ He concludes that “as all these prayers go back to pre-Christian times, they are of incalculable importance to the student of Jewish and Christian liturgy” (594).

Twenty years later Kohler again came back to this subject in a long contribution to *HUCA* in 1924.³² After 30 years Kohler still sticks to his Essene hypothesis and he complains about the neglect his ideas about the Jewish nature of these prayers have suffered on the part of other scholars, notably Elbogen (410). He then tries to demonstrate his case *in extenso* by providing all of AC 7.33–38 in English translation, adding many notes and comments intended to show the Jewish origin of these prayers and how they were christianized by various changes and additions.³³ Finally, in a posthumously published book, *The Origins of the Synagogue and the Church*,³⁴ he once more returns to his favourite topic. Pointing out several Jewish formulas such as “the God of our holy and perfect fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” and “the Law which Thou hast planted in our souls,” he stresses that chapters 33–38 of AC 7 “contain the Seven Benedictions of the

altessenisches Kaddischgebet” and at p. 497 he asserts that Philo “ohne Zweifel Essäer war.” All this is typical of the view of the Essenes that was prevalent in the 19th century, on which see S. Wagner, *Die Essener in der wissenschaftlichen Diskussion vom Ausgang des 18. bis zum Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts* (BZAW 79; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1960); on Kohler *ibid.* 223–224.

³⁰ “Didascalia,” *JE* 4 (1903): 593–594.

³¹ Book 7 § 33 ~ first benediction, § 34 ~ second benediction, § 35 ~ third benediction, § 36 ~ fourth benediction, § 37 ~ fifth benediction, § 38 ~ sixth benediction. Book 8 § 37 ~ seventh benediction. The final equation was later dropped by Kohler.

³² “The Origin and Composition of the Eighteen Benedictions with a Translation of the Corresponding Essene Prayers in the Apostolic Constitutions,” *HUCA* 1 (1924): 387–425.

³³ This translation with notes is to be found at pp. 411–425.

³⁴ *The Origins of the Synagogue and the Church* (New York: Macmillan, 1929), 250–259, esp. 257–258.

ancient Jewish Ritual turned into a new shape by Greek-speaking, probably Essene, Jews, but christianized by a few verbal changes or additions” (257).³⁵

In 1915 the German Protestant scholar Wilhelm Bousset published a lengthy study of the prayer texts in the AC, apparently without any knowledge of the contributions that Kohler made in this field in the two preceding decades.³⁶ However regrettable Bousset’s neglect of Kohler’s work may be from a scholarly point of view, it does give us the opportunity to see that completely independently from one another a Jewish and a Christian scholar came to much the same conclusions regarding the Jewish origin and nature of these Christian prayers. Bousset begins by pointing out that AC 7.35 is “gar nichts anderes als die charakteristische Form der Keduscha in der jüdischen Liturgie” (436),³⁷ especially in the version in the *Yotser* (the blessing recited before the Shema in the morning). He points out that especially the collocation of the quotations of Isa 6:3 and Ezek 3:12 in both texts (also attested in *t. Ber.* 1.9) cannot be due to coincidence. There must be some connection between the two. He then goes on to demonstrate that AC 7.36 is an originally Jewish prayer for Shabbat comparable with the Kiddush prayer or the Shabbat Musaph prayer and that the Christian interpolations are easily discernible because they have been so clumsily and awkwardly inserted.³⁸ AC 7.37 and 38 equally show their Jewish character by their list of exclusively Old Testament heroes of faith, into the second of which Jesus has been interpolated again in a clumsy way. AC 7.34 has a striking parallel in AC 8.12³⁹ and the two prayers undoubtedly draw on a common source, namely a Jewish creation hymn that interpreted Genesis 1 in a Stoic sense. However, “wir wissen nicht, was für eine Stellung, Sinn und Zweck es [the prayer] im jüdischen Gottesdienst und liturgischem Gebrauch gehabt hat” (464). Finally Bousset discusses AC 7.33, an undoubtedly Jew-

³⁵ Here he also repeats his thesis that AC 7.26 contains an originally Jewish prayer.

³⁶ *Eine jüdische Gebetssammlung im siebenten Buch der apostolischen Konstitutionen*, Nachrichten der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philologisch-historische Klasse, 1915, 435–489; reprinted in his *Religionsgeschichtliche Studien* (ed. A. F. Verheule; Leiden: Brill, 1979), 231–286.

³⁷ References are to the pages of the original 1915 publication. Since these page numbers are also given by Verheule in the margin of the reprint in *Religionsgeschichtliche Studien*, readers will easily find the references there.

³⁸ Especially the line in the closing paragraph which states, after all the praise of Shabbat, that the Day of the Lord (=Sunday) is much more excellent.

³⁹ Bousset, *Gebetssammlung* 451–454, prints the texts in parallel columns. *Ibid.* 455: “Es kann keinem Zweifel unterliegen, daß diese beiden Gebete im VII. und VIII. Buch der Konstitutionen Redaktionen desselben Textes sind.”

ish prayer, if only because of the formula “God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,” that is so strongly reminiscent of the Amidah, and the repeated mention of these three patriarchs further on in the prayer. Moreover, the use of ὄραματισμός (“vision”) and συνθήκη (“covenant”) in §4 is an indication for the composer’s use of Aquila’s Bible translation, again a confirmation of the Jewish provenance of the prayer.⁴⁰ Apart from that, the use of Aquila’s translation is also a chronological pointer: the prayer(s) must derive from a period after the first half of the second century C.E.⁴¹

So these prayer texts are important witnesses to a form of Hellenistic Judaism of the second century and later and to its world of thought. AC 7.33–38 “stellt wahrscheinlich bereits eine jüdische Gebetssammlung dar, die der Bearbeiter in sehr naiver und dankenswert geringer Umarbeitung in christliche Gebete verwandelt hat” (469). Bousset suspected that the ‘Sitz im Leben’ of the prayer collection was the instruction of proselytes, but he admits that it is only a guess (“nur als Vermutung,” 470). Thereafter, however, Bousset proceeds beyond Kohler in suggesting that also several prayers in book 8 of the AC have a Jewish origin. He wants to prove that “die gesamte Gebetsliturgie des achten Buches von jüdischem Einfluß, d.h. von unserer Gebetssammlung beherrscht ist” (471–472). Since his main contention is that some ten prayers (or parts of prayers) in book 8 are based upon the prayers of book 7 or used the same source as book 7 did, we can leave aside this part of his discussion for the moment.⁴² Bousset concludes by saying that these Jewish prayer texts are “ein Dokument von geradezu einzig dastehender Wichtigkeit für die Geschichte des nachchristlichen griechischen Diasporajudentums” (487). The most important aspect is that the prayers demonstrate that also after 135 C.E. there still existed a Greek-speaking Diaspora Judaism which had a Greek liturgy. “In den vorliegenden Gebeten präsentiert sich ein Judentum im Gewand griechischer Sprache, tief berührt von hellenistischem Geiste, das z.T. (...) eine Fortentwicklung über Philo hinaus zeigt und im Besitz einer

⁴⁰ At p. 466 Bousset also notes the use of Σιναι̃ instead of Σιναι̃ (35:4) and of Φασσα̃ instead of Φασσεκ (37:3), both being Aquilan words. For the rest, however, the real quotations are from the LXX, which Bousset suspects come from the Christian interpolator.

⁴¹ At pp. 466–469 Bousset points out the relevance of the fact that in 7.33 the concept of *gnôsis* plays an important role; he there speculates about a Judaism that on the basis of Gen 15 tried to establish the relation between *gnôsis* and *pistis*.

⁴² The prayers in book 8 he discusses are 5.1–4; 6.5; 9.8–9; 12.6–27; 15.7–9; 37.1–4; 37.5–7; 38.4–5; 39.3–4; 41.4–5. A useful synoptic chart with the lists of Kohler, Bousset, and Goodenough can be found in Fiensy, *Prayers Alleged to Be Jewish* 11.

griechischen Liturgie ist" (487). It should be added here that, even though Bousset goes further than Kohler in identifying Jewish prayers in AC, he does not identify any of them with the Seven Benedictions for Shabbat and the festival days.⁴³

Twenty years later Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough attempted to draw a picture of the cultural and religious milieu in which these prayer texts came into being. In his famous book, *By Light, Light: The Mystic Gospel of Hellenistic Judaism*,⁴⁴ he devotes a long chapter to what he calls 'The Mystic Liturgy.'⁴⁵ He is grateful to Bousset (but does not mention Kohler!) for having brought to light a body of liturgy that is "strikingly appropriate to the thesis of this book" (306), this thesis being that in the Hellenistic and Roman period there was a strand of Judaism that was both strongly hellenised and strongly mystic.⁴⁶ He then goes on by presenting sixteen texts dealt with by Bousset in an English translation, followed by a discussion. In the translation, Christian interpolations are indicated by italics. He begins by dealing with Bousset's parade horse, AC 7.35, with its striking parallel to the Qedushah, and then moves on to the other fragments, the discussion being largely devoted to marking the Christian interpolations which, like Bousset, he regards as limited and easily identifiable, and to indicating the mystic character of much of what is said in these prayers. Goodenough's concept of 'Mystic Judaism' (or 'the Jewish Mystery') induces him to regard as Jewish even a number of phrases that Bousset regarded as Christian interpolations⁴⁷ and even some prayer texts that Bousset had excluded as being Christian compositions.⁴⁸ Goodenough regards all these texts as "the product of specifically mystic Judaism" (336). For example, the denial of God's spatiality and temporality in AC 8.15.7 is typically Philonic

⁴³ In 1925 W. O. E. Oesterley briefly stated in his *The Jewish Background of the Christian Liturgy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), 138, that AC 8.11.5 is based on the benediction *Abavah*, 8.12.8 on the *Yotser*, 8.12.24 on the *Ge'ullah*, and 8.12.27 on the *Qedushah*. He did not deal with the prayers of book 7.

⁴⁴ (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1935), 306–358.

⁴⁵ For Goodenough's view of the Jewish Mystery see R. S. Eccles, *Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough: A Personal Pilgrimage* (Biblical Scholarship in North America 11; Chico: Scholars Press, 1985), 37–65.

⁴⁶ He more or less divides Hellenistic Judaism into 'normative literalists' on the one hand and 'allegorists or mystics' on the other. At p. 345 he says that the mysticism of our prayers is of Pharisaic stamp!

⁴⁷ A glaring case can be found at pp. 328–329. At p. 351 Goodenough says that "extreme similarity to early Christian points of view" does not preclude "almost complete accord with the Jewish Mystery."

⁴⁸ These are AC 7.26.1–3; 8.16.3; 8.40.2–4.

and has no parallel in “normative Jewish thought” or “normative Judaism” (336–338). Also the thought that God is not subject to generation and is in need of nothing whatsoever (7.35.9; 8.5.1; 8.12.6; 8.15.7) is Philonic and dubbed ‘mystical’ by Goodenough (337). To put it briefly, most of the Hellenistic philosophical elements in these prayers (God’s unchangeability, His invisibility, His inhabiting an inaccessible light, His Logos and Sophia, etc.) are evidence for mysticism according to this interpretation. We can leave aside this highly controversial way of interpreting these texts.⁴⁹ For the present purpose it suffices to see that in Goodenough the history of research on these texts reaches its maximalist peak.⁵⁰ We will have to wait fifty years before the pendulum swings back to a minimalistic counterpart.

In the meantime various scholars of comparative liturgy (A. Baumstark, H. Lietzmann, E. Werner, L. Bouyer) followed Kohler, Bousset and/or Goodenough by assuming a Jewish origin for many of the prayers in AC 7 and 8, although sometimes with qualifications.⁵¹ The only really dissenting voice was that of B. Botte, who denied, apparently on *a priori* grounds, the possibility that Christians had taken over prayers from the synagogue service. His main point of criticism of Bousset was that this scholar indulged in circular reasoning: He isolated the Christian elements in these Christian prayers as interpolations in order to enable himself to declare the texts to be

⁴⁹ For the problematic nature of Goodenough’s thesis see, e.g., Fiensy, *Prayers Alleged to Be Jewish* 4; cf. also A. D. Nock, “The Question of Jewish Mysteries,” *Gnomon* 13 (1937): 156–165 (repr. in his *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 459–468); M. Smith, “Goodenough’s *Jewish Symbols* in Retrospect,” *JBL* 86 (1967): 53–68.

⁵⁰ The reader is again referred to the convenient chart on p. 11 in David Fiensy’s book *Prayers Alleged to Be Jewish*, where it can be seen that Kohler regarded seven prayer texts in the AC as Jewish, Bousset sixteen, and Goodenough twenty.

⁵¹ See the useful survey (with bibliographical details) in Fiensy, *Prayers Alleged to Be Jewish* 5–9. Also his note 78 at p. 17 and the remark in his article “Redaction History and the Apostolic Constitutions,” *JQR* 72 (1981/82): 294, to the effect that the Kohler-Bousset-Goodenough thesis has enjoyed popularity with scholars of both Jewish and Christian liturgy, such as J. Heinemann, A. Z. Idelsohn, A. Spanier, E. Peterson, H. Lietzmann, L. Bouyer, A. Baumstark, E. Werner, M. Simon, and J. Daniélou. In his *Jewish Liturgy and Its Development* (New York: Schocken Books, 1932; repr. 1967), 301–308, A. Z. Idelsohn has an appendix on ‘Jewish Elements in Early Christian Liturgy’ in which he simply takes over Kohler’s findings (esp. 305–307). M. Simon, *Verus Israel. A Study of the Relations Between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire, AD 135–425* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986 [French original 1948]), 53–60, follows Bousset.

Jewish.⁵² By and large, however, the Kohler/Bousset/Goodenough thesis was accepted, and apart from some minor corrective suggestions,⁵³ no real progress was made in the study of these texts.

In 1985, however, the most important monograph on our texts to date was published. David Fiensy's *Prayers Alleged to Be Jewish* originated as a 1980 Duke University dissertation directed by J. H. Charlesworth. After a survey of research from Kohler to the eighties of the previous century, Fiensy sets out to answer the following questions: (1) Are any of these prayers Jewish? (2) Have Kohler, Bousset, and Goodenough proven their thesis? (3) When, where, and in what circles were the prayers composed? (4) If some or all of these prayers are Jewish, what are the implications for the history of Jewish-Christian relations?

He then first considers the nature of the AC. A late fourth century manual of ecclesiastical life in Syria, as mentioned above, it is a compilation of older material (*Didache*, *Didascalía*, Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition*) some of which is still extant in its independent forms. This is of great importance since it enables us to see what the compiler of AC does to his sources and what his theological tendencies are. It appears that "the compiler was not a slavish collector of sources but an editor as well, and at times it seems, an author. If there were Jewish prayers among his sources, can we now retrieve their original wording? This last question, which is so important, virtually everyone has failed to ask" (27). By way of example he then shows in a synoptic form how the compiler of the AC used and edited two chapters of the *Didache* in the section almost immediately preceding the prayer texts (*Did.* 9–10 in AC 7.25).⁵⁴

In a long chapter (ch. III, pp. 43–127), Fiensy prints the Greek text of all twenty prayers that have been alleged to be of Jewish origin, with an English translation at facing pages and extensive notes. Here he still deals only with the final form of the prayers as we now have them, without attempting

⁵² B. Botte, "Liturgie chrétienne et liturgie juive," *Cahiers Sioniens* 3 (1949): 215–223. See also Botte's critical remarks in a note added to A. Baumstark's *Liturgie comparée*, 3rd ed. by B. Botte (Chevetogne: Editions de Chevetogne, 1953), 12 n.2, where he warns against Baumstark's support for Bousset.

⁵³ E.g., L. Bouyer argued that AC 7.33, 34, and 35 are expanded versions of the first three Benedictions of the Amidah, that 7.36 is a prayer for the sabbath, that 7.37 is a combination of Benedictions 14–17 of the Amidah, and 7.38 an expansion of Benediction 18; see his book *Eucharist: Theology and Spirituality of the Eucharistic Prayer* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966), 121–122. He also regarded the long prayer in 8.12 as a combination of the three prayers in 7.33–35.

⁵⁴ *Prayers* 28–35.

to differentiate between a Jewish and a Christian stratum. Then, in chapter IV (pp. 129–164), he analyses the arguments for originally Jewish prayers in AC. He states right at the outset that he will argue “that Kohler was essentially correct in saying that AC 7.33–38 is a version of the Seven Benedictions, but that Bousset – though he possessed a fine sensitivity in recognizing that AC 7.33–38 is Jewish – used an inadequate methodology in arguing for his thesis, and that this methodology led him to suggest incorrectly that other prayers in AC books seven and eight are Jewish as well” (129). This task is carried out carefully in several steps.

Even though with his Essene theory Kohler misunderstood the milieu of the prayers, his recognition of the Seven Benedictions in AC 7.33–38 was correct.⁵⁵ It cannot be denied that the six prayers in AC 7.33–38 “follow closely the contents of the first six of the Seven Benedictions (the seventh is omitted) and that in the same order” (130). The correspondences are too many to be a case of sheer coincidence. Moreover, the fact that these prayers are not scattered throughout the AC but grouped together corroborates the thesis that we have to do with a source here. So it seems that, as the compiler used the *Didascalia* as his source in books 1–6 and the *Didache* in 7.1–32, he used a set of Jewish prayers as his source in 7.33–38. “Thus, the third source in the AC is a Jewish Greek version of the Seven Benedictions” (131). This case is further strengthened by the fact that, even though there never existed a fixed uniform formulation of these *berakhoth*, there are verbal Greek equivalents to phrases in the Hebrew benedictions. In a chart (on pp. 155–159) Fiensy presents the Hebrew text of the Seven Benedictions in the Babylonian version of R. Amram and the Palestinian version from the Genizah, underlining the verbal parallels to the Greek version. Every benediction turns out to have at least one verbal parallel, apart from thematic equivalents. To give just one clear instance: AC 7.34 ends with a clause in which God is called ὁ ζῶσποιοὺς τῶν νεκρῶν (“reviver of the dead”) just as the corresponding Hebrew benediction (*Gevuroth*) ends with God as *mechayyeh ha-metim*. Fiensy concludes: “These verbal similar-

⁵⁵ The Seven Benedictions for Sabbaths and festival days consist of the first three (*Avoth*, *Gevuroth*, *Qedushat ha-Shem*) and last three *berakhot* (*Avodah*, *Hoda'a*, *Birkat Shalom*) of the Shemoneh Esreh plus a middle benediction for the sanctification of the day (*Qedushat ha-Yom*). So on Sabbaths and *yamim tovim* (except *Rosh ha-Shanah*) the thirteen middle benedictions are replaced by one *berakhah* for that specific day. ‘Replaced’ may not be the right word since it is not impossible that the Seven Benedictions were already in existence before the Amidah got its final form. See J. Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud* (Berlin-New York: W. de Gruyter, 1977), 22, 24, 28–29, 228–229.

ities and equivalents would be striking enough if they appeared in isolated prayers. But, coming as they do in a prayer collection, and appearing for the most part in their proper order, they constitute a convincing corpus of evidence to suggest that AC 7.33–38 is a Greek version of the Hebrew Seven Benedictions” (134).

Fiensy then devotes no less than fifteen pages (134–148) to Bousset’s treatment of the prayers the methodology of which he thinks is deeply flawed. For instance, in his treatment of AC 7.35, Bousset on the one hand rightly demonstrated that the juxtaposition of Isa 6:3 and Ezek 3:12 must be the result of Jewish influence, but on the other hand he failed to consider the possibility that a Christian may have composed a prayer “using the Jewish Kedusha which he had heard recited by Jews” (134). The fact that this prayer contains a Jewish expression does not necessarily make it a Jewish prayer. “Merely finding a Jewish expression – or later on, Jewish ideas – in a prayer which is now Christian does not mean that a Jewish stratum lies underneath” (134). Moreover, in contrast to Kohler, Bousset treated each prayer individually and did not pay attention to the context so that it escaped his notice that AC 7.33–38 is a prayer collection of which the structure and arrangement are exactly paralleled in Jewish liturgy. Further, Bousset paid no attention to the tendency of the redactional work of the compiler. For instance, as to AC 7.36, the Sabbath prayer, he rightly compared it to the Jewish Qiddush prayer for Sabbath, but he failed to consider the possibility that the original prayer was Christian after all since from several passages in the AC as a whole it is apparent that the compiler and his community observed the Sabbath (e.g. 2.36.2: “Keep the Sabbath on account of the one who rested from his work”). Since Sabbath observance seems to have been practised in the compiler’s Christian community (a quite general practice in the early Christian East), it is equally possible that the compiler took an older Christian prayer which extolled the Sabbath, and appended a reference to the superior Sunday because he revered Sunday even more. Still Fiensy does believe that the prayer was originally Jewish, “standing as it does exactly where the Kedushat ha-Yom stands in the Seven Benedictions” (136), but he wants to point out that by neglecting the nature of the compiler’s work as a whole one excludes possibilities that are more than just imaginative.

Bousset’s failure to consider the theological tendencies and literary conventions of the compiler leads also to flawed results in his treatment of AC 7.37 and 38. Here he argues that the fact that the lists of biblical heroes occurring in both prayers do not contain a single NT name (only OT ones, apart from the obvious interpolation of Jesus in 7.38.3) demonstrates that the author of the original prayer was Jewish. However, even

apart from the fact that such lists occur also in other early Christian writings (even in the NT itself, e.g., Heb 11), several of such enumerations occur elsewhere in the, mostly in redactional sections (e.g. 2.55.1; 5.7.12; 6.12.13; 7.5.5). “Thus it is also likely that the lists in AC 7.37 and 38 are redactional” (136). To put it in other words: comparison with other passages in which the compiler “has freely edited, rearranged, recast, and interpolated his sources” makes one wonder about “the extent of redaction of any Jewish prayers which the compiler may have incorporated into his work” (137). This extent may have been much larger indeed. It is an untenable assumption that after having excised all phrases that are obviously and characteristically Christian, we can take everything else in the prayers to be Jewish.

Another of Bousset’s errors is that he did not sufficiently consider the Christian liturgical tradition that was available to the compiler. This led him, e.g., to the assumption that 7.34 and 8.12.9–20 are two different redactions of the same Hellenistic Jewish prayer in which God is thanked for his creation by listing its individual parts (with parallels in Philo). Such prayers, however, are quite common in various Eastern liturgies and other early Christian writings. So these prayers may by and large be Christian compositions. Also Bousset’s argument from the occurrence of words from Aquila’s Bible translation is less than convincing. The word *συνθήκη* turns out to occur in redactional sections of AC as well. As to *φασσᾶ*, this reading is very uncertain and it occurs in a passage that on other grounds is likely to be redactional. Also for the spelling of the word *Σιναι* the mss display a lot of variation and the word occurs in an otherwise LXX quotation! Only *ὄραματισμός* is from Aquila’s version, but does this imply that the whole of AC 7.33 must have been written by a Jew? Could this word not simply have been picked up from Aquila’s version by the compiler himself?

Dealing with the question of whether themes occurring in the prayers that are Jewish are found elsewhere in the AC, especially in its redactional sections, “often leads to the conclusion that the ‘Jewish’ elements are actually favourite themes or literary conventions of the compiler of AC. The emphasis upon Sabbath worship and the listing of OT heroes are examples” (143–144). So many of Bousset’s arguments in favour of his thesis of the Jewish character of these prayers fail to convince. To be sure, the prayers in AC 7.33–38 are Jewish, but not for the reasons given by Bousset, says Fiensy (144). In a final paragraph (144–148) Fiensy criticizes Bousset’s defense of the Jewish origin of the prayers other than those in AC 7.33–38 as being even more weak, based as it is largely upon an argument from silence. Moreover, most of these texts bristle with redactional phrases, which

makes it highly likely that they are by and large creations of the compiler himself.

Understandably, Goodenough's long treatment of the material is only briefly dealt with by Fiensy (148–150). The hesitations that Bousset sometimes voiced clearly are totally absent in Goodenough's work. He even added some more prayers to the list, with utterly weak arguments. For instance, he argued that AC 8.16.3 reads perfectly as a Jewish prayer "if one supplies 'Logos' in place of 'Christ'" (335), but, as Fiensy remarks, "he did not demonstrate why one should do this" (148). This whole prayer contains the favourite themes of the compiler and should therefore be regarded as his composition. This applies in most cases to the other prayers as well. So the scholarship of the great Goodenough was not good enough in this case.

As to the four prayers contained in AC 8.37–39 which both Bousset and Goodenough took to be Jewish, Fiensy admits that, as in the case of the prayer collection in AC 7.33–38, "these prayers contain ideas corresponding to prayers in an existing Hebrew text [scil. *Ma'ariv*, *Abavah*, *Yotser*, *Abavah* after *Yotser*], and they correspond to the order of these prayers in the Hebrew text" (151). However, unlike the case of AC 7.33–38, there are no verbal parallels at all and the central themes are different, and all of these prayers betray again the hand of the compiler in containing several obvious redactional elements.

Fiensy's conclusions are as follows:

First, it is highly probable that AC 7.33–38 is a Jewish Greek version of the Hebrew Seven Benedictions. Secondly, many of the additional prayers that Bousset suggested might be Jewish, probably are the work of the compiler of AC. Goodenough's additional suggested Jewish prayers are either beyond our present scope, or probably also the work of the compiler. (...) Thirdly, the evening and morning prayers in AC 8.37–39 are curiously reminiscent of the prayers accompanying the Shema, but different enough from those prayers and edited sufficiently, that their original Jewishness is far less likely than in the case of AC 7.33–38. Even if we conclude that they were originally Jewish, we could not get at the original form of these prayers (153).

In his chapter on the reconstruction of the original source (165–207), Fiensy operates on the basis of a minimalist approach. He assumes that the compiler faithfully represents his source only in those cases where there exist close similarities between the Greek text and the Babylonian or Palestinian versions of the Seven Benedictions. Where the resemblances are vague and there is evidence of the compiler's vocabulary, it is assumed that

he has completely recast his source at that point. Editorial activity is to be found in (1) material containing explicitly Christian elements, (2) material containing words, phrases, or themes which were favoured by the compiler,⁵⁶ (3) material containing recurrent words, phrases, or themes which only appear elsewhere in books 7 and 8 of the AC, in those portions where the source is unknown,⁵⁷ (4) material discordant with the rest of the text, (5) material strongly reminiscent of Pseudo-Ignatius in expression or idea, and (6) material which has parallels in other Christian liturgies. “When we cannot show that material in AC 7.33–38 meets the six criteria above, we assume that it was in the original” (167). The mistake of previous scholars is that they applied only the first criterion, with the result that they attributed much redactional material to the source.

Fiensy then analyzes the six prayers in AC 7.33–38 with his six criteria and in the end presents the results in a chart (pp. 198, 200). His reconstruction of the original source turns out to be less than two pages of Greek text. A greater contrast with the dozens of pages of text in the Bousset-Goode-nough approach is hardly possible. Fiensy admits that his method inevitably implies that he may have occasionally omitted from the reconstructed source what was in the Jewish stratum (due to the compiler’s recasting of an idea) and that he may have included some material which is redactional (but which fails to meet the six criteria). Still that would not alter the overall picture of the compiler as a person with a heavy editorial hand. Fiensy’s conclusions are very sobering.

In the final chapter on literary and historical questions (209–242), Fiensy discusses the question of whether the Jewish prayers were an oral source or a written document, and he very tentatively concludes that the prayers were written down most probably by a Christian before the time of the compiler. He further discusses the original language of the prayers which he thinks must go back to Hebrew originals (there is syntactical evidence to that effect, he says⁵⁸). He assumes they were composed in Hebrew

⁵⁶ These favourite expressions can be found by studying the way the compiler dealt with the text of the *Didascalia* (in books 1–6), the *Didache* (in 7.1–32), and the *Apostolic Tradition* (in parts of book 8). Fiensy admits, however, that “it is remotely possible that the Jewish source could have furnished the compiler with a theme or expression which he favored” (166).

⁵⁷ There is an element of uncertainty here since the source is unknown, “but repeated appearance of these elements in scattered portions of books seven and eight of AC certainly suggests that the material is redactional” (166).

⁵⁸ Actually, the paragraph on syntactical evidence for a Semitic background of the prayers (214) is very weak.

in Palestine and later translated into Greek, either in Palestine or in the diaspora, for use in the Greek-speaking synagogue, where they were heard, adopted and adapted by Christians who attended synagogue services. This probably took place in Syria since most of AC's sources are known to be of Syrian provenance and the AC themselves were compiled in Syria. Moreover, we know from a variety of other sources that there were intimate contacts between church and synagogue in second to fourth century Syria, especially in Antioch. (The compiler himself also refers several times to the "sin" committed by Christians who attended synagogue services, e.g. 2.61.1)

The date of the composition of the prayers is hard to fix. Fiensy assumes that the *terminus ad quem* should be pushed back to one or two generations before the compiler, that is circa 300 C.E., since in view of his strongly anti-Jewish views he must have been unaware of the Jewish origins of the prayers. The *terminus post quem* must be the first century C.E., since a comparison of the parallels between AC 7.33–38 and Jewish prayer texts from the second century B.C.E. to the first century C.E. on the one hand and those to the Seven Benedictions as we know them from the Genizah fragments and Amram's text on the other shows that the latter are less remote than the former. The parallels from the earlier texts consist of only a few scattered words and their order never corresponds to the Hebrew prayers. This makes it probable that AC reflects a later stage in the development of these prayers. Also the fact that the structure of the Qedushah as reflected in AC 7.35.3 is most probably a post-first-century product confirms a dating to "any time between A.D. 150 and 300" (227), although the fact that Ps 68:18 is connected with the Qedushah here, which seems to reflect a third-century midrashic tradition,⁵⁹ favours the later part of this period. As to the milieu in which the prayers originated, the reconstructed text does not give the slightest clue to either Essene or 'mystical' circles, for all passages that Kohler and Goodenough used for these theories turn out to be redactional. An analysis of the reconstructed text shows that the theology of its composer(s) is "not different in thought from the Hebrew prayers" (231), with the exception of the heavy emphasis on the significance of the number seven in 7.36, which sounds more like Philo.

⁵⁹ Here Fiensy relies on an unpublished paper by D. J. Halperin. See now Halperin's *The Faces of the Chariot. Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel's Vision* (TSAJ 16; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988), 143–149, 288–289, 316–318, 501–504.

Fiensy summarizes his findings as follows:

The reconstructed text yields different results from the text as it stands in the AC. The compiler's source may have been oral or written, and the Greek is based upon a Hebrew source. No better suggestion for provenance than Syria can be offered. The form of the prayers is post-first century, but must have reached Christian circles by at least A.D. 300. Most significant is the different picture of milieu which the reconstruction effects. (...) The theology of the prayers is in the main that of the Hebrew benedictions and of rabbinic thought, and the prayers are probably an example of the Syrian synagogal Sabbath morning service in the late second to early fourth centuries A.D. (234).

In the same year in which Fiensy published his book (1985), there appeared also his introduction to D. R. Darnell's translation of (no less than sixteen of) the prayer texts in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. J. H. Charlesworth, vol. 2, 671–696). Here he covers by and large the same ground as in his dissertation, so there is no need for an extensive summary of this contribution. The policy adopted in the translation is that only the passages that cannot be but Christian are indicated by underlining, but, it is added: "There is considerable difficulty in defining the perimeters of interpolation. They may begin earlier and end later than indicated, but restraint has been applied in underlining" (675).⁶⁰

C. AC's Reasons for Incorporating the Prayers

In the paragraph on the nature of the AC we saw that the compiler of our document on the one hand stresses the continuity between ancient Israel and the Christian church and on the other hand rejects the non-Decalogue

⁶⁰ In light of Fiensy's work it is remarkable that in his new critical edition of AC for the Sources Chrétiennes series Marcel Metzger (who knows Fiensy's book) states regarding the Jewish prayers in 7.33–38: "Les remaniements semblent peu importants: tantôt quelques mots, tantôt la seule mention du Christ, tantôt une phrase entière" (vol. III, 66–67). Even Fiensy's own supervisor, J. H. Charlesworth, wrote only a couple of years before Fiensy published his 1980 dissertation that in the fourteen (!) Jewish prayers in the AC it is "usually (...) relatively easy to discern and remove the fabricated veneer of the Christian interpolations" (see his "Christian and Jewish Self-Definition in Light of the Christian Additions to the Apocryphal Writings," in E. P. Sanders (ed.), *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, Vol. 2 [London: SCM Press, 1981], 31).

legal parts of the Torah. The tension that is inherent in this position is also reflected in the incorporation of the originally Jewish prayer texts into a Christian liturgy. On the one hand the compiler polemicizes on several occasions against the practices of judaizing Christians, on the other hand he seems to play into their cards by adopting synagogal prayers, however modified they were by him. Is there a historical situation that can shed light on this procedure?

The clearest evidence for such a situation is the eight anti-Jewish homilies preached by John Chrysostom in the year 386/7.⁶¹ They deal exactly with the situation in Antioch in the same decade in which the compiler of the AC was at work. From Chrysostom's vehement invectives against Christians who go to the synagogue on the Sabbath, who have themselves circumcised, who celebrate Pesach and other Jewish festivals, who keep Jewish food laws, who fast together with the Jews, etc., etc., – it becomes more than clear that as late as the end of the fourth century many Christians were being strongly attracted by Judaism. If the Jews are painted so black as they are by Chrysostom, it is because to too many Christians they appear not sufficiently unattractive. "The most compelling reason for anti-Semitism was the religious vitality of Judaism."⁶² How strong this vitality was in Syria and parts of Asia Minor is also evident from several canons of the council of Laodicea (in Phrygia) which was held somewhere in the third quarter of the fourth century.⁶³ In canon 29 it is stated: "It is forbidden that Christians live like Jews (*ioudaïzein*) and rest on the Sabbath; they should work on that day. They should prefer the Lord's day to rest on,

⁶¹ W. A. Meeks and R. L. Wilken, *Jews and Christians in Antioch in the First Four Centuries of the Common Era* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1978), 83–126 et al. R. Brändle, "Christen und Juden in Antiochien in den Jahren 386/87. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte altkirchlicher Judenfeindschaft," *Judaica* 43 (1987): 142–160, has a very useful bibliography, now updated by him in *Johannes Chrysostomus: Acht Reden gegen Juden*, eingeleitet und erläutert von Rudolph Brändle, übersetzt von Verena Jegher-Bucher (Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur, Bd. 41; Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1995). See also P. W. van der Horst, "Jews and Christians in Antioch at the End of the Fourth Century," in S. E. Porter & B. W. R. Pearson (eds.), *Christian-Jewish Relations Through the Centuries* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 228–238.

⁶² M. Simon, *Verus Israel* 232. Cf. also E. M. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule* (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 508.

⁶³ The exact date of this synod is unknown, though most scholars incline to date this meeting to the sixties of the fourth century. See the discussion in C. J. Hefele, *A History of the Councils of the Church*, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1898), 295–325. The text of the canons can be found in E. J. Jonkers, *Acta et symbola conciliorum quae saeculo quarto habita sunt* (Leiden: Brill, 1954), 86–96.

if possible, since they are Christians. If they turn out to be judaizers, let them be accursed (*anathema*) by Christ.” Canon 38 runs as follows: “It is forbidden to take unleavened bread from the Jews or to participate in their godless acts.” Canon 37 forbids any participation in the festivals of the Jews or heretics, and canon 36 warns the clergy against making *phylacteria*, which are probably *tefillin* used as magical apotropaic amulets.⁶⁴ These canons can only be explained on the assumption that keeping the Sabbath, celebrating Pesach and other Jewish religious festivals, etc., were not marginal but frequently occurring and tenacious phenomena among Christians in Asia Minor in the second half of the fourth century. The same situation prevailed in Syria as the testimonies of not only John Chrysostom, but also of Aphraat and Ephrem Syrus make impressively clear.⁶⁵ Only the fact that Judaism continued to make its presence strongly felt in the Diaspora throughout the first five centuries of our era makes it explicable that during these centuries there was a persistent tradition of judaizing in the churches of Syria and Asia Minor which defied all the anathemas of the church authorities. Marcel Simon put it well: “The anti-Jewish bias of official ecclesiastical circles was counterbalanced by equally marked pro-Jewish sentiments among the laity and among some of the clergy too. Or rather, it is the existence of the pro-Jewish sentiments among the laity that is the real explanation of Christian anti-Semitism.”⁶⁶

We know from other sources that in the early centuries of the Common Era Antioch had a large and vibrant Jewish community, of which Josephus already wrote that “they were constantly attracting to their religious ceremonies multitudes of Greeks” (*Bellum* 7.45).⁶⁷ And not long after Josephus wrote these words, one of the first bishops of Antioch, Ignatius, at the beginning of the second century made some remarks in his letters that strongly suggest that he was upset by the fact that several Christians in his

⁶⁴ On the great reputation of Jewish magic in antiquity see Simon, *Verus Israel* 339–368, esp. 361 on the magical use of phylacteries/tefillin. Some scholars regard also canon 35 (against *angelolatreia*, worship of angels) as directed against judaizing practices.

⁶⁵ On Aphraat see J. Neusner, *Judaism, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism in Talmudic Babylonia* (Lanham-New York-London: University Press of America, 1986), 199–228; on Ephrem, see H. J. W. Drijvers, “Syrian Christianity and Judaism,” in his *History and Religion in Late Antique Syria* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1994), ch. 2, esp. 141–142.

⁶⁶ Simon, *Verus Israel* 232.

⁶⁷ See C. H. Kraeling, “The Jewish Community at Antioch,” *JBL* 51 (1932): 130–160; G. Downey, *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus to the Arab Conquest* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 272–316; B. J. Brooten, “The Jews of Ancient Antioch,” in Ch. Kondoleon (ed.), *Antioch: The Lost Ancient City* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 29–37.

community were adopting Jewish practices, evidently under the influence of the local Jewish community (*Magn.* 8:1–2; *Phld.* 6:1). From John Chrysostom we learn that this situation persisted for centuries after Ignatius. There is a wealth of evidence for strong Jewish influences on early Syriac ecclesiastical practices in this period.⁶⁸ In such a situation it was a tactical move to incorporate Jewish prayers into the Christian liturgy, for ‘if you can’t beat them, join them.’ If there existed a tenacious need among Christians in Antioch for using Jewish liturgical material, which was one of the reasons why they kept going to the synagogue on the Sabbath, then the best thing church leadership could do was to see to it that the prayers the members of their community said in the synagogue, could also be said by them in the church, albeit with some modifications, so that the need of these members was obviated and the danger of losing them to the synagogue was lessened. This is the most likely *Sitz im Leben* for these prayers in the *AC*.⁶⁹

The implication for the dating of the prayer texts is that their composition most probably took place before 350 C.E. Since *m. Rosh ha-Shana* 4.5 already mentions the Seven Benedictions by name, we may assume that they were already in existence in their Hebrew form at least by ca. 200 C.E. (how much earlier is impossible to determine). It stands to reason to assume that their translation into Greek for use in Greek-speaking synagogues took place sometime in the third century. From *j. Sotah* VII 1, 21b we learn that in the synagogue of Caesarea around 300 C.E. the Shema was recited in Greek, and there are several other references to synagogue liturgies in Greek.⁷⁰ So there can be no doubt that Jewish synagogal prayer texts in Greek were in circulation in the third and fourth centuries and probably also before and after that period.⁷¹ Fiensy opts for a dating in the third cen-

⁶⁸ For a short discussion of possible evidence for the period between Ignatius and Chrysostom see Fiensy, *Prayers* 218–219; see further S. P. Brock, “Jewish Traditions in Syriac Sources,” *JJS* 30 (1979): 212–232, and especially G. Rouwhorst, “Jewish Liturgical Traditions in Early Syriac Christianity,” *VC* 51 (1997): 72–93.

⁶⁹ For OT interpretation by Antiochian theologians in this period see R. C. Hill, *Reading the Old Testament in Antioch* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2005).

⁷⁰ See S. C. Reif, *Judaism and Hebrew Prayer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 350 n. 47. For Greek Bible texts used in the ancient synagogues see E. Tov, “The Text of the Hebrew/Aramaic and Greek Bible Used in the Ancient Synagogues,” in B. Olsson & M. Zetterholm (eds.), *The Ancient Synagogue From Its Origins Until 200 CE* (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 2003), 237–259, esp. 251–255.

⁷¹ A case in point from Egypt may be Pap. Egerton 5, a prayer text from the fourth century C.E., on which see P. W. van der Horst, “Neglected Greek Evidence for Early Jewish Liturgical Prayer,” *JSJ* 29 (1998): 278–296 [see for this prayer also elsewhere in this volume].

ture.⁷² On the one hand he rightly rejects the *Frühdatierungen* by scholars like Kohler and Goodenough, on the other hand he advocates a dating of the Greek version before 300 C.E. with the unconvincing argument that in view of the compiler's anti-Jewish views he must have been unaware of the Jewish origins of the prayers. As may be gathered from the previous paragraphs, we think the contrary was the case. But even so, in view of other suggestive evidence for a third-century dating adduced by Fiensy (for which the reader is referred to the final paragraphs of the chapter on the history of research; see above), it is highly probable that the Greek text of the prayers was produced at some time in the third century C.E., or otherwise at any rate between 150 and 350 C.E.⁷³ It is possible that the Greek version of these prayers originated in Jewish-Christian circles.⁷⁴

As was rightly stressed by Bousset, one of the important aspects of this material is that it offers us a window on a form of Hellenistic or hellenized Judaism after 70 or 100 C.E. All too often it is assumed that, since we have no Jewish literature in Greek from the period after Josephus, the Jews by and large turned away from Hellenistic culture after the destruction of the temple. But that is demonstrably false. It is not only the prayers dealt with here but also a host of other evidence that proves that the contrary was the case. There is a great amount of epigraphical material, the vast majority of which is in Greek, that makes abundantly clear that in the second through sixth centuries C.E. all over the classical world, including the land of Israel, there was a wide variety of forms of Greek-speaking Judaism. Other archaeological data also testify to the ongoing engagement with Hellenism by Jewish communities in later antiquity. The fact that so few Jewish literary documents in Greek from these centuries have been preserved is something of a riddle that still has to be studied further. All the more important is it to have these prayer texts from between the second and fourth century which show us a form of spirituality in which a thoroughly biblical faith goes hand in

⁷² *Prayers* 220–228.

⁷³ That the standardization and systematization of synagogal prayer took place only after 135 C.E. is argued by T. Zahavy, *Studies in Jewish Prayer* (Lanham-London: University Press of America, 1990), 26–36. That the translation cannot have taken place before 150 C.E. can be deduced from the fact that the translator used Aquila's version of the Bible.

⁷⁴ This is a suggestion by B. D. Spinks, *The Sanctus in the Eucharistic Prayer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 53, and A. Ekenberg, "Evidence for Jewish Believers in 'Church Orders' and Liturgical Texts," in O. Skarsaune & R. Hvalvik (eds.), *Jewish Believers in Jesus* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2007), 640–658, esp. 653–657.

hand with Greek ideas. As will become abundantly clear in the commentary, the authors of these prayers were at home both in the biblical and Jewish tradition and in Greek philosophy (although the latter acquaintance may well have been second-hand).⁷⁵ Since there are still too many uncertainties concerning the reconstruction of the Jewish source, however, it would be hazardous to try to sketch a ‘theology’ of these prayers.

D. *The Task of the Present Commentary*

It is clear that after Fiensy’s investigation it is no longer possible to revert to the old style maximalist approach à la Kohler, Bousset, or Goodenough. It cannot and should not be denied that Fiensy has touched on a vulnerable spot in pointing out that none of these scholars had paid sufficient (if any) attention to the many redactional elements in the texts that are not overtly Christian in character.⁷⁶ His minimalist position is a healthy corrective to the naive maximalism of these earlier scholars and their followers. Does that imply now that we have to follow and swallow Fiensy’s approach and results throughout? Fiensy himself will be the first to admit how many uncertainties there still are. As he points out repeatedly, “we may have occasionally omitted from our reconstructed source what was in the Jewish stratum, due to the compiler’s recasting of an idea” (187). This is certainly true. In the commentary we will weigh his arguments for inclusion or exclusion case by case, all the while being careful not to fall into the pitfall of wishful reading, in this case declaring to be Jewish what may as well be Christian. The present writer cannot but agree with Fiensy, however, that it is only the prayers in AC 7.33–38 that have a demonstrably Jewish ‘Grundstock.’ It is for that reason that only these six prayers will receive treatment in this commentary.

⁷⁵ With this is meant that, when the prayers betray knowledge of Platonic or Stoic ideas, this does not necessarily imply that the author(s) had read Plato and Zeno or Chrysippus (as Philo undoubtedly had); they rather may have gathered their knowledge from popular handbooks such as circulated in the Roman empire (in the time of the compiler, for instance, Sallustius’ *Περὶ θεῶν καὶ κόσμου*) or from doxographical treatises.

⁷⁶ Fiensy’s conclusions were already anticipated by Gregory Dix in 1937 when he wrote about the Christian compiler of the AC: “This author was equipped with a perverse ingenuity in the maltreatment of earlier documents (. . .). He everywhere fuses the language of his sources with phrases and sentiments entirely of his own devising,” in his *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome*, reissued by H. Chadwick, (London: The Alban Press – Ridgefield: Morehouse Publishing, 1991), lxxii–lxxiii.

Recently, Esther Chazon has argued that, apart from AC 7.33–38, the text of 8.6.5–8 should also be included in the set of originally Jewish prayers in the AC.⁷⁷ It is a prayer for the catechumens in which she has detected several phrases that find their closest parallels in two prayers in the *Words of the Luminaries* from Qumran (4Q504 and 4Q506). The most important of these parallels concern phrases about the implanting of the Law/Torah in the human heart, God’s teaching and making humans understand his ordinances, and the motifs of repentance and forgiveness. There is no denying that these are striking parallels and that there is a real possibility that the Christian author of this prayer for the catechumens used elements from an originally Jewish prayer. Yet there is a basic difference with the prayers in AC 7.33–38, and that is that the case for the original Jewishness of this set of prayers is not only based upon a limited number of isolated phrases but is decisively corroborated by the fact that these prayers are in a sequence that is exactly the same as that of the Seven Benedictions for the Sabbath. The latter is not at all the case with the prayer in AC 8.6.5–8. Moreover, the number of correspondences is few and far between and is also of a rather general nature, although this is not to deny that they are there and may well point to a Jewish background. Since, however, our commentary is not meant to be on Jewish elements in Christian prayers but on Jewish prayers that have been christianized to a greater or lesser degree, however thin the dividing line between these two categories may be, we have decided to leave this prayer out of consideration in this book.

In this commentary the following procedure will be followed. A new English translation will be offered. In view of the fact that there are already four English translations available, all of them made by native speakers,⁷⁸ it will be evident that it was unavoidable and necessary for the present translator (whose native language is not English) to rely heavily upon his predecessors in this respect. Where important deviations from the existent translations were deemed necessary, these decisions will be argued in the commentary.

A major typographical deviation from all existing translations will be that ours will use three different types: **Bold type** will be reserved for the

⁷⁷ E. G. Chazon, “A ‘Prayer Alleged to Be Jewish’ in the *Apostolic Constitutions*,” in E. G. Chazon, D. Satran & R. A. Clements (eds.), *Things Revealed. Studies in Early Jewish and Christian Literature in Honor of Michael E. Stone* (JSJS 89; Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2004), 268–9. The prayer is also dealt with by Fiensy, *Prayers* 72–75, because Goodenough had included it in his list of Jewish prayers, but he does not include it in his set of originally Jewish prayers.

⁷⁸ W. Whiston, E. R. Goodenough, D. A. Fiensy, D. R. Darnell (see the bibliography hereafter).

material that certainly or almost certainly belongs to the Jewish stratum of the text (that is to say, it indicates the material the Jewish nature of which all researchers so far agree upon *plus* material that I claim Fiensy has wrongly identified as additions by the compiler). *Italics* will be used to indicate the material that according to all scholars is demonstrably Christian. Finally, normal type will be used for the remaining material, that is, the material that some scholars claim to be Jewish whereas others claim it to be Christian. In most of the existing translations only the glaringly Christian elements (e.g., the name Jesus Christ) are indicated by underlining. After David Fiensy's investigation it turns out to be necessary to *italicize* much more material as Christian. At the same time it will be argued, however, that some of the material that was dubbed Christian by Fiensy can reasonably be assumed to be Jewish, but we will set more material in **bold type** only in those cases where we have reached a relatively high degree of certainty as to its Jewish origin.

The material in **bold type** will be dealt with in the commentary at some length; the material in normal type will receive a briefer treatment; the material in *italics* will be ignored, for obvious reasons.

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Commentary

Apostolic Constitutions VII 33

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Translation

(2) **Our eternal Saviour, King of the gods, the one who alone is almighty and Lord, God of all beings, and God of our holy and blameless fathers who^a were before us, God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who is merciful and compassionate, patient and abundant in mercy, to whom every heart appears as naked and (to whom) every secret thought is revealed. To you the souls of the righteous cry out, upon you the devout have put their hopeful trust, you Father of the blameless, you who listen to those who call upon you in uprightness, you who even know the supplications that are kept silent, for your foreknowledge reaches as far as the inmost parts of humankind, and by your awareness you search each person’s thought, and in every region of the inhabited world the incense that comes through prayer and words is sent up to you.**

(3) You have established the present world as a place where men should run the race of righteousness, you have opened to all a gate of mercy, you have showed to everyone by implanted knowledge and natural judgement as well as through the exhortation of the Law, that the possession of wealth is not eternal, that outer beauty is not everlasting, that physical power is easily dissolved, and that all these things are nothing but vapour and vanity. Only a sincere conscience of faith (?), that truly ascends and traverses^b through the midst of the heavens, receives the assurance of future bliss^c,

and at the same time, even before the promised rebirth is realized, that soul rejoices as it is exulting in hope.

(4) **For from the beginning, when our forefather Abraham strove for the way of truth, you have guided him by means of a vision and taught him thus what this world really is (or: what this life really is about). From that knowledge resulted his faith, and the covenant was the consequence of his faith (or: Faith preceded his knowledge and the covenant was the consequence of his faith).**^d For you had said: “I will make your seed like the stars of heaven and like the sand along the shore of the sea” (Gen 22:17).

(5) **Moreover, when you had given him Isaac and knew that he was going to be like him (his father) in his way of life, you called yourself also his God when you said: “I will be your God and that of your seed after you” (Gen 17:7). And when our father Jacob set out for Mesopotamia, you showed (him) *Christ*, and you spoke through him saying: “Look, I am with you and I will increase you and multiply you exceedingly” (Gen 28:15; 48:4).**

(6) And to Moses, your faithful and holy servant, you said in the vision at the bush: “I am the one who is. That is my eternal name and a memorial to generations after generations” (Exod 3:14–15).

(7) **Defender of the offspring of Abraham, blessed are you forever!**

Text-critical Notes

a: fam. N has καί before “(those) before us”. Since “who were before us” stands in between “our holy and blameless fathers” and “Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,” however, it seems that “who were before us” are these Patriarchs and not another group of forebears.

b: all edd. have διαμένει, but c, h, and fam. N read διαβαίνει. The difference in pronunciation between these two words is very small. I agree with Fiensy (53) that the following words “through the midst of the heavens” require a verb of movement, not of remaining. Though διαμένει is *lectio difficilior*, it makes too little sense and, for that reason, too, διαβαίνει is to be preferred.

c: mss a, c, h, and e read τροφής, which is adopted by Migne, but it is a reading that is totally out of context here, the idea at the background of this reading being the messianic banquet.

d: the reading with γνώσεως ... πίστις ... πίστεως is supported by c, h, y(mg), N, v, whereas a, y (txt), and z have πίστεως ... γνώσις ... γνώσεως. It is a complex situation in that the text with stronger mss attestation yields a much less easily understandable whole. The situation is further complicated by the fact that the same group a, y, and z also have instead of τῆς δὲ πίστεως ἀκόλουθος ἦν ἡ συνθήκη the following: τῆς δὲ γνώσεως

ἀκόλουθος γέγονεν ἡ πίστις, τῆς δὲ πίστεως ἦν ἐπακολούθημα ἡ συνθήκη, which yields: “Knowledge preceded his faith and faith was the follower of his knowledge, and a consequence of faith was the covenant.” This makes for the logical order: knowledge > faith > covenant. In the reading of the majority of mss the order seems to be: faith > knowledge, but then, illogically, covenant again as the consequence of faith. If, however, one translates προώδυσεν here with “came forth from” or “resulted from” (as in Iamblichus, *Vit. Pyth.* 74) instead of “preceded,” the logical order is restored. Most probably, however, the majority reading is a result of an attempt by Christian copyists to give priority to Abraham’s faith, influenced as they were by Paul (see Rom 4). So the most likely reading would seem to be: καὶ τῆς μὲν πίστεως αὐτοῦ προώδυσεν ἡ γνώσις, τῆς δὲ γνώσεως ἀκόλουθος ἦν ἡ συνθήκη. This reading, however, is not to be found in any of the mss! Perhaps the best solution is to accept the well attested majority reading and to translate προώδυσεν as suggested above, however problematic that may seem. But all other solutions are at least equally problematic.

General Comment

Like all other prayers in AC VII, this prayer begins with a formula of address (it is different in all the prayers) in §2. It is followed by a section in which God’s listening to and hearing of prayers (even the silent ones!) is recognized and his (fore)knowledge of human thoughts is emphasized. §3 stresses the temporary nature of worldly goods and the importance of an abiding blissful afterlife. In §§4–5 the prayer turns to the exemplary function of the three patriarchs who had already been mentioned in §2, and in §6 Moses is added. §7 forms the closing *berakbah*. It is the emphasis on the “Fathers” (the three patriarchs), the closing phrase “defender of the offspring of Abraham,” and its position as the first prayer in a row that make it more than probable that this prayer is the Greek parallel to *Avoth*, the first *berakbah* of the Amidah.

Notes

(2) “Our eternal Saviour” refers to God. Since in the AC “saviour” (σωτήρ) is almost always used for Jesus Christ, except here and in 7.35.1, it seems to have come from the Jewish source at both these places. Σωτήρ is used frequently as a designation of God in the LXX.⁷⁹ “King of the gods”

⁷⁹ See F. Jung, ΣΩΤΗΡ. *Studien zur Rezeption eines hellenistischen Ehrentitels im Neuen Testament* (Münster: Aschendorff, 2002), esp. 177–238.

(βασιλεὺς τῶν θεῶν) is a formula found also in Esther's prayer in one of the additions to Esther in the LXX, Esth 4:17r (or add. C23). In the background are passages like Ps 95:3: "The Lord ... is a great king above all the gods."⁸⁰ Cf. also Ps 82:1, where God is standing "in the assembly of gods." Since the expression "king of the gods" occurs only here in the AC, it most probably derives from the Jewish source. "The one who alone is almighty and Lord, God of all beings" (ὁ ὢν μόνος παντοκράτωρ καὶ Κύριος, ὁ θεὸς πάντων τῶν ὄντων) is regarded by Fiensy as the compiler's addition since παντοκράτωρ is used often by him and since the compiler likes to emphasize the pre-eminence of the Father and the correlative subordination of the Son and the Holy Spirit. But it has to be objected that παντοκράτωρ is used at least as frequently by his sources (as Fiensy is forced to admit, 203 n.9),⁸¹ and that in the instances of emphasis on the pre-eminence of the Father mentioned by Brightman⁸² the use of παντοκράτωρ is missing. So it stands to reason to take this whole phrase, just as the immediately surrounding phrases, to derive from the Jewish source, though perhaps the words "God of all beings" (ὁ θεὸς πάντων τῶν ὄντων) is a free and universalizing rendering of "our God" in the alleged counterpart of this prayer, the *berakhah Avoth* in the Amidah. "God of our holy and blameless fathers who were before us, God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" is a phrase that occurs in very similar wording in *Avoth* in the Amidah: "God of our forefathers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob" (which is where this *berakhah* got the name *Avoth* from). The expression is from Exod 3:16 and occurs also in the opening line of the *Prayer of Azariah* (Dan 3:26 LXX); cf. Tob 8:5. Since, however, "blameless" (ἄμεμπτος) is a favourite word of

⁸⁰ On the motif of God's kingship in the Bible and postbiblical Jewish and Christian literature see the various contributions in M. Hengel & A. M. Schwemer (eds.), *Königsherrschaft Gottes und himmlischer Kult im Judentum, Urchristentum und in der hellenistischen Welt* (WUNT 55; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991). On God as king see also Ch. Zimmermann, *Die Namen des Vaters: Studien zu ausgewählten neutestamentlichen Gottesbezeichnungen vor ihrem frühjüdischen und paganen Sprachhorizont* (AJEC 69; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 271–281.

⁸¹ Moreover, at other places in the prayer texts Fiensy retains παντοκράτωρ as part of the Jewish *Grundlage*, e.g., 7.36.1. For God as the Almighty see Zimmermann, *Die Namen des Vaters* 233–256.

⁸² F. E. Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western, Being the Texts Original or Translated of the Principal Liturgies of the Church*, vol. 1: *Eastern Liturgies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896; reprinted as *Eastern Liturgies, Being ... etc.*, Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2002), xxv. Fiensy heavily relies upon Brightman's analysis of the literary and theological characteristics of the compiler at pp. xxiv–xxix, and on the word index in Funk's edition, vol. I, 637–704.

the compiler, that he has demonstrably inserted on various occasions into his sources (Fiensy 203 n. 12), the words “holy and blameless” are arguably his interpolations. But the formula “God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” which has such a close parallel to *Avoth* that it is generally taken to be part of the original Jewish prayer, was also inserted twice into other texts by our compiler (7.26.3 and 8.40.3)! It could thus be argued that this formula is from the compiler’s hand as well, but in view of the close parallel in *Avoth* and other Jewish prayer texts (e.g., the communal confession in 4Q393 iv 5) it seems better not to do that. But the matter does demonstrate how difficult it is to separate tradition from redaction.

“Who is merciful and compassionate, patient and abundant in mercy” (ὁ ἐλεήμων καὶ οἰκτίρμων, ὁ μακρόθυμος καὶ πολυέλεος): This is probably a free-floating liturgical formula based upon passages such as Exod 34:6–7; Num 14:17–19; Joel 2:13 and 2 Ezra 19:17; but cf. also Jonah 4:2; Neh 9:17; 4 Ezra 7:132–140; *Pr. Man.* 7.⁸³ In view of the compiler’s tendency towards inserting scriptural quotes, it could be regarded as his insertion. Since, however, the formula should not be regarded as a quote but rather as a reminiscence, the phrase may be part of his source here as well but that remains very uncertain. The corresponding section in the *berakhab Avoth*, following upon “God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,” praises God as “great, mighty, awesome, Most High, bestowing lovingkindness.”

“To whom every heart appears as naked and (to whom) every secret thought is revealed” (ὅ ἅπαντα γυμνοφανῆς βλέπεται καρδία καὶ πᾶν κρύφιον ἐνθύμημα ἀποκαλύπτεται): Since the Greek vocabulary of this line is completely atypical of our compiler, it most probably derives from his Jewish source. The imagery of the naked soul goes back to Plato (*Gorg.* 523c–e; *Crat.* 403b); cf. Marcus Aurelius 12.2 and 2 Cor 5:3. The author has rephrased “naked soul” as “naked heart” so as to give the phrase a

⁸³ On the role of this series of predicates in Jewish prayers see A. Enermalm-Ogawa, *Un langage de prière juif en grec* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1987), 69–70, and on the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of Exod 34:6–7 and Num 14:17–19 esp. J. L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible* (Cambridge MA – London: Harvard University Press, 1998), 721–723, and M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 341–350. Many instances of appeals to God’s mercy in Jewish prayers are given in N. B. Johnson, *Prayer in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha: A Study of the Jewish Concept of God* (Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, 1948), 54–61. Michael Stone notes that 4 Ezra 7:132–140 can be regarded as a midrash on Exod 34:6–7; see his *Fourth Ezra* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 256. Note that in the prayer in Wis 9:1 one also finds the combination of “God of our forefathers” and “merciful Lord.”

more biblical colour (in the Bible the heart is also the source of cognition, unlike in the Greek world where the soul or mind has that function); so here Plato and Moses go hand in hand.⁸⁴ The theme of God's knowledge of even the innermost thoughts of humankind is widespread in the Bible (e.g., Ps 139:1–2; 3 Kgdms 8:39; 1 Chron 28:9; Acts 1:24, 15:8) and Jewish literature (e.g., 4Q504 (=4QDibHam^a) 5 iv 4–5 “Every thought of our hearts lies open before you”; Josephus, *Ant.* 4.41 “Neither what is done nor what is thought is hidden from you”).⁸⁵ Also the line “to you the souls of the righteous cry out, upon you the devout have put their hopeful trust”⁸⁶ (πρὸς σὲ βοῶσιν ψυχὰι δικαίων, ἐπὶ σοὶ πεποιθήσιν ἐλπίδες ὁσίων) has an atypical vocabulary and should be regarded as coming from the source. The following phrase, however, “Father of the blameless,” is again one of the many cases in which the compiler has inserted expressions with his favourite word ἄμεμπτος.⁸⁷ “You who listen⁸⁸ to those who call upon you in uprightness, you who even know the supplications that are kept silent” is a phrase that recurs *verbatim* in a Christian prayer in AC 8.15.2 and should therefore probably be regarded as Christian, even though it cannot be ruled out that in 8.15.2 the compiler copied this phrase from the Jewish prayer since the theme is already found in a prayer for the Day of Atonement from Qumran which says, “You know the hidden things and the revealed things [...] you know our inclination” (4Q508 ii 4–5).⁸⁹ That God is said to hear even

⁸⁴ Another and comparable example of the fusion of Platonic and Mosaic terminology is the phrase “the eyes of the heart” in Eph 1:18 where the eyes are Plato's (*Resp.* 519B, 533D, 540A, etc.: ‘eyes of the soul’) and the heart Moses's.

⁸⁵ For parallels in Greek literature see T. Jonquière, *Prayer in Josephus* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 117–118. See, e.g., Xenophanes, fr. B24DK; Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.1.19; Plato, *Leg.* 901d, 905a.

⁸⁶ Lit. “the hopes of the devout have put their trust upon you.” Hope is here not an expression of doubt (“let's hope so”) but of looking forward to something with the implication of confidence about it coming to pass (BDAG 319).

⁸⁷ The address of God as “Father” is of course very common in biblical and postbiblical Jewish (and Christian) literature; see A. Strotmann, “*Mein Vater bist du!*” (*Sir* 51,10): *zur Bedeutung der Vaterschaft Gottes in kanonischen und nichtkanonischen früh-jüdischen Schriften*, (Frankfurt: Knecht, 1991), *passim*, and Zimmermann, *Die Namen des Vaters* 41–73.

⁸⁸ The author here uses the adjective ἐπήκοος, on which see J. Barr, “The Meaning of ἐπακούω and Cognates in the LXX,” *JTS* n.s. 31 (1980): 67–72. Cf. also Philo, *Praem.* 84.

⁸⁹ As was pointed out by D. K. Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (STDJ 27; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 212–213, this passage from the Qumran text has a close parallel in the confession made in the public recitation of the Amidah on the Day of Atonement in the later synagogue liturgy: “Do you not know all hidden

silent prayers has its background in the widespread ancient conviction that prayers to God or the gods should be said out loud and not in silence.⁹⁰

“For your foreknowledge reaches as far as the inmost parts of humankind, and by your awareness you search each person’s thought” (χωρεῖ γὰρ μέχρι σπλάγχμων ἀνθρωπίνων ἡ σὴ πρόνοια καὶ διὰ συνειδήσεως ἐκάστου ἔρευνας τὴν γνώμην): This line is meant to explain the previous one, so it probably is an addition as well, the more so since πρόνοια is a favourite topic of the compiler. “In every case where the word occurs in AC, where we can compare the AC with its source, the word has come from the compiler” (Fiensy 169, with 204 n. 15). Πρόνοια is usually rendered as “providence” but that is not very fitting here.⁹¹ The theme is still God’s knowledge of the thoughts of humankind, so it seems that πρόνοια here has the sense of “foreknowledge, foresight,” which is, of course, a prerequisite for providence (cf. the use of πρόγνωσις in Jdt 9:6). Most translators take συνείδησις to refer to men’s conscience or consciousness, but in view of the parallelism with ἡ σὴ πρόνοια it makes better sense to have it refer to an activity of God with regard to human thoughts; hence our translation “awareness” (but see also the note in Fiensy 51 n.10).

“In every region of the inhabited world the incense that comes through prayer and words is sent up to you” (κατὰ πᾶν κλίμα τῆς οἰκουμένης τὸ διὰ προσευχῆς καὶ λόγων ἀναπέμπεται σοι θυμίαμα) is a phrase that stands in some contradiction to the preceding clause. There the subject was God’s knowledge of human thoughts and silent prayers, whereas here the thought seems to be that the incense is sent up to God in the form of audible prayers (“words”). This ties in with the crying out of the righteous souls mentioned previously;⁹² hence we can take this phrase also to belong to the source. The vocabulary does not militate against this. On incense – originally used in the Temple service as an offering – in a metaphorical sense (= prayer) see e.g., Ps 140(141):2; Rev 5:8; cf. 1QS 9.5; patristic instances in PGL s.v. θυμίαμα, A3.

things and the revealed things? You know the mysteries of the universe and the hidden secrets of all living beings etc.”

⁹⁰ For extensive discussion and references see P. W. van der Horst, “Silent Prayer in Antiquity,” *Numen* 41 (1994): 1–25, reprinted in his *Hellenism – Judaism – Christianity: Essays on Their Interaction* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994), 252–281, 2nd ed., (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 293–316.

⁹¹ Providence was a much debated topic in Hellenistic philosophy; see the bibliography in RBLG 442 and BDAG 873.

⁹² Cf. LAB 32.7: “The people cried out to the Lord and their prayer was heard,” based on Exod 2:23. Cf. Ps 87(88):1.

(3) “You have established the present world as a place where men should run the race of righteousness” (τὸν παρόντα αἰῶνα στάδιον δικαιοσύνης ἐνστησάμανος): Αἰών may also be translated “age” (cf. Hebrew *‘olam*) or “life.”⁹³ Life in this world as a contest in a stadium (here στάδιον δικαιοσύνης) is a Stoic commonplace that is also used on various occasions by Paul, e.g., 1 Cor 9:24–27.⁹⁴ The structure of the phrase (Fiensy 169: “The whole clause is encased between an article and a participle (...) a common stylistic trait of the compiler”) betrays its origin at the compiler’s desk. Even though translated here with *verba finita*, this and the following sentences are good examples of what Eduard Norden called the “Partizipialstil der Prädikation.”⁹⁵ The compiler liked this kind of clause; in 8.12.9–20 one finds a long series of them, and elsewhere as well (in our prayer texts also in 7.34.1 and 37.1).⁹⁶

“You have opened to all a gate of mercy, you have showed to everyone (...) that the possession of wealth is not eternal, that outer beauty is not everlasting, that physical power is easily dissolved” (πᾶσι δὲ ἀνοιξας πύλην ἐλεημοσύνης, ὑποδείξας δὲ ἐκάστῳ ... ὡς πλοῦτου μὲν οὐκ αἶδιον τὸ κτῆμα, εὐπρεπείας οὐκ ἀέναον τὸ κάλλος, δυνάμεως εὐδιάλυτος ἢ ἰσχύς): These phrases do not have vocabulary that suggests the compiler’s hand in any way, so they can be taken to derive from the source. Although the intervening words, “by implanted knowledge and natural judgement as well as through the exhortation of the Law” (διὰ τῆς ἐμφύτου γνώσεως καὶ φυσικῆς κρίσεως καὶ ἐκ τῆς τοῦ νόμου ὑποφωνήσεως) do reflect recurring motifs in the AC, a Jewish origin is very well possible. The words “implanted” (ἐμφυτος) and “natural” (φυσικός) do belong to the compiler’s favourites in connection with the implanted law and natural knowledge, and his emphasis on the value of the

⁹³ See H. M. Keizer, *Life, Time, Eternity: A Study of Αἰών in Greek Literature and Philosophy, the Septuagint and Philo* (diss. University of Amsterdam, 1999).

⁹⁴ See V. C. Pfitzner, *Paul and the Agon Motif* (NovTSup 16; Leiden: Brill, 1967); M. Brändl, *Der Agon bei Paulus: Herkunft und Profil paulinischer Agonmetaphorik* (WUNT II/222; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006).

⁹⁵ E. Norden, *Agnostos Theos. Untersuchungen zur Formengeschichte religiöser Rede* (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1913; repr. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1956), 166–168, 201–207, 380–383. See also G. Delling, “Geprägte partizipiale Gottesausagen in der urchristlichen Verkündigung,” in his *Studien zum Neuen Testament und zum hellenistischen Judentum* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), 401–416.

⁹⁶ H. Löhr, *Studien zum frühchristlichen und frühjüdischen Gebet* (WUNT 160; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 474–5 lists as examples from prayers: Ps 79(80):2; 2 Macc 1:25; Wis 9:1–2; *Pr. Man.* 2–3; *Jos. Asen.* 12.1–3.

teachings of the Law (of Moses) recurs throughout the AC.⁹⁷ However, as Esther Chazon has demonstrated, the motif of the implanted Law occurs already in a second century B.C.E. Jewish prayer in Qumran (it is one in the series of prayers in the *Words of the Luminaries*, 4Q504 1–2 ii 13–5).⁹⁸ She therefore concludes that here we have a case in which (to put it in Fiensy’s words) “the Jewish source could have furnished the compiler with a theme or expression which he favored” (167). Moreover, also in the old morning prayer the importance of studying Torah was emphasized.⁹⁹ For that reason we assign this clause to the source, albeit with some hesitation. The text’s message is that it is the combination of natural and revealed knowledge that makes humans aware of the passing nature of worldly affairs.¹⁰⁰ “Gate of Mercy”: For the metaphorical use of “gate” in contexts like this see, e.g., Ps 117(118):19 (“Open for me the gates of righteousness”); 1QM 18.7 (“You have opened for us many times the gates of salvation”); 4Q434 viib 2 (“a gate of hope”); Origen, *C.Cels.* 6.36, and other patristic references in *PGL* 1207b. The temporary nature, and therefore the relative unimportance, of wealth, beauty, and power is a theme that one can find in various Jewish writings but also in many a Church Father, e.g., Jer 9:22; Ps.-Phocylides 53; Philo, *Spec.* 1.311; Christian references in *PGL* 1096a-b. It is important to notice that the theme of the worthlessness of worldly goods and values is also stressed in a passage of the *Tefillat shacharit* (Morning prayer).¹⁰¹ Since there are no lexicographical reasons to attribute this phrase to the compiler,

⁹⁷ For references see Fiensy, *Prayers* 170 and 204 n.17. On the uncertain meaning of ὑποφώνησις (here translated with ‘exhortation’) see the remarks in Fiensy, *Prayers* 51 n. 17.

⁹⁸ E. G. Chazon, “A ‘Prayer Alleged to Be Jewish’ in the *Apostolic Constitutions*,” in E. G. Chazon, D. Satran & R. A. Clements (eds.), *Things Revealed. Studies in Early Jewish and Christian Literature in Honor of Michael E. Stone* (JSJS 89; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 267–269.

⁹⁹ S. R. Hirsch, *Siddur Tefilloth Yisra’el* (New York – Jerusalem: Feldheim Publishers, 1969), 7: “. . . who has sanctified us with his commandments and commanded us to engage in the study of the words of Torah.”

¹⁰⁰ For ἔμφυτος and φυσικός as terms in the epistemological debates of antiquity see Fiensy, *Prayers* 51 n. 16; K. Algra, *Conceptions and Images: Hellenistic Philosophical Theology and Traditional Religion* (MKNW 70/1; Amsterdam: Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, 2007), 39 with n. 108; esp. J. W. Martens, *One God, One Law: Philo of Alexandria on the Mosaic and Greco-Roman Law* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2003). Patristic evidence in *PGL* 459.

¹⁰¹ Hirsch, *Siddur* 17. Erik Peterson was the first to draw attention to this parallel; see his “Henoch im jüdischen Gebet und in jüdischer Kunst,” in his *Frühkirche, Judentum und Gnosis* (Freiburg: Herder, 1959), 36–42, here 36–7.

it is best to take it as the natural complement to “you have showed that” and hence as belonging to the Jewish source (as does Fiensy 170). “All these things are nothing but vapour and vanity” (ἀτμός μὲν καὶ ματαιότης τὰ σύνολα) seems to be an addition by the compiler judging on the basis of vocabulary (Fiensy 204 n.20) and the probable reminiscence of Jas 4:14 (ἀτμίς γάρ ἐστε); ἀτμίς = ἀτμός. For “vanity” (ματαιότης) see Eccl 1:2 and 12:8.

“Only a sincere conscience of faith,¹⁰² that truly ascends and traverses through the midst of the heavens, receives the assurance of future bliss (τῆς μελλούσης τρυφῆς δεξιὰν ἀπολαμβάνει),¹⁰³ and at the same time, even before the promised rebirth (παλιγγενεσία) is realized, that soul rejoices as it is exulting in hope.” This sentence is difficult to translate and understand, but this much is clear that it contrasts the permanent character of a blessed afterlife of the soul in heaven (and the joy of anticipating that life) to the ephemeral nature of worldly pleasures such as wealth, beauty and power. The concept of the ascent of the soul is strikingly Philonic. This passage is from the hand of the compiler for the following reasons: (1) In a prayer that focuses on God’s hearing of the prayers of humankind (strongly reminiscent of the sixteenth *berakbah* of the Amida, *Shomea’ Tefillah* [=He who hears the prayer]), this passage on the mystical ascent of the soul through the heavens and its vision is not very fitting. (2) The central term παλιγγενεσία, though not necessarily Christian,¹⁰⁴ is a favourite word of the compiler; he regularly uses it for resurrection (Fiensy 204 n. 21). So it is not likely that this passage was in the source. It cannot be excluded, however, that there was something in the source here that has been recast in such a way by the compiler as to have become unrecognizable.

(4–6) Here begins the long passage on the Patriarchs’ and Moses’ visionary experiences: Abraham’s in Gen 15, Jacob’s in Gen 28, and Moses’ in Exod 3. “He could not omit mentioning Isaac, but – since the OT does not attribute a vision to him – he can only say that God found Isaac to be

¹⁰² Peterson, “Enoch” 38, translates συνείδησις πίστεως with “bewusster Glaube.” Unnecessarily, he speculates that “faith” is here an allegorization of Enoch and that the words “ascends and traverses through the midst of the heavens” refer to Enoch’s heavenly journey.

¹⁰³ Note that the force of ἀπο – in ἀπολαμβάνει is that this future bliss is well deserved; see P. W. van der Horst, “Abraham’s Bosom, the Place Where he Belonged: A Short Note on ἀπενεχθῆναι in Luke 16.22,” *NTS* 52 (2006): 142–144.

¹⁰⁴ See J. Dey, *Palinogenesis* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1937); more lit. in BDAG and RBLG s.v. Fiensy, *Prayers* 55 n.25, has a long note on παλιγγενεσία in pagan and Christian literature. It commonly refers to rebirth or reincarnation.

just like Abraham” (Fiensy 171). Since what we learn about the contents of Abraham’s vision (“he taught him what this world/life really is”) exceeds what the reader is told in Gen 15, one may assume that the author was also familiar with the interpretative traditions about this chapter, e.g., such as we encounter in *Apoc. Abr.* 9 (see esp. 9.9 “I will show you the things which were made by the ages and by my word, and affirmed, created, and renewed”) or *4 Ezra* 3.14 (“to him only you revealed the end of the times”). Mention of the three Patriarchs and God’s covenant with Abraham is a common feature in ancient Jewish prayers; see e.g., 2 Macc 1:2; Josephus, *Ant.* 4.212; *Prayer of Azariah* in Dan 3:35 LXX; *Prayer of Manasseh* 1.¹⁰⁵ The whole passage seems intended to illustrate what was said in the long closing sentence of § 3 and may for that reason be suspected as work of the compiler who also wrote that sentence in § 3. Fiensy’s assertion that there is an anti-Gnostic argument in § 4, since faith is elevated above knowledge, has a less than certain basis as may be clear from the text-critical note (above, *ad locum*). It may well be that the confused textual situation here only indicates that an (originally Jewish?) emphasis on the order “knowledge > faith > covenant” was replaced by Christian copyists with the order “faith > knowledge > covenant.”¹⁰⁶ In that case, Abraham’s (and the others’) knowledge of “what this life (or this world) really is about,”¹⁰⁷ revealed to him by God, smoothly fits in with what was said in § 3 about God’s showing humankind the ephemerality of worldly goods or outer appearance, lines we have suggested belong to the Jewish *Grundschrift*. So it may well be the case that the interpolator’s hand is to be found only in the words “you showed him [Jacob] Christ.”¹⁰⁸ When we further delete the non-necessary

¹⁰⁵ For an elaborate discussion see Löhr, *Studien* 270–273; further Enermalm-Ogawa, *Langage* 31–32; R. Kimelman, “The Literary Structure of the Amidah and the Rhetoric of Redemption,” in W. G. Dever & J. E. Wright (eds.), *The Echoes of Many Texts: Reflections on Jewish and Christian Traditions* (BJS 313; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 200–1. The address *’elohay ’avotenu* is very common in several synagogal prayers.

¹⁰⁶ This was already suggested by Goodenough, *By Light, Light* 356.

¹⁰⁷ Is this an allusion to Gen 15:5, “Look up at the sky and count the stars, if you can,” as suggested by Bousset, *Gebetssammlung* 465? At 466–469, Bousset on the one hand rightly states “daß die Betonung der Gnosis und die Ausführungen über diese schwerlich erst von dem Redaktor der Konstitutionen in unsere Gebete hineingebracht sein können” (467), but on the other hand he exaggerates the “gnostic” implications of this usage.

¹⁰⁸ Compare the similar statement in the prayer in AC 8.12.23 that God showed Christ to Abraham (Bousset, *Gebetssammlung* 464 n. 2).

biblical quotations,¹⁰⁹ which are so characteristic of the compiler, this might yield a Jewish *Grundlage* of §§ 4–7 in more or less the following form:

For from the beginning, when our forefather Abraham strove for the way of truth, you guided him by a vision and taught him what (life in) this world really is (about). From that knowledge came forth his faith, and the covenant was the consequence of this faith. When you had given him Isaac and knew that he was going to be like him (his father) in his way of life, you called yourself also his God. And when our father Jacob set out for Mesopotamia, you showed him [a vision?]¹¹⁰ and spoke to him. Defender of the offspring of Abraham, blessed are you forever.¹¹¹

Fiensy (171) regards the whole of §§ 4–6 as deriving from the Christian compiler but he downplays the importance of the fact that in the passage on Abraham (4), which refers to Gen 15, the author demonstrably used Aquila's version of that biblical chapter. Both ὄραματισμός (vision) and συνθήκη (covenant) are used by this second century C.E. Jewish Bible translator, where the LXX has different terminology (ὄραμα in v. 1 and διαθήκη in v. 18), and this makes it well-nigh certain that these passages derive from the Jewish source.¹¹² Fiensy's argument (142) that the compiler employed

¹⁰⁹ On these see J. H. Newman, *Praying by the Book: The Scripturalization of Prayer in Second Temple Judaism* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 216.

¹¹⁰ It should be noted in view of δειξας in our text that in Wis 10:10 the passage in Gen 28:15 (quoted in the prayer) was interpreted as follows: ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ βασιλείαν θεοῦ. Note also that the *Prayer of Jacob* is linked to his dream vision in Gen 28, both in its independent Hebrew form and in its Slavonic form as chapter 2 of the *Ladder of Jacob*. So the motif of God's showing something of great importance to Jacob in his vision at Bethel has a Jewish origin.

¹¹¹ The paragraph on Moses is left out here since he is clearly a favourite of the compiler; see E. M. Synek, "*Dieses Gesetz ist gut, heilig, es zwingt nicht ...*" 33–39, 69–70. Moreover, "die Erinnerung an die Väterzeit" in prayer texts is usually restricted to the three Patriarchs (Löhr, *Studien* 273; *ibid.* n. 647 for instances). For that reason I disagree with S. M. McDonough, *YHWH at Patmos: Rev. 1:4 in its Hellenistic and Early Jewish Setting* (WUNT II/107; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 158, when he states that the quote from Exod 3:14 ("I am the one who is") in our passage proves that "this phrase from the LXX was regarded as sufficiently 'inspired' to be included in the worship of the community of Greek-speaking Jews."

¹¹² See L. Lütkeemann & A. Rahlfs, "Hexaplarische Randnoten zu Isaias 1–16 aus einer Sinai-Handschrift," *Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen*, Philologisch-historische Klasse 1915, Beiheft, Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1915, 29–31 (ὄραματισμός and ὄραματίζεσθαι are "*Neuschöpfungen*" by Aquila); also J. Reider & N. Turner, *An Index to Aquila* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 174 and 229. Aquila consistently used ὄραβν to translate *ra'ab* and the

συνθήκη for “covenant” elsewhere so that the word is to be regarded as belonging to his vocabulary is flawed because it does not take into account that the word συνθήκη occurs here in combination with the certainly Aquilan ὄραματισμός in a context that clearly refers to Gen 15. The fact that most of the other biblical quotes are from the LXX may be explained in two ways: (1) the Christian redactor replaced all Aquilan quotes by their LXX version, overlooking only a small minority; or (2) the Christian editor added all LXX citations.¹¹³

The §§4–6 are in the form of a *Beispielreihe* or biblical *exempla*,¹¹⁴ a phenomenon that has many parallels in other Jewish texts, such as 1 Macc 2:49–60; 3 Macc 2:2–8 and 6:2–8 (in prayers); 4 Macc 16:18–23; Wis 10:1–21; Sir 16:5–10; 4 Ezra 7:106–110; Jdt 9:2–5; CD 2.14–3.12.¹¹⁵ The longest *Beispielreihe* in the prayers of AC is 7.37.2–4.

(7) “Defender of the offspring of Abraham, blessed are you forever” (ὑπέρμαχε γένους Ἀβραάμ, εὐλογητὸς εἶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας). There is no doubt among students of the AC that this line belongs to the Jewish *Grundlage*. It is perfectly parallel to the ending of the *berakbah Avoth* of the Amidah, which in all versions runs as follows: “Blessed are you, Lord, Shield of Abraham” (*barukh ’ata Adonai, magen Avraham*). “Defender (ὑπέρμαχος) of the offspring of Abraham” is only the logical explication of the formula “Shield of Abraham.”¹¹⁶ The idea of God being Abraham’s shield derives from Gen 15:1: “Do not be afraid, Abraham, I am your shield” (LXX: ἐγὼ ὑπερασπίζω σου). That the author uses here the Greek ὑπέρμαχος instead of a word for “shield” (ἄσπίς) may have its origin in the fact that the Jewish

neologism ὄραματίζεσθαι for *chazah* (and thus ὄραματισμός for *machazeh* in Gen. 15:1). For the semantic equivalence of συνθήκη and διαθήκη in Judaeo-Greek documents see A. M. Schwemer, “Zum Verhältnis von Diatheke und Nomos in den Schriften der jüdischen Diaspora Ägyptens in hellenistisch-römischer Zeit,” in F. Avmarie & H. Lichtenberger (eds.), *Bund und Torah. Zur theologischen Begriffsgeschichte in alttestamentlicher, frühjüdischer und urchristlicher Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 67–109, here 88. On Aquila see G. Veltri, *Libraries, Translations, and ‘Canonic’ Texts: The Septuagint, Aquila, and Ben Sira in the Jewish and Christian Traditions* (JSJS 109; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 147–189.

¹¹³ For a discussion of the question see Simon, *Verus Israel* 55–56. Bousset, *Gebetsammlung* 465: “Es ist wahrscheinlich, daß das LXX-Zitat erst vom Bearbeiter des Gebetes stammt.”

¹¹⁴ See A. Lumpe, “Exemplum,” *RAC* 6 (1966): 1229–1257, for an extensive discussion of this form.

¹¹⁵ More examples are discussed in Newman, *Praying by the Book* 159–171.

¹¹⁶ Thus rightly A. Spanier, “Die erste Benediktion des Achtzehngebetes,” *MGWJ* 81 (1937): 75.

Bible translator Symmachus translated *magen* in Gen 15:1 with a form of the verb ὑπερμάχομαι (cf. Aquila's translation of *magen* with ὑπερασπιστής in Ps 32[33]:20). Note that God is called ὑπέρμαχος by Philo, *Flacc.* 170; *Abr.* 232, and also in 2 Macc 8:36; 14:34 (God as ὁ διὰ παντὸς ὑπέρμαχος τοῦ ἔθνους ἡμῶν); cf. *Or. Sib.* 3.709. For God as ὑπερασπίζων τοῦ γένους Ἰσραήλ in a prayer see Jdt 9:14, and for God as ὑπερασπιστής the prayer in *Jos. Asen.* 12.13 (and note God as σκεπαστής [protector] in 3 Macc 6:9). The phrasing here in AC is a good summary of the contents of the original *berakhah* in its Hebrew form, but less so of the Greek version as it stands in its interpolated form. Εὐλογητὸς εἶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας = *barukh 'ata le'olam (wa'ed)* is certainly an old Jewish blessing in view of Rom 1:25, where Paul says that the creator is εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. Cf. also the frequent occurrence of the formulas "Blessed are you, God of Israel" and "Blessed be the God of Israel" in the collection of daily prayers from Qumran in 4Q503 and in the purification rituals in 4Q284, 4Q414, and 4Q512 (cf. Tob 8:5; Jdt 13:17).¹¹⁷

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Bibliography

- Bousset, *Eine jüdische Gebetssammlung* 449–464.
 Darnell, *OTP* 2.678–680.
 Fiensy, *Prayers* 60–65, 172–176.
 Goodenough, *By Light, Light* 318–320.
 Kohler, "The Origin and Composition" 412–414.
 Metzger, *Constitutions apostoliques* 3.70–75.
 Skutsch, "Ein neuer Zeuge der altchristlichen Liturgie."

Translation

- (1) **Blessed are you, O Lord, King of the ages, who made all things through Christ** and who in the beginning brought order *through him* to the disordered (chaos), who separated waters from waters by a firmament, who also put a spirit of life into them, who established the earth and stretched out the heaven, and who ordered exactly the (dis)position of each one of the creatures.
- (2) For it is thanks to your decision^a, O Master, that the universe is beaming; that heaven, fixed like a vault, is adorned with stars in order to comfort

¹¹⁷ On the formula εὐλογητὸς εἶ see Enermalm-Ogawa, *Un langage de prière juif* 34–35; see also the commentary to *PrAzar* 3 elsewhere in this volume.

(us in) the darkness; that the light and the sun have been created for the day and the growth of fruits, and the moon which increases and decreases for the change of seasons; that the one was called night and the other named day; that a firmament appeared from the midst of the abysses when you said that the waters should be collected and the dry land become visible.

(3) As to the sea itself, how could anyone describe it? It comes raging from the ocean, but runs back again from the sand because it is stopped there by your command, for you said that its waves shall be broken by it. And you have made it passable for small and large animals and for ships.

(4) Then the earth became green, painted^b with all sorts of flowers and a wide variety of different trees. The brightly shining luminaries are their nourishers, who unwaveringly keep their course without deviating from your command in any respect. Wherever you order them, there do they rise and set to signal seasons and years, thus alternating for the service of humankind.

(5) Thereafter the various kinds of animals were formed, those on dry land, those living in water, those traversing the air, and the amphibians; and the skillful wisdom of your providence imparts to each of them the corresponding provisions^c. For just as she was strong enough to produce different kinds (of animals), so too she did not neglect to make different provisions for each.

(6) As the goal of your creation you formed the rational living being, the world citizen, having given an order to your Wisdom by saying, "Let us make man according to our image and likeness" (Gen 1:26). You presented him as an ornament of the world,¹¹⁸ you shaped a body for him from the four bodies^d, you created for him a soul out of nothing, you bestowed upon him fivefold sense perception, but over the senses you placed the charioteer of the soul, the spirit.

(7) And besides all that, O Master (and) Lord, who can adequately describe the movement of the rain-producing clouds, the flash of lightning, the clap of thunder, (all of them) for the production of appropriate food and a harmonious blending of the air.

(8) But when man disobeyed you, you deprived him of the life you promised him as a reward, not by destroying him completely (or: for ever), but after having put him to sleep for a little while you called him to a new birth by an oath and you loosened the bond of death, **you reviver of the dead through Jesus Christ, our hope.**

¹¹⁸ Lit., "as a cosmos of the cosmos." The same expression is also used in the episcopal prayer in AC 8.9.8.

Text-critical Notes

a: a(txt), y, and z have δυνάμει instead of ἐνθυμήσει. Although δυνάμει is adopted by Migne, the stronger attestation of the less usual ἐνθυμήσει makes it the better reading.

b: yz's κεκαλλώπισται instead of the more unusual καταγραφομένη is obviously a *lectio facilior*.

c: yz read: "by your wisdom you impart to each the corresponding provisions."

d: yz's στοιχείων (a: στοιχείων σωμάτων) obviously is an attempt to explain the somewhat unusual σωμάτων. The parallel passage in 8.12.17 also has στοιχείων in this context.

General Comment

After the opening formula of address (Jewish from the start but immediately christianised), the rest of the prayer consists mainly (§ 1–6) of a praise-ful listing of God's acts of creation, patterned upon Genesis 1, but with deviations in the order of the acts (on which see Bousset, *Gebetssammlung* 455–457) and in a strongly hellenised form. § 7 gives expression to the feeling of inadequacy to describe properly the greatness of God's creation. The closing paragraph (§ 8) hints at the story of Adam and Eve's disobedience in Genesis 3 but adds that instead of punishing them with eternal death God promised them resurrection. The whole prayer is permeated with Greek philosophical terminology and ideas.

Notes

(1+8) "Blessed are you, O Lord, King of the ages, who made all things (...) you reviver of the dead." Εὐλογητὸς εἶ, Κύριε βασιλεῦ τῶν αἰώνων, ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ὅλα (...) ὁ ζωοποιὸς τῶν νεκρῶν = *Barukh 'ata Adonai, melekh ha'olam(im), bore' ha-kol* (or: *qoneh ha-kol*, or: *yotser hakol*) ... *mechayyeh ha-metim*. The first part is a variant of the standard opening benediction of many Jewish prayers; e.g., *Avoth* and *Da'at* in the Amidah open with *barukh 'ata Adonai*, and in many other prayers one finds *melekh ha'olam*; cf. βασιλεὺς τῶν αἰώνων in Tob 13:7(6), *Pap. Egerton* 5 34. Metzger (71 note a) refers to 1 Tim 1:17 as the source of the expression βασιλεὺς τῶν αἰώνων, but it should be noted that it is much more probable that the author of 1 Timothy knew this common Jewish prayer formula and that both he and the compiler drew on that source. Ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ὅλα (or πάντα) is an expression the Hebrew equivalent of which one expects to find in the second *berakhah* of the Amidah, *Gevuroth*, because the overriding theme of that benediction is God's mighty deeds of which his creation of the universe (τὰ πάντα) is of course the paramount example. It does not

occur there, however, but it does so in the first *berakhah*, *Avoth*, in the form *qoneh ha-kol*.¹¹⁹ Moreover, the formula “Blessed are you, O Lord, creator of all things (*yotser ha-kol*)” is already found in the opening line of a thanksgiving hymn from Qumran, 1QH VIII 17 (previously XVI 17); and cf. ὁ κτίσας τὰ πάντα in the prayer of Aseneth in *Jos. Asen.* 12.1; also *Corp. Herm.* 13.17.¹²⁰ It is striking that the expression “King of the universe” used for God occurs for the first time in a passage that refers to him as a reviver of the dead, in 2 Macc 7:9, “The King of the universe will raise us up to an everlasting renewal of life.” In the benediction *Gevuroth* there is a clear emphasis on God as *mechayyeh ha-metim*, “the reviver of the dead,” in that this expression is used of God both at the beginning and (twice) at the end of the prayer in all versions known to us. In our Greek prayer it is only at the end (§8) that God is called ὁ ζωοποιὸς τῶν νεκρῶν, “the reviver of the dead,” but the coincidence is striking enough to suggest that in all likelihood the origin of the Greek prayer lies in the second benediction of the Amidah, the more so since it is positioned between two prayers which correspond to the first and the third benedictions of the Amidah.¹²¹ The idea of the revival of the dead is mainly a post-biblical development in the history of Jewish religion and, even though this tenet finally gained a predominant position because it was so strongly backed by the Pharisees and later by the rabbis, it never gained a position of complete monopoly. Best known is the antagonism at this point between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, reflected in texts such as Mark 12:18–27, Acts 23:8, and *m.Sanh* 10.1 (with the gemara in *b.Sanh* 90a).¹²² For God as ζωοποιῶν τοῦς

¹¹⁹ As one will see later, it happens more than once that motifs or phrases from other Jewish *berakhot* are combined with the ones of the prayer under consideration. That the root *qnh* can mean “to create” apart from its usual meaning “to acquire” has been established in recent decades on the basis of Ugaritic texts (and see e.g., Gen 14:19 and Prov 8:22).

¹²⁰ Note that in our prayers δημιουργός does not occur, unlike in Philo, Josephus, some of the Pseudepigrapha, and the Church Fathers.

¹²¹ We do not follow Heinemann’s suggestion that this prayer reflects a form of the ‘*Alenu leshabbeach*’; see J. Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud* 223. On God as reviver of the dead in Jewish prayer see Kimelman, “Structure of the Amidah” 202–207.

¹²² See, e.g., G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1972); H. C. C. Cavallin, *Life after Death: Paul’s Argument for the Resurrection of the Dead in I Cor. 15, Part. 1: An Enquiry into the Jewish Background* (Lund: Gleerup, 1974); C. D. Ell-edge, *Life after Death in Early Judaism: The Evidence of Josephus* (WUNT III/208; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006; there more lit.). On *m.Sanh* 10.1 see now C. Setzer, “‘Talking Their Way into Empire’: Jews, Christians, and Pagans Debate Resurrection

νεκρούς see *Jos.Asen.* 20.7 and Rom 4:17. Cf. also the phrase “He will revive the dead” (*metim yechayyeh*) in the *Messianic Apocalypse* from Qumran, 4Q521 2 ii 12.

(1–8) The problems of this prayer concern mainly the large section between these opening and closing phrases. Fiensy regards it as completely the work of the compiler. The end result of his analysis (as may be seen on p. 198) is that of the forty-five lines of Greek text (according to Metzger’s edition) only two are left as belonging to the source, namely the opening and closing lines just discussed, because these have close counterparts in *Gevuroth*. Why has everything in between been left out by Fiensy? That is not only because the rest of the text does not have such obvious parallels in the second *berakhah* of the Amidah. Let us have a closer look at his arguments.¹²³

The prayer is very similar to the one in AC 8.12.9–20. After the opening line (with some obvious interpolations, e.g., “through Christ”) the prayer goes on with an enumeration of God’s various acts of creation, roughly patterned after Genesis 1 (LXX), but with a markedly different sequence.¹²⁴ Exactly the same is the case in the similar prayer in 8.12.9–20,¹²⁵ and Bousset regarded both prayers as different and independent redactions of one and the same Jewish text. But this common *Grundlage* was not at all a Jewish prayer text, says Fiensy, but the Christian liturgical tradition. And it was the compiler himself who redrafted this tradition into two both similar and different prayers, the differences having been caused perhaps by the fact that there lay several weeks or some months between his reworking of the *Grundlage* in 7.34 and in 8.12. This Christian liturgical tradition can be traced in a variety of sources, beginning as early as *1 Clement* 20, where also the various elements of creation are enumerated in praise of God. “AC 7.34 reflects the theme and language of this liturgical tradition” (140), and it was the fact that God’s great deeds were also the main theme of the Amidah’s second *berakhah* (*Gevuroth* = God’s powerful deeds) that led the com-

of the Body,” in C. Bakhos (ed.), *Ancient Judaism in Its Hellenistic Context* (JSJS 95; Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2005), 155–175, esp. 158–164. For the way the Targums read resurrection into the Hebrew Bible see H. Sysling, *Tehiyyat ha-Metim. The Resurrection of the Dead in the Palestinian Targums of the Pentateuch and Parallel Traditions in Classical Rabbinic Literature* (TSAJ 57; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996). On the epithet “der lebendigmachende Gott” see Zimmermann, *Die Namen des Vaters* 427–440.

¹²³ Presented on pp. 172–176 (also 137–140).

¹²⁴ The author was also influenced by other biblical creation accounts such as Ps 103[104] and Job 38, and to a lesser extent also Prov 8 and Sir 24.

¹²⁵ And both texts also mention Job 38 at the same point when speaking about the sea.

piler to recast this benediction using his own liturgical tradition which had such a similar emphasis. The fact that there are so many common themes and stock expressions in 7.34 and 8.12 can only be explained on the assumption that the compiler himself redacted both prayers. Everything in between the opening and closing lines can be explained in terms of either the Christian liturgical tradition or the compiler's favourite themes and expressions. Only the barest framework still reminds one of the Jewish *berak-hah*, but it does so clearly enough. So far Fiensy.

This seems to be a well-argued position. On closer scrutiny, however, matters appear to be somewhat different than suggested by Fiensy. The differences between 7.34 on the one hand and 8.12.9–20 on the other are much greater than he suggests, if only because the second prayer contains some seventy lines of Greek (in Metzger's edition) whereas the former has only forty-five. The verbal agreements amount to no more than a handful of short phrases, as can easily be gathered from Fiensy's own synoptic chart D (pp. 189–197). To explain these vast differences by the assumption that some weeks or months had lapsed between the compiler's redrafting of the source in 7.34 and in 8.12 is not very illuminating. It would seem, therefore, that Bousset was right after all that they are different redactions of a common source by different hands, and most probably 7.34 with its shorter form was the earlier one. This would explain two things: (1) the fact that most of the parallels in the Christian liturgical tradition are parallels to 8.12, much less so to 7.34; (2) the fact that, contrary to 7.34, the prayer in 8.12 has a eucharistic setting (the so-called *ante-sanctus*), which is also the case in the other liturgies adduced by Fiensy. In other words, what is applicable to 8.12 is not necessarily so to 7.34, in spite of the agreements between the two texts. This reopens the possibility that parts of the middle section of 7.34 indeed do go back to Jewish sources. In the present state of research, however, there is no way of determining to which parts that applies since Fiensy rightly points to redactional elements in some parts of this middle section (174–175). Hence the matter must be left open.¹²⁶

(1) "Who separated waters from waters by a firmament": see Gen 1:6–7. "Who also put a spirit of life into them" (ὁ καὶ πνεῦμα ζωτικὸν τούτοις

¹²⁶ It is also not possible (*pace* Bousset, *Gebetssammlung* 461) to settle the matter by referring to the indeed striking parallel in Philo's *Spec.* 1.97 which has, "The high priest of the Jews offers up prayers not only on behalf of the whole race of humankind but also on behalf of the different parts of nature, of the earth, of water, of air, and of fire. He pours forth his prayers and thanksgivings for them all, looking upon the world – as indeed it really is – as his fatherland." This final remark fits in well with the motif of the "world-citizen" in §6 of this prayer.

ἐμβλαλών): If this is a reference to Gen 2:7 where God breathed a spirit of life into Adam's nostrils, then the plural "them" is strange and since humans have not been mentioned before it would be unclear what τούτοις refers to. But if the reference were to Gen 1:2 where God's spirit hovers over the water (mentioned in the plural, ὕδατα, in the immediately preceding phrase), the formulation "he put a spirit of life into them" is very strange since this suggests a bringing to life of something which is not what the biblical verse is about. Because, however, from a grammatical point of view the word τούτοις in the text cannot but refer back to ὕδατα, we have to assume that this is what the author means, however odd that may be. "Who established the earth and stretched out the heaven": cf., apart from Genesis 1, also Ps 101(102):26 τὴν γῆν ἐθεμελίωσας; 103(104):2 ἐκτείνων τὸν οὐρανόν. "Who ordered exactly the (dis)position (διάταξις) of each one of the creatures": Also Ps 118(119):91 speaks of God's διάταξις in a creation setting. That creation was primarily a matter of bringing order (τάξις) into chaos (and not a *creatio ex nihilo*) is a common early Jewish and Christian thought.¹²⁷

(2) "Master": δεσπότης is often used as a substitute translation for YHWH instead of κύριος (e.g., by Josephus) and is found in prayers such as Jon 4:3, Jdt 9:12, Tob 8:17, Dan 9:8, 15–17, 3 Macc 2:2, 6:5, 10; Pr. Azar. 14; Ezekiel Trag., *Exagoge* 124 etc.¹²⁸ "The universe is beaming (κόσμος πεφαιδρύνεται)": cf. *Ladder of Jacob* 2.11 "the heaven which beams under you." The verb φαιδρύνω does not occur in the Greek Bible, but in pagan Greek literature it often means "to beam or brighten up with joy." "Heaven, fixed like a vault": The word καμάρα for the vault of heaven is also used in Isa 40:22. The rest of §2 is full of references or allusions to the creation story in Genesis 1, albeit in a different order than in that chapter, possibly because the author felt free to draw on other creation accounts as well. A comparable text is the non-canonical Psalm B from Qumran, 4Q381 frg. 1.

(3) "How could anyone describe it?" (πῶς ἂν τις ἐκφράσειεν): The motif of the indescribability of God's creation is probably a variant of the biblical motif of God's incomparability, e.g., Ps 39[40]:6; Isa 40:25–26;

¹²⁷ A very good parallel to §1 as a whole can be found in the (Jewish or Christian?) prayer in *Jos. Asen.* 12:1–2; see the comments by R. D. Chesnutt, "Prayer of a Convert to Judaism (Joseph and Aseneth 12–13)," in M. Kiley *et al.* (eds.), *Prayer from Alexander to Constantine* (London & New York: Routledge, 1997), 70 note 3.

¹²⁸ Cf. Euripides, *Hippolytus* 88 θεοὺς γὰρ δεσπότης καλεῖν χρέων. On God as δεσπότης see Zimmermann, *Die Namen des Vaters* 290–303 (*ibid.* 171–191 on God as Κύριος).

Sir 43:27–33 (note here esp. v. 28, “Where could we find the strength to sing his praises?”). The motif of human inability to describe God’s great deeds is also found in the Qumran *Hodayot*, e.g., 1QH XIX [formerly XI] 24 “Who among all your creatures is able to recount [your wonders]?” (cf. 11Q5 xxviii 7); also 2 *Bar.* 54.8 “For if my members were mouths or the hairs of my head voices, even then I could not honour you with praise or praise you properly, nor could I recount your splendour or tell of the glory of your beauty.” In the Bible, though, it is only in Ps 88(89):9–12 that the themes of God’s incomparability and his power in creation are interwoven.¹²⁹ “It is stopped there by your command, for you said that its waves shall be broken by it”: This is most probably an allusion to Job 38:8–11 where God says that he established the bounds of the sea and set its barred doors in place and said, “Thus far may you come but no farther, here your surging waves must halt”; cf. the very similar allusion to Job 38:8 in AC 8.12.13. Ps 103(104):6–9 may also be at the background here. “You have made it passable for small and large animals and for ships”: This is certainly an allusion (again) to Ps 103(104):25–26 ἐκεῖ ... ζῶα μικρὰ μετὰ μεγάλων, ἐκεῖ πλοῖα διαπορεύονται.

(4) “Then the earth became green etc.”: This is again a paragraph full of allusions to the creation story. When the text emphasizes that the heavenly luminaries “unwaveringly keep their course without deviating from your command in any respect” (ἀπαράβατον σώζοντες τὸν δόλιχον καὶ οὐδὲν παραλλάσσοντες τῆς σῆς προσταγῆς), again the element of the order that God has brought about is brought to the fore (see also § 1 and cf. Theophilus, *Autol.* 1.6); for ἀπαράβατος cf. 1 *En.* 2.1 οὐ παραβαίνουσιν τὴν ἰδίαν τάξιν (said about the heavenly bodies), *Jos. Asen.* 12.2 τὰ προστάγματα σου οὐ μὴ παραβαίνουσιν, and cf. for the motif 4Q432 fr. 1; further references in BDAG 97. That all this is done for “the service of humankind” (τὴν τῶν ἀθρώπων ὑπηρεσίαν)¹³⁰ is already a prelude to the motif of God’s providence that the next sections will focus upon.

¹²⁹ C. J. Labuschagne, *The Incomparability of Yahweh in the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 109, states that “what is relevant (...) is the fact that Yahweh’s activity as creator does not figure prominently in the conception of His incomparability, and that, where it does appear, it is intimately connected with His redeeming activity in history, but only of secondary importance.”

¹³⁰ The translation of ἀμειβόμενοι τὴν τῶν ἀθρώπων ὑπηρεσίαν is uncertain: “alternating for the assistance of mankind” (Darnell), “changing for the service of mankind” (Fiensy), “pour ... faire alterner les travaux des hommes” (Metzger). For the sense compare Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 17.6: quid tenebrarum et luminis dicam recursantes vices, ut sit nobis operis et quietis alterna reparatio.

(5) “Thereafter the various kinds of animals were formed”: This paragraph is a free rendering of Gen 1:20–25,¹³¹ here with a special focus on God’s πρόνοια (the term occurs three times); note that where the translation has “corresponding provisions” and “different provisions” for each animal, the Greek has κατάλληλος πρόνοια and διάφορος πρόνοια.¹³² This non-biblical emphasis has its background in a Greek motif current since Plato (*Prot.* 320d-321e), that each living being has received its own equipment (often called “weapon”) to defend itself. It is also used by Jewish authors such as Philo (*Somn.* 1.103) and Pseudo-Phocylides (125–128: “God allotted a weapon to every creature; the capacity to fly to birds, speed to horses, strength to the lions, he clothed the bulls with self-growing horns, he gave stings to the bees as their natural means of defence, but reason [or: speech, λόγος] to man as his protection”).¹³³ Whereas in Greek authors (esp. Stoics) it is usually nature that has endowed humans and animals with their “weapons,” in Jewish and Christian authors it is God’s providence. That “the skillful wisdom of your [God’s] providence” is said to have accomplished all this may be seen as another way of saying, “You have done this in your skillful and wise providence,” but it should be noted that ever since Prov 8:22–31 the personified Wisdom was seen as an agent in creation; note that in the next paragraph God gives orders to Wisdom in the creation process (*Wis* 9.2 “By your Wisdom you fashioned man;” 11Q5 26.14 “By his Wisdom he established the earth;” *Genesis Rabba* 1.1 [with a reference to Prov 8]; *Targum Neofiti* on Gen 1:1 where “in the beginning” is rendered as “by Wisdom”).¹³⁴ Moreover, the order given to Wisdom is in the form of a quotation of Gen 1:26 (“Let *us* make man”), demonstrating that in the ongoing debate on the plural form of the verb (“let us make”) in this verse among ancient Jews and Christians our author has it refer to God and Wisdom.¹³⁵

¹³¹ For the use of κατασκευάζειν for the act of creation cf. Isa 40:28; Wis 11:24; Bar 3:32 (cf. ἀκατασκεύαστος in Gen 1:1).

¹³² On *pronoia* see M. Dragona-Monachou, “Divine Providence in the Philosophy of the Empire,” *ANRW* II 36.7 (1994): 4417–4490.

¹³³ For many more details see S. O. Dickermann, *De argumentis quibusdam apud Xenophonem, Platonem, Aristotelem obviis e structura hominis et animalium petitis* (diss. Halle, 1913), 48–73, and the material in P. W. van der Horst, *The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*, (SVTP 4; Leiden: Brill, 1978), 199–201. Fiensy’s comments (*Prayers* 63 nn. 17–18) are inadequate here.

¹³⁴ For further references see J. L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible: The Bible As It Was at the Start of the Common Era* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 44–45, 63.

¹³⁵ See A. F. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports about Christianity and Gnosticism* (SJLA 25; Leiden: Brill, 1977), esp. 121–134.

(6) “As the goal of your creation you formed the rational living being”: That humans are the goal (or end, τέλος, in the sense of “final work,” cf. Philo, *Opif.* 77) of creation, an “ornament of the world” (κόσμου κόσμος) – everything in the cosmos has been created for the sake of humankind – is a common idea in pagan, Jewish, and Christian antiquity.¹³⁶ That this human is also a rational being (λογικὸν ζῷον)¹³⁷ is a typically Greek philosophical concept, developed especially by the Stoics (see, e.g., SVF 3.95) and taken over by Hellenised Jews such as Philo (e.g., *Leg.* 2.75).¹³⁸ “World citizen” (κοσμοπολίτης): That humans are citizens of the whole world is originally a Stoic idea (see, e.g., Epictetus, *Diatr.* 2.10), although the Greek term κοσμοπολίτης is scarcely found outside Philo and Christian writers depending upon him; see *Opif.* 3.¹³⁹ “You shaped a body for him from the four bodies”: For σώματα in the sense of “elements” see, e.g., [Philolaus] fr. 44B12; *Placita* 1.3.22 (p. 228 Diels); Julian, *Or.* 4, 132c.¹⁴⁰ It is a rather unusual meaning of the term σῶμα, but the author preferred it to the more common στοιχεῖον (used in this context in 8.12.17) because he indulges in wordplay here: κόσμου κόσμος ... ἐκ σωμάτων σῶμα. “You created for him a soul out of nothing”: most probably a reference to both Gen 2:7 and the (Christian) doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*.¹⁴¹ The author draws “a contrast between the corporeal origin of the body and the incorporeal ori-

¹³⁶ See the discussion of this motif in the chapter “Der Mensch als Telos der Schöpfung” in A. Kallis, *Der Mensch im Kosmos: Das Weltbild Nemesios’ von Emesa* (Münsterische Beiträge zur Theologie 43; Münster: Aschendorff, 1978), 81–90.

¹³⁷ Note that for “living being” the Greek has the same word as for “animal” in § 5, ζῷον.

¹³⁸ On the Stoic background of some elements in this prayer see also the short remarks by P. Wendland, “Zwei angeblich christliche liturgische Gebete,” *Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen*, Philologisch-historische Klasse aus dem Jahre 1910 (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1910), 330–334.

¹³⁹ D. T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria on the Creation of the Cosmos according to Moses* (PACS 1; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 103.

¹⁴⁰ The four elements are earth, water, air, and fire. That LSJ does not list this meaning of σῶμα, as Fiensy (*Prayers* 65 n. 22) says, is not correct; see there *s.v.* III 1.

¹⁴¹ The idea of *creatio ex nihilo* is first found in Christian writers of the second century (Tatian, Theophilus); in Judaism it appears not before the Middle Ages. 2 Macc 7:28 cannot be taken to imply this doctrine; see J. Goldstein, *II Maccabees* (AB 41A; Garden City: Doubleday, 1983), 307–311; D. Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (AB 43; Garden City: Doubleday, 1979), 38–39; W. Grosz, “Creatio ex nihilo,” *RGG* 2 (1999): 485–487 (lit.).

gin of the soul.”¹⁴² “You bestowed upon him fivefold sense perception” (αἴσθησις πένταθλον): Sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch. The idea of the five senses, too, has a Greek philosophical origin,¹⁴³ but it was known to Jews and Christians as well; see, e.g., *Test. Rub.* 2.3–9; 2 Enoch 30.9 (the five senses are mentioned again in our prayers in AC 7.38.4). “But over the senses you placed the charioteer of the soul, the spirit” (νοῦν τὸν τῆς ψυχῆς ἡνίοχον ταῖς αἰσθήσεσιν ἐπιστήσας): The image of the charioteer of the soul derives from a well-known passage in Plato’s *Phaedrus* 246a–b. Philo, too, refers frequently to this Platonic image in *Sacr.* 45, *Agr.* 72–73, *Migr.* 67, *Leg.* 1.73, 3.118, 128, 134, 136, and elsewhere. The idea here is that the rational part of the soul (ψυχὴ), namely the spirit (νοῦς), enables humankind to take control over the irrational parts, the senses and their perceptions, who might otherwise lead to sin.

(7) “Who can adequately describe”: see the note *ad* § 3. “A harmonious blending of the airs”: The expression κρᾶσις ἀέρων παναρμόνιος has a Greek scientific background. The idea behind it is that the air (= “climate” when in the plural; see LSJ *s.v.* 2, *in fine*) in which humans live is crucial not only to their physical but also to their spiritual and moral wellbeing; a balanced climate (Philo calls it εὐκρασία ἀέρων [a good climatological mix] in *Virt.* 154) is necessary in order to further that wellbeing; see, e.g., the highly influential [Pseudo-?] Hippocratic treatise *Περὶ ἀέρων ὑδάτων τόπων* 12.3; Plato, *Tim.* 24c; [Aristotle], *Probl.* 909a; and compare Strabo’s remarks in *Geogr.* 2.5.14 and 6.4.1 (where κρᾶσις ἀέρων occurs as well).¹⁴⁴ That God sees to it that there is a harmonious climate for his people to live in is more than just a meteorological remark, it is about God’s care for a good spiritual and moral state of mind.

(8) “But when man disobeyed you, you deprived him of the life you promised him as a reward”: a clear allusion to the story of Genesis 3. The

¹⁴² G. E. Sterling, “The Jewish Philosophy’: The Presence of Hellenistic Philosophy in Jewish Exegesis in the Second Temple Period,” in Bakhos (ed.), *Ancient Judaism in its Hellenistic Context* 148 (131–153). Sterling rightly points out the parallels in Philo (*Opif.* 146, *Decal.* 31, *Spec.* 1.294) but wrongly takes the whole passage to be of Jewish origin. At p. 151 he also takes the prayer in AC 8.12.25 to be Jewish, which it is not.

¹⁴³ D. Andriopoulos, *Sense and Perception in Greek Philosophy* (Athens: Library of Philosophy, 1975). A very brief survey in S. A. Harvey, *Scenting Salvation: Ancient Christianity and the Olfactory Imagination* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 2006), 100–105 with 278–282.

¹⁴⁴ The best treatment of this ‘environmental theory’ to date is B. Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 55–109.

expression ἔμμισθος ζωή here refers to the eternal life God promised Adam and Eve if they would be obedient (see the references to the *Life of Adam and Eve*, below). “After having put him to sleep for a little while you called him to a new birth by an oath and you loosened the bond of death”: As the immediately following acclamation of God as “reviver of the dead” demonstrates, the meaning of this line is that, although God punishes humankind temporarily with death (“sleep”),¹⁴⁵ he will finally deliver them from its bonds by resurrecting the dead. On “new birth” (παλιγγενεσία) see the note *ad* 7.33.3. For “bond” the Greek has ὄρος, “boundary, limit,” indicating that the limit of life that is death has been abolished by God. What exactly the author has in mind when he speaks about God’s oath (ὄρκος) is hard to say with certainty, but it is not improbable that he refers to a promise by God such as the one in Dan 12:2: “Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake.” It may also be the case, however, that the reference is to the story that God promised Adam a future resurrection as reported in the Greek and Latin *Life of Adam and Eve* (Gr. 28, 37, 41; Lat. 47, 51), as was already suggested by Bousset (462).¹⁴⁶

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Translation

(1) **Great are you, O Lord almighty, and great is your power, and of your understanding there is no measure.** O Creator (and) Saviour, you who are rich in favours, patient and bestowing mercy, you do not withhold salvation from your creatures. For you are good by nature, yet you spare sinners and

¹⁴⁵ M. Ogle, “The Sleep of Death,” *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 11 (1933): 81–117.

¹⁴⁶ On reminders of God’s promises in Jewish prayers see Johnson, *Prayer in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha* 46–48.

call them to repentance. For your warnings are full of compassion. How could we subsist if you were to demand us to be judged quickly, when after having experienced so much patience on your part we are scarcely able to free ourselves from our weakness?

(2) Your power is proclaimed by the heavens and your steadfastness by the earth, even though it is shaken because it is hanging upon nothing^a. The sea, that in its raging waves shepherds an innumerable company of living beings, is bound by the sandy beach and trembles before your will, and therefore it compels all to cry out: “How great are your works, O Lord! You have made all things in wisdom. The earth is full of your creation (Ps. 103[104]:24).”

(3) A fiery army of angels and intellectual spirits say: “Only One is holy to Phelmouni” [or: ‘ ... say to Phelmouni: “Only one is holy”’] (Dan 8:13), and **the holy seraphim, who together with the six-winged cherubim sing for you the song of victory, cry out with never-silent voices: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Sabaoth, heaven and earth are full of your glory! (Isa 6:3).” And the multitudes of the other orders – angels^b, archangels, thrones, dominions, principalities, authorities, and powers – say with a loud voice: “Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place (Ezek 3:12).”**

(4) Israel, your earthly assembly (that was taken) out of the gentiles, emulates the powers in heaven day and night when it sings with an overflowing heart and a willing soul: “The chariot of the Lord is ten thousand-fold thousands of thriving ones; the Lord is among them at Sinai, at the holy place (Ps. 67[68]:18).”

(5) Heaven knows the one who fixed it upon nothing, in the form of a vault, like a cube of stone, the one who united earth and water with one another, the one who poured out the air that nourishes living beings, and conjoined fire with it for warmth and comfort in darkness. One is struck by the choir of stars that points to the one who counted them and shows the one who named them, as do the living beings to the one who gave them life and trees to the one who makes them grow. All these things which have been made by your word manifest the strength of your power.

(6) For that reason every human being should send up from the bottom of his heart a hymn (of thanks) for all that to you *through Christ*, since it is thanks to you that he has power over all things.

(7) For you demonstrate your goodness by your benefactions, and your generosity by your deeds of compassion, you the only almighty one. For when you want to do something, the ability to do it is yours. For your eternal might cools flames, muzzles lions, tames sea monsters, raises up those who are sick, overturns powers, and overthrows an army of enemies and a people that is counted among the arrogant.

(8) You are the one who is in heaven, the one who is on the earth, the one who is in the sea, the one who, though being in finite areas, is himself infinite. “For there is no limit to your greatness (Ps 144[145]:3).” For this oracle is not ours, Master, but your servant’s, who says: “And you will know in your heart that the Lord your God is a God in heaven above and upon earth below, and there is no other beside him (Deut 4:39).”

(9) For there is no God except you alone, no holy one except you, Lord, the God of knowledge, the God of the holy ones, the Holy One above all holy ones. “For the holy ones are under your hands (Deut 33:3).” (You are) glorious and highly exalted, invisible by nature, and inscrutable in judgments. Your life is in want of nothing; your continuity is unchangeable and unfailing; your activity is untiring; your greatness is unlimited; your beauty is everlasting; your habitation is inaccessible; your dwelling place is immovable; your knowledge is without beginning; your truth is unchangeable; your work is unmediated; your power is unassailable; your monarchy is not in need of a successor; your kingdom is without end; your strength is irresistible; your army is great in numbers.

(10) For you are the Father of Wisdom, the one who as a cause founded the creation through a mediator, the supplier of providence, the giver of laws, the fulfiller of needs, the avenger of the ungodly and the rewarder of the righteous, *the God and Father of Christ and the Lord of those who are pious towards him, whose promise is reliable, who is incorruptible in his judgement, whose opinion is immutable^c, whose loyalty is unceasing, whose gratitude is eternal, through whom every rational and holy creature owes you worship worthy of you.*

Text-critical Notes

a: γ and ζ change the difficult Greek of this sentence into the more comprehensible σοῦ ἢ γῆ τῆν ἰσχὺν μαρτυρεῖ ἐπ’ οὐδενὸς κρεμαμένη καὶ ἀσφάλειαν ἀσάλευτον ἔχουσα.

b: the word ἄγγελοι is very uncertain since it is not in v and the mss of fam. H (except for the margin of a).

c: all editions read with the mss the iotacistic form ἀμετάπιστος; it should be corrected to ἀμετάπειστος.

General Comment

The prayer opens with praise of the Lord’s great power and goodness (§ 1). This power and glory are proclaimed by heaven and earth (§ 2), the angelic world (§ 3), and the people of Israel (§ 4). § 5 summarizes the theme of nature’s and humankind’s recognition of God’s great power. Gratefulness is the only fitting answer to all that (§ 6). The next two para-

graphs (§§ 7–8) again give examples of God’s unlimited power and greatness, § 9 stresses his uniqueness, and § 10 gives further praise. The structure of this prayer is a bit rambling, perhaps due to its interpolatory character. The identification with the *Qedushah* (i.e., the repetition of the now expanded third *berakhah* of the Amidah in an antiphon between cantor and community) is based mainly upon its third position and the fact that in both texts the striking combination of quotes from Isa 6:3 and Ezek 3:12 occurs.¹⁴⁷

Notes

(1) “Great are you, O Lord almighty, and great is your power, and of your understanding there is no measure” (Μέγας εἶ, Κύριε παντοκράτωρ, καὶ μεγάλη ἡ ἰσχὺς σου καὶ τῆς συνέσεώς σου οὐκ ἔστιν ἀριθμὸς). This opening line is clearly based upon Ps. 146[147]:5: “Great is our Lord and great is his power, and his wisdom is beyond all telling.” The word “almighty” may have been added by the compiler but may also be a common liturgical expansion of the Psalm text which is not literally quoted here, and so may have already been in the source. Moreover, κύριος παντοκράτωρ is a common designation for God in the LXX.¹⁴⁸ Of the rest of the paragraph it is hard to say whether or not it derives from the compiler since on the one hand the vocabulary does not suggest his hand (e.g., “Saviour” is here used of God; see *ad* 7.33.2), but on the other hand the emphasis on God’s mercy and forbearance would seem to be somewhat out of tune with the main theme of the prayer, God’s power and greatness, so it might have been added later. The appeal to God’s μακροθυμία, οἰκτίρμος and ἔλεος (echoing the divine epithets in Exod 34:6) is reminiscent of the prayer in 7.33.2, in a passage that is possibly from the compiler’s hand (see the note *ad locum*). “You are good by nature” (φύσει γὰρ ἀγαθὸς ὑπάρχεις): In § 7 God’s goodness is called χρηστότης but the meaning is the same. God’s goodness is mentioned *passim* in the LXX and often in Jewish prayers (Dan 3:89 LXX; Ps. Sol. 5.2; Pr. Man. 11).¹⁴⁹ That it is God’s very nature (φύσις) to be good is, however, a typically Greek idea. “A belief in the inherent goodness of god or the gods was widely shared by the Greek philosophers.”¹⁵⁰ See,

¹⁴⁷ See H. Lietzmann, *Mass and Lord’s Supper* (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 104–108.

¹⁴⁸ See Enermalm-Ogawa, *Langage* 67–71.

¹⁴⁹ Löhr, *Studien* 236, has many more instances. See also Josephus, *Ant.* 11.144, with the comments in Jonquière, *Prayer in Josephus* 188–191.

¹⁵⁰ J. H. Leshner, *Xenophanes of Colophon. Fragments: A Text and Translation with a Commentary* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 84.

e.g., Plato, *Resp.* 379b1, *Tim.* 29e1–2.¹⁵¹ This idea was also adopted by Jewish and Christian philosophers such as Philo (e.g., *Conf.* 180–181) and Clement of Alexandria (e.g., *Paed.* 1.9.82.4), although the rabbis and others retained the biblical idea that both good and evil come from God’s hand.¹⁵² “Your warnings are full of compassion”: The idea that God warns his people before punishing is found in Ezek 3:17–19; Jer 11:7–8; Neh 9:30; Jdt 8:27. “How could we subsist etc.”: That humans are not able to keep their ground before God’s judgement-seat is said in Ps 129(130):3 etc.; see also 1QH XV (formerly VII) 28–29.

(2) This paragraph does return to the main theme, but the very close parallels between this passage and 7.34.3 (redactional) and 8.12.13 suggest that the compiler is at work here. God’s greatness in creation is a favourite theme of his, so when it also occurred as a motif in his *Grundlage*, it is hard to decide where it derives from in the present text. But since § 5, which more or less summarizes this whole theme, again shows a number of striking parallels to 7.34 and 8.12, one can hardly avoid Fiensy’s conclusion (177) that both paragraphs are the compiler’s work.

The beginning of § 2 presents the translator with a problem. Σοῦ τὸ κράτος ἀνήγγειλαν οἱ οὐρανοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ κραδαιομένη τὴν ἀσφάλειαν ἐπ’ οὐδενὸς κρεμαμένη is problematic (as the medieval copyists already found; see text-critical note a) in that the function of the accusative τὴν ἀσφάλειαν is unclear. Whiston, Darnell, Metzger and others (see also the above translation) take it to depend upon ἀνήγγειλαν with γῆ as grammatical subject, but Fiensy says it is an *accusativus respectus* and then wonders whether “the earth is shaken with respect to security or does it hang upon nothing with respect to security?” (67 n.3). He opts for the latter, but that is more forced than to take it as the object of “proclaimed,” though the problem remains that one expects a different word order in that

¹⁵¹ See F. Solmsen, *Plato’s Theology* (Ithaca – New York: Cornell University Press, 1942), 68, 138–139, 149–150. W. J. Verdenius, “Platons Gottesbegriff,” in *La notion du divin d’Homère jusqu’à Platon* (Entretiens sur l’antiquité classique 1; Genève: Fondation Hardt, 1954), 239–293. The best recent treatment of God’s essential goodness in Greek philosophy is by M. Bordt, *Platons Theologie* (Freiburg & München: Verlag Karl Alber, 2006), 95–135.

¹⁵² See H.-J. Becker, “Einheit und Namen Gottes im rabbinischen Judentum,” in R. G. Kratz & H. Spieckermann (eds.), *Götterbilder, Gottesbilder, Weltbilder*, Band II: *Griechenland und Rom, Judentum, Christentum und Islam* (FAT II/18; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 153–187, esp. 175–178. On the way philosophically educated Jews and Christians tried to cope with the biblical notion of God’s anger see P. W. van der Horst, “Philo of Alexandria on the Wrath of God,” in his *Jews and Christians in Their Graeco-Roman Context* (WUNT 196; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 128–134.

case (κραδαινομένη after τὴν ἀσφάλειαν). Probably κραδαινομένη is a corrupt doublet of κρεμανένη and should be deleted: “Your power is proclaimed by the heavens and your steadfastness by the earth, even though it is hanging upon nothing.” The idea that the earth is hanging upon nothing has a Greek cosmological background.¹⁵³ See, e.g., Anaximander, fr. 12A11 DK: “The earth stays aloft, not supported by anything but staying where it is because it is at the same distance from anything” (τὴν δὲ γῆν εἶναι μετέωρον ὑπὸ μηδενὸς κρατουμένη, μένουσα δὲ διὰ τὴν ὁμοίαν πάντων ἀπόστασιν, quoted by Hippolytus, *Ref.* 1.6.3). Anaximenes, fr. 13A7 DK, says the earth is a flat body riding upon the air (τὴν δὲ γῆν πλατεῖαν εἶναι ἐπὶ ἀέρος ὄχουμένην, quoted in Hippolytus, *Ref.* 1.7.4). Cf. also Plato, *Phaedo* 108e-109a; Aristotle, *De caelo* 294b13–21. The idea is that of a disk-shaped or drum-shaped earth held in place by free suspension in the air.¹⁵⁴ The motif of the steadfastness of the earth is also expressed, e.g., in Ps 92(93):1 καὶ γὰρ ἐστερέωσεν τὴν οἰκουμένην ἥτις οὐ σαλευθήσεται. “The sea (...) is bound by the sandy beach and trembles before your will”: For this motif see the notes *ad* 7.34.3. The quote at the end from Ps 103(104):24 (“the earth is full of your creation [κτίσεως]”) differs slightly from what one finds in modern editions of LXX Psalms, where the adopted reading is, “the earth is full of your property (κτήσεως),” a case of iotacistic confusion.

(3) In this paragraph God’s holiness is emphasized as in the *Qedushah*. “The fiery army of angels and the intellectual spirits say: ‘Only One is holy for Phelmouni’” (καὶ στρατὸς ἀγγέλων φλεγόμενος καὶ πνεύματα νοερά λέγουσιν· Εἷς ἅγιος τῷ Φελμουני). Other translations have: “(...) the intellectual spirits say to Phelmouni: Only one is holy.” The Greek is a quote from Dan 8:13, where the visionary sees angels (“holy ones”) and hears “a holy one speaking and another holy one answering him, whoever he was,” where the Theodotion version has the words quoted here, εἷς ἅγιος τῷ Φελμουני = “one holy one (said) to Phelmouni.” The Greek translators (Theodotion, Aquila and LXX)¹⁵⁵ seem not to have understood and hence transliterated the Hebrew *palmoni*, “a certain one.” Be that as it may, both in the Hebrew and in the Greek, Phelmouni is the one addressed, but in the context of our prayer that no longer seems to be the case, since the word

¹⁵³ See M. R. Wright, *Cosmology in Antiquity* (London – New York: Routledge, 1995), 39–41.

¹⁵⁴ The biblical idea is more that of a round disk floating upon a vast extent of water or standing upon pillars; see R. A. Oden, “Cosmogony, Cosmology,” *ABD* 1 (1992): 1162–1171, esp. 1167–8.

¹⁵⁵ See Reider-Turner, *Index* 249.

order militates against it: λέγουσιν “εἷς ἅγιος” τῷ Φελμουνι would be odd Greek. However, the alternative is also problematic for it is hard to discover what the composer of the prayer could have meant by “Only One is holy to Phelmouni.”¹⁵⁶ The whole phrase is probably to be attributed to the compiler, since in other passages where he inserts quotes from Daniel, he uses the Theodotion version as well.¹⁵⁷ The angels are here called a “fiery army” because angels were often thought to have a body of fire on the basis of Ps 103[104]:4 ὁ ποιῶν τοὺς ἀγγέλους αὐτοῦ πνεύματα καὶ τοὺς λειτουργοὺς αὐτοῦ πῦρ φλέγον. See, e.g., 4 *Ezra* 8:22; 2 *Bar.* 21:6; 48:8; *PRE* 4.¹⁵⁸

“The holy seraphim, who together with the six-winged cherubim sing for you the song of victory, cry out with never-silent voices: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Sabaoth, heaven and earth are full of your glory!’” (ἅγιος, ἅγιος, ἅγιος Κύριος Σαβαώθ, πλήρης ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ τῆς δόξης σου). Apart from some minor elements, the passage does not show traces of the compiler’s vocabulary. The words “the song of victory” (τὴν ἐπινίκιον ᾠδὴν) do appear in other early Christian liturgies as well and may have replaced another expression in the source. That seraphim and cherubim are mentioned here in combination has to do with the fact that seraphim are mentioned in Isaiah 6 as the six-winged angels who sing the Trishagion that is quoted here and that the angels who are mentioned in the context of Ezek 3:12, quoted immediately hereafter, are identified as cherubim in Ezekiel 10; the same combination occurs in 2 *En.* 21:1. The quote of Isa 6:3 is not exact, for the Hebrew and also the Greek versions of the biblical text have only “the earth” (without heaven), but most early Christian liturgies have the formula with “heaven and earth.”¹⁵⁹ So “heaven and” may also be

¹⁵⁶ Sigal’s theory, based upon interpretations of Dan 8:13 by Rashi and Ibn Ezra, to the effect that Phelmouni means “the mysterious and wonderful one,” scil. God, has not met with acceptance; see Ph. Sigal, “Early Christian and Rabbinic Liturgical Affinities: Exploring Liturgical Acculturation,” *NTS* 30 (1984): 63–90, here 80–1.

¹⁵⁷ Fiensy, *Prayers* 177, gives references.

¹⁵⁸ For a discussion of this motif see S. M. Olyan, *A Thousand Thousands Served Him: Exegesis and the Naming of Angels in Ancient Judaism* (TSAJ 36; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1993), 29, 71–73. More references in Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible* 75–76.

¹⁵⁹ See on this change E. Werner, *The Sacred Bridge: The Interdependence of Liturgy and Music in Synagogue and Church during the First Millennium* (London: Dennis Dobson – New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), 282–287. On p. 285 Werner asserts that the Targum on Isaiah demonstrates that the reading “heaven and earth” has a Jewish origin, but this reading is not found in any edition of Targ. Isa. What he probably means is that the Thrice Holy is diversified in the Targum as holy in heaven, holy on earth, and holy in eternity (“And one would receive from the other, saying

an addition by the compiler.¹⁶⁰ The various versions of the *Qedushah* (known as the *Qedushah de-Amidah*, the *Qedushah de-Yotser*, and the *Qedushah de-Sidra*¹⁶¹) always follow the biblical text (“the earth is full of his glory”), so the probability that the compiler added the words familiar to him from his own liturgical tradition seems to be great.¹⁶² Some scholars, however, argue that the formula “heaven and earth” in quotations of Isa 6:3 occurs in early Jewish sources as well, e.g., *Test. Isaac* 6:5, 24; 2 *En.* 21:1.¹⁶³

‘Holy in the high heavens, the place of his residence, holy on earth, the work of His might, holy in eternity! The Lord of Hosts! The splendor of His glory fills all the earth!’”), but that is not the same as the formula “heaven and earth are full of his glory.” On the many variant forms in which Isa 6:3 is quoted see also Newman, “Holy, Holy, Holy” 123–134, and A. Baumstark, “Trishagion und Qeduscha,” *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* 3 (1923): 18–32. Note that Isa 6:3 is also quoted partially in the angelic song in Rev 4:8.

¹⁶⁰ In the formulation in 1 *Clem.* 34:6 πλήρης πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ the words “the entire creation” could be taken to be the equivalent of “heaven and earth.” For further discussion see A. Baumstark, “Trishagion und Qeduscha”; Newman, “Holy, Holy, Holy”; and D. Flusser, “Sanktus und Gloria,” in O. Betz a.o. (eds.), *Abraham unser Vater: Juden und Christen im Gespräch über die Bibel. Festschrift für Otto Michel* (Leiden: Brill, 1963), 129–152. esp. 131–2. See also W. C. van Unnik, “1 Clement 34 and the ‘Sanctus,’” in his *Sparsa Collecta*, vol. 3 (Leiden: Brill, 1983), 326–361; B. D. Spinks, *The Sanctus in the Eucharistic Prayer* (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), 25–54; L. I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue. The First Thousand Years* (New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2000), 540–544.

¹⁶¹ On these three forms of the *Qedushah* see Spinks, *Sanctus* 39–45; I. Elbogen, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1967 [=1931, 3. Aufl.]), 61–67; E. Werner, “The Doxology in Synagogue and Church,” in J. J. Petuchowski (ed.), *Contributions to the Scientific Study of Jewish Liturgy* (New York: Ktav, 1970), 318–370, esp. 334–349; M. Nulman, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Prayer* (North Vale: Jason Aronson, 1996), 188–191; Th. Lehnardt, “Der Gott der Welt ist unser König: Zur Vorstellung der Königsherrschaft Gottes im Shema und seinen Benediktionen,” in Hengel & Schwemer (eds.), *Königsherrschaft Gottes und himmlischer Kult* 299–306.

¹⁶² *Contra* Fiensy, *Prayers* 178, who appeals to Flusser for his position, but Flusser, “Sanktus und Gloria” 132 n. 2, says about AC 7.35: “[D]a das ganze Gebet christlich überarbeitet ist, könnte natürlich das Trishagion an den christlichen Ritus angeglichen sein.” In the same note Flusser tentatively suggests that perhaps originally “heaven and” figured in the *Qedushah* but that the text was later corrected towards the biblical wording. That must remain speculation. See also Lietzmann, *Mass and Lord’s Supper* 674.

¹⁶³ See Chr. Böttrich, “Das ‘Sanctus’ in der Liturgie der hellenistischen Synagoge,” *Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie* 35 (1994/95): 10–36 (with the criticism by Lühr, *Studien* 383 n. 96).

These documents were preserved, however, in Christian circles and may have been altered so as to make them conform to Christian usage. Yet it can certainly not be excluded that the formula “heaven and earth” does derive from a Jewish source since one of the *Hodayot* from Qumran clearly alludes to Isa 6:3 with the words, “Your holy spirit [...] *the fullness of heaven and earth* [...] your glory, the fullness of ...” (1QH VIII 12 [formerly XVI 3]). Moreover, both the (admittedly later) Old-Slavonic and the Hebrew versions of the *Prayer of Jacob* have “heaven and earth” in their quote of the Trishagion as does the longer recension of 2 *En.* 21:1.¹⁶⁴ On balance the overall situation remains too uncertain, however, to justify printing the words “heaven and” in bold type. Another difference with Isa 6:3 is that the biblical text describes the praise of God by angels in the third person (“his glory”),¹⁶⁵ whereas here it has become a direct address of God in the second person (“your glory”), a trait more often seen in Christian versions of the Trishagion.¹⁶⁶

“And the multitudes of the other orders – angels, archangels, thrones, dominions, principalities, authorities, and powers – say with a loud voice: ‘Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place’ (Ezek 3:12 εὐλογημένη ἡ δόξα Κυρίου ἐκ τοῦ τόπου αὐτοῦ).”¹⁶⁷ It is precisely this combination of quotes from Isa 6:3 and Ezek 3:12 (and their distribution over two different groups of angels) that is the characteristic core of the *Qedushah* and is to be

¹⁶⁴ See R. Leicht, “*Qedushah* and Prayer to Helios: A New Hebrew Version of an Apocryphal Prayer of Jacob,” *JSQ* 6 (1999): 140–176, esp. 151 and 175. The Slavonic text is to be found in the second chapter of the *Ladder of Jacob*; see H. G. Lunt, “Ladder of Jacob,” *OTP* 2:401–411, here 408; the Hebrew version was first published in P. Schäfer & Sh. Shaked, *Magische Texte aus der Kairoer Geniza*, vol. 2 (TSAJ 64; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 27–78. It is also to be kept in mind that the expression “God of heaven and earth” occurs already in Gen 24:3, and that the designation “God who created heaven and earth” occurs *passim*; see N. C. Habel, “Yahweh, Maker of Heaven and Earth,” *JBL* 91 (1972): 321–337. Note also Jer 23:24, “Do I not fill heaven and earth?, says the Lord.” For other ways of quoting Isa 6:3 in free and inexact forms in ancient Jewish documents see Böttrich, “Sanctus” 29–32.

¹⁶⁵ Thus also in the prayer in AC 8.12.27. The two recensions of 2 *En.* 21:1, also vary between “your glory” and “his glory” (see Böttrich, “Sanctus” 19).

¹⁶⁶ See Böttrich, “Sanctus” 12; Newman, “Holy, Holy, Holy” 124. This feature, however, is also paralleled in the Hebrew and Slavonic versions of the *Prayer of Jacob*; see Leicht, “*Qedushah*” 175.

¹⁶⁷ On the question of whether or not the reading with *barukh* (blessed) is a scribal mistake for *berum* (on high) see D. J. Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot. Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel’s Vision* (TSAJ 16; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988), 44–5.

found, e.g., in *t. Ber.* 1.9 and 3 *En.* 2.¹⁶⁸ Even though this is now generally regarded as a proof of the origin of this prayer as a form of the *Qedushah*, it should be noticed, however, that in the same period that the AC were compiled, the Antiochene Church Father John Chrysostom quoted this very same combination of biblical verses in his first sermon against the judaisers (*Adv. Jud.* 1.1 [without “heaven and”]). This observation cannot fail to make the *communis opinio* somewhat less certain. It is perhaps counterbalanced somewhat by the fact that, whereas the biblical text of Ezek 3:12 does not explicitly state that it is the angelic beings who recite the blessing, this is made explicit in the Targum to this verse (by adding *we’amerin*), exactly as is done in our text (ἀγγελοῦσιν).

Lists of angelic powers are to be found in both early Jewish and Christian sources (e.g., 1 *En.* 61:10, 71:7–9; *T. Adam* 4; 1 Pet 3:22),¹⁶⁹ so the phenomenon in itself does not point in a certain direction, but the sequence of θρόνοι, κυριότητες, ἀρχαί and ἔξουσίαι seems to be too much of a quote of Col 1:16 to go unsuspected. Since “archangels” further appears only in the compiler’s material, we may conclude that the whole list is his work.¹⁷⁰ Fiensy’s attempt to save “angels” and “powers” is not convincing since after “the multitudes of other orders” it would be futile to name only two. Bousset, too, thinks the list of angelic powers may be from the Jewish source (with reference to 1 *En.* 61:10) and suggests that Col 1:16 may draw upon such a list, but that is not convincing.¹⁷¹ The concept of angelic liturgy has ancient roots and is attested in many early Jewish sources, especially in a wide variety of apocalyptic and mystical documents (e.g., 2 *En.* 8:8, 17:1, 20:3; 4QShirot ‘Olat ha-Shabbat; 11Q5 xxvi [Hymn to the Creator]).¹⁷²

¹⁶⁸ Perhaps this combination is found already in Qumran texts such as 4Q405. See E. G. Chazon, “Human and Angelic Prayer in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in E. G. Chazon (ed.), *Liturgical Perspectives: Prayer and Poetry in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (STDJ 48; Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2003), 42–43. Cf. also her “The *Qedushah* Liturgy and Its History in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in Tabory (ed.), *From Qumran to Cairo* 7–17. On the antiquity of this combination see also the discussions by Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers* 138–146, and Spinks, *Sanctus* 53–54. For its occurrence in the mystical Hekhalot literature see, e.g., M. D. Swartz, *Mystical Prayer in Ancient Judaism. An Analysis of Ma’aseh Merkavah* (TSAJ 28; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), 129 (on *Ma’as. Merk.* §555–6).

¹⁶⁹ See Fiensy, *Prayers* 69 n. 9, for other references.

¹⁷⁰ Moreover, “angels” is text-critically uncertain; see text-critical note **b**.

¹⁷¹ Bousset, *Gebetssammlung* 437.

¹⁷² Fiensy, *Prayers* 69 n.10, gives more references (not all of them relevant). See now especially R. Elior, *The Three Temples: On the Emergence of Jewish Mysticism* (Oxford-Portland: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2005), 165–200.

(4) This whole paragraph derives from the Jewish source, apart from the phrase “with an overflowing heart and a willing soul” (καρδίᾳ πλήρει καὶ ψυχῇ θελούσῃ) which “looks like a stock phrase since it appears in 8.6.12 and 8.16.5” (Fiensy 178).¹⁷³ The formula ἐκκλησία ἡ ἐξ ἔθνῶν may look like a Christian formula at first sight, but it may also be an expression for God’s having chosen Israel from among the gentiles; the expression remains of doubtful provenance, however. The epithet “earthly” (ἐπίγειος) is added here in order to stress that the people of Israel forms the earthly counterpart of the heavenly powers (= the angelic orders) in their common liturgy which is conducted in unison¹⁷⁴ by angels above and Jews below. This motif of the coordination of heavenly and earthly liturgy is well-known in the history of early Jewish worship; it occurs already in 4QShirot ‘Olat ha-Shabbat¹⁷⁵ and in the Qumran *Hodayot*¹⁷⁶ and is also a recurring theme in the later mystical *Hekhalot* literature.¹⁷⁷ The quote from Ps 67[68]:18 (“The chariot of the Lord is ten thousand-fold thousands of thriving ones; the Lord is among them at Sinai, at the holy place”) also plays an important role in early Jewish mystical sources and in angelological speculations.¹⁷⁸

(5) This paragraph is completely from the compiler’s hand; see above *sub* (2). References to the creation story in Genesis 1 and other biblical passages are here woven together so as to make the whole into a doxology. “Heaven knows ...”: Perhaps the idea is that the parts of creation are well aware of who created them and realize their being dependent upon him. “The one who fixed it [heaven] upon nothing, in the form of a vault, like a cube of stone” (τὸν ἐπὶ μηδενὸς αὐτὸν καμαρώσαντα ὡς λιθόκυβον, the latter word being a *hapax legomenon* meaning a block of stone in cubic

¹⁷³ But cf. already 2 Macc 1:3 καρδίᾳ μεγάλῃ καὶ ψυχῇ βουλομένη.

¹⁷⁴ Ἀμιλλωμένη usually means “competing, emulating.” Here it indicates that Israel strives to join in and keep in harmony with the angelic choirs in their heavenly liturgy. For the variant forms of joint human-angelic praise see Chazon, “Human and Angelic Prayer in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls” 34–47 (there older literature).

¹⁷⁵ See C. Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985); also her new edition in DJD XI: *Qumran Cave 4: VI* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 173–401. To give an example: 4Q400 2 1–7 “... to praise your glory wondrously with the gods of knowledge [=angels] and the praiseworthiness of your kingship with the holiest of the holy ones [=angels].”

¹⁷⁶ Chazon, “Human and Angelic Prayer” 43–45.

¹⁷⁷ See R. Elior, “From Earthly Temple to Heavenly Shrine: Prayer and Sacred Song in the Hekhalot Literature and its Relation to Temple Traditions,” *JSQ* 4 (1997): 217–267.

¹⁷⁸ Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot* 143–149, 288–289, 316–318, 501–504; also Olyan, *A Thousand Thousands Served Him* 50–51.

shape): This expression is based upon a combination of two biblical verses: Isa 40:22 ὁ στήσας ὡς καμάραν τὸν οὐρανόν and Job 38:38 κεκόλληκα δὲ αὐτὸν (sc. οὐρανόν) ὥσπερ λίθω κύβον. “[He] conjoined fire with it [heaven] for warmth and comfort in darkness” is a reference to the creation of sun and moon in Gen 1:14–18. That the moon was created in order to give consolation or encouragement in the darkness is a rare notion that has a parallel in Novatian’s hymn on the creation in his *De trinitate* 1.7: *lunae candens globus ad solatium noctis*. “The choir of stars that point to the one who counted them” is a clear allusion to Ps 146(147):4, a verse that is also alluded to in Ezekiel the Tragedian, *Exag.* 79–80.

(6) Apart from the obvious interpolation “through Christ,” there is no reason to doubt the Jewish origin of this paragraph, and it ties in neatly with § 4 about singing in unison with the angels. Since God has given to humankind dominion over all things (διὰ σὲ τῶν ἀπάντων κρατῶν; see Gen 1:28), it is fitting that everyone should send up to him a song of heartfelt (ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν στέρνων) thanks.

(7) It is not easy to determine whether this paragraph derives from the source or from the compiler. Fiensy says the first half (up to “the ability to do it is yours”) with its emphasis on God’s mercy does not harmonize with the theme of the sanctification of God and so was not in the source, but that the second half was, since its contents follow smoothly after § 6. It could be objected, however, that, firstly, when § 6 ends with praise of God for giving humans power over all things, it makes sense to speak thereafter of God’s goodness and benefactions, amongst which is also his compassion (which, moreover, is also mentioned at this point in some versions of the *Qedushah*).¹⁷⁹ His compassion (οἰκτιρμοί) is a manifestation of his power, and for that reason the text goes on to say that God is always able to do what he wants (cf. *cuncta pollens* for Jupiter in Seneca, *Agam.* 805).¹⁸⁰ And, secondly, if § 6 ends with praise of God for having given humankind power over all things, whereas the second half of § 7 is about God’s own power over all things, there is a shift of theme here, which is greater than that between § 6 and § 7a. So both § 7a and 7b may well derive from the source, the more so since the vocabulary of both passages is atypical of the compiler.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ See, e.g., Hirsch, *Siddur Tefilloth Yisra’el* 361.

¹⁸⁰ On this motif see W. C. van Unnik, “‘Alles ist dir möglich’ (Mk. 14,36),” in O. Böcher, K. Haacker (eds.), *Verborum veritas. Festschrift für Gustav Stählin* (Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 1970), 27–36.

¹⁸¹ Fiensy, *Prayers* 179, rightly rejects the thesis that the thematic similarity of § 7b to Heb 11:33–34 implies dependence upon that passage, though there may well be a common Jewish tradition (hymnic?) behind both passages.

The $\sigma\upsilon$ γάρ style at the beginning of §7 is also found in §10 and in 7.36.3; cf. also 3 Macc 2:3 (Simon’s prayer); Josephus, *Ant.* 1.272 (Isaac’s prayer); and the prayer in *1 Clem.* 60.1.¹⁸² For God’s goodness, see the note on §1; for his being able to do whatever he wants, see Wis 12:18; for his cooling flames, see Dan 3; for his muzzling lions, see Dan 6; for his taming sea monsters, see Jon 2; for his raising up the sick, see 2 Kings 5; for his overturning powers etc., see 2 Kings 19. There is here a remote parallel with Heb 11:33–34.

The words λαὸν ἀριθμούμενον ἐν τῷ ὑπερηφανεύεσθαι in the final line are very difficult to translate: “the people numbered with those who behave arrogantly” (Fiensy), “a people numbered for its arrogance” (Darnell), “a people numbered in their arrogance” (Whiston and Goodenough); but what does it mean? One would expect ἐν τοῖς ὑπερηφάνοις and not an infinitive. Ἐν τῷ + infinitive usually has either an instrumental or a causal sense. So the phrase should mean something like “a people that is reckoned/ counted/numbered because it behaves in an arrogant way” but that hardly makes sense. I am therefore tempted to take ἀριθμέω here in the rare sense of “to count out, to pay” (LSJ *s.v.*2), which would yield “a people that is put paid because of its arrogant behaviour.” That might be a reference to the Romans and is also reminiscent of the twelfth *berakhah* in the Amidah, the *Birkat ha-Minim*, which asks God to uproot “the dominion of arrogance” (*malkut zaddon*). But the exact sense remains uncertain. Cf. also Prov 3:34 Κύριος ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται. Metzger (3.79 n. r) here refers to the story of David’s numbering (ἀριθμεῖν) of the people of Israel in 2 Sam 24 but that is an unlikely suggestion.

(8) Even though emphasizing God’s uniqueness (as Father) is typical of the compiler, it is at this point that also the text of some versions of the *Qedushah* has this same emphasis,¹⁸³ which makes it very probable that at least large parts of both §8 and §9 were in the source. In §8 Fiensy has doubts only about the clause “the one who, though being in finite areas, is himself infinite,” since this emphasis on God’s infinitude is found also in AC 8.15.7. That may be right, and in view of the compiler’s tendency to insert biblical quotes into his sources, it would seem safe to take the quote from Ps 144[145]:3 to be his addition as well.¹⁸⁴ The quote from Deut 4:39 then excellently ties in with the opening line of §8: “You are the one who is

¹⁸² See Löhr, *Studien* 225.

¹⁸³ See Hirsch, *Siddur* 360 (four times *’echad*).

¹⁸⁴ There is some confusion here in Fiensy’s work in that on p. 180 he includes the quote from Ps 144[145]:3 as the compiler’s work, whereas at the same time this quote appears on p. 198 in his reconstructed Jewish source.

in heaven, the one who is on the earth, the one who is in the sea”~ “You will know in your heart that the Lord your God is a God in heaven above and on earth below, and there is no other beside him.” Why the text so strongly emphasizes that “this¹⁸⁵ oracle is not ours, but your servant’s” (μή γάρ ἡμέτερόν ἐστιν τοῦτο, δέσποτα, τοῦ θεράποντός σου λόγιόν ἐστιν) is unclear. The fact that, instead of οὐ, the negation μή is used here with the indicative, seems to indicate that the sentence actually is either a rhetorical question to which an emphatic “no” is the only possible answer or a rather emotional statement (“it is out of the question!”),¹⁸⁶ but it is hard to see why the author would use such a superfluous construction in this case. Perhaps it is a clumsy way to account for the change of referent for “you” (in the previous quote “you” referred to God, in the latter quote it refers to Israel). For λόγιον (oracle, lit. saying [of a deity]) designating God’s words through Moses and the prophets and hence biblical texts see Deut 33:9; Ps 11(12):7; *Ep. Arist.* 177; Philo, *Mos.* 2.262, *Fuga.* 60, *Cont.* 25; Rom 3:2; Acts 7:38; Heb 5:12; see further BDAG 598 and PGL 805–806.

(9) This paragraph continues the theme of God’s uniqueness (οὐδὲ γάρ ἔστι θεὸς πλὴν σοῦ μόνου)¹⁸⁷ with echoes of Isa 45:5, 14, 18, 22. That God alone is holy echoes the *Trishagion* of Isa 6:3. The curious plural in θεὸς γνώσεων derives from 1 Sam 2:3 LXX (MT *’el de’oth*) and it is also found in 1QH XXII 15 “Blessed are you, O God of knowledge (*’el ha-de’oth*)” and in 1QH IX 26 (here “God” is written in Palaeo-Hebrew characters); cf. 4Q427 8 ii 15–6 and 4Q506 131–132 9. “Gods of knowledge (*’eley da’at*)” in the sense of angels are also mentioned in one of the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 4Q400 2 1 (cf. also 1QS 3.15). The “holy ones” are angels (as they are also called in the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*). Finally there is a quotation of Deut 33:3 that may still belong to the source, although that is far from certain in view of the compiler’s inclination to insert biblical quotes, but the now following string of phrases with adjectives from a *theo-*

¹⁸⁵ For τοῦτο instead of τόδε, a post-classical usage, see G. Mussies, *The Morphology of Koine Greek* (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 179–180.

¹⁸⁶ See R. Kühner & B. Gerth, *Ausführliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache*, vol. II/2 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1966 = repr. of the 1904 edition), 183 on the use of μή in main clauses in order to express “das Gefühl der Abneigung, des Abscheus, womit man einen Gedanken von sich abwehrt: kein Gedanke daran!”

¹⁸⁷ On this “μόνος-Formel” see E. Peterson, ΕΙΣ ΘΕΟΣ. *Epigraphische, formgeschichtliche und religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (FRLANT, N. F. 24; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1926), 196, and Zimmermann, *Die Namen des Vaters* 544.

logia negativa vocabulary (ἀόρατος, ἀνεξιχνίαστος, ἀνενδεής, ἄτρεπτος, ἀνεκλιπής, ἀκάματος, ἀπερίγραφος, ἀπρόσιτος, ἀμετανάστευτος, ἀμεσίτευτος, ἀνεπιβούλευτος, ἀδιάδοχος, ἀτελεύτητος) are certainly the compiler's work. Such constructions are favoured by him (Fiensy 180 and 205–206 gives a list of instances, e.g., 8.5.1, 8.6.11, 8.12.6–7) and the vocabulary is his. So the rest of § 9 is redactional.¹⁸⁸

(10) The same applies to § 10, since, apart from obvious Christian phrases such as “the God and Father of Christ etc.,” this paragraph first enumerates a number of the compiler's favourite themes (creation through wisdom as mediator, providence in creation, the giving of the laws) and then continues the list of *theologia negativa* adjectives (ἀδιάφυστος, ἄδωροδόκητος, ἀμετάπειστος, ἄπαιστος, ἄιδιος).¹⁸⁹ I agree with Fiensy that one cannot exploit the contradiction between the statement in § 9 that God's work is unmediated (ἀμεσίτευτον) and the one in § 10 that he created his handiwork through a mediator (διὰ μεσίτου) so as to claim the whole of § 9 for the Jewish source, as Kohler did.¹⁹⁰ “One must not hold the compiler to strict consistency when he succumbs to such eulogistic inclinations” (Fiensy 181). We must assume that the compiler has supplanted the original Jewish ending of the prayer with one more of his own taste.

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Bibliography

- Bousset, *Eine jüdische Gebetssammlung* 442–445.
 Darnell, *OTP* 2.682–684.
 Fiensy, *Prayers* 74–79, 181–183.
 Goodenough, *By Light, Light* 310–312.
 Kohler, “The Origin and Composition” 418–420.

¹⁸⁸ For a parallel see the *theologia negativa* section in Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 5.12.81, and the comments by J. Whittaker, “APPHTOΣ KAI AKATONOMAS-TOΣ,” in H.-D. Blume & F. Mann (eds.), *Platonismus und Christentum. Festschrift für Heinrich Dörrie* (JAC.E 10; Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1983), 303–306. For the history of the *theologia negativa* see D. Carabine, *The Unknown God: Negative Theology in the Platonic Tradition* (Louvain: Peeters – Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995).

¹⁸⁹ Also the use of the rare μισθαποδότης (rewarder) for God would seem to be borrowed from Hebr 11:6 where this word occurs for the first time. BDAG 653: “only Heb. and ecl. lit.”

¹⁹⁰ Kohler, “Origin” 417.

Metzger, *Constitutions apostoliques* 3.82–87.

Miller, “Liturgy and Communal Identity: Hellenistic Synagogal Prayer 5 and the Character of Early Syrian Christianity”.

Translation

(1) O Lord almighty, you created the world *through Christ* and you have instituted the Sabbath in memory of the fact that it was on that day that you rested from your works – for training in your laws, and you have also ordained festivals for the gladdening of our souls, so that we may be reminded of the Wisdom created^a by you.

(2) *How for us he submitted to birth through a woman, how he appeared in (this) life manifesting himself in his baptism, how he who appeared is God and man, how he suffered for us by your consent, and died, and arose by your power. Therefore, when we celebrate the feast of the resurrection, we rejoice on that Sunday over the one who conquered death and brought to light life and immortality. For through him you have brought the gentiles to yourself in order to make them a special people, the true Israel, loved by God (and) seeing God.*

(3) For you, O Lord, you also led our fathers out of the land of Egypt, and you saved them from an iron furnace and from clay and the making of bricks, you redeemed them from the hand of Pharaoh and his underlings, and you led them through the sea as through dry land, and in the desert you sustained^b them with all sorts of good things.

(4) You gave them the Law of the ten words spoken by your voice and written by your hand. You commanded them to keep the Sabbath, not in order to give them a pretext for laziness but as an opportunity for piety, for the knowledge of your power, for the prevention of evil, by confining them as it were within a sacred precinct for the sake of instruction, and for rejoicing in the number seven. For this reason there are one seven (week), seven sevens (weeks), the seventh month, the seventh year, and according to its cycle^c the fiftieth year for remission. (5) (This is) so as to prevent humankind from having any excuse to pretend ignorance. For that reason you commanded them not to work on any Sabbath, so that no one would even be willing to speak a word in anger on the day of the Sabbath. For Sabbath means resting from creation, the completion of the world, searching of the laws, (and) thankful praise to God for the gifts he gave to humankind.

(6) *(But) the Lord’s day surpasses all this! It shows the Mediator himself, the one who exercises providence, the Lawgiver, the cause of the resurrection, the firstborn of all creation, God the Word and a man born of Mary, the only one begotten without a man, who lived a holy life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, died, and arose from the dead. So the Lord’s day com-*

mands us, O Master, to offer you thanks for all these things. (7) For this is the grace offered by you which on account of its greatness has obscured every other good deed.

Text-critical Notes

a: four mss (d, s, y, z) have the theologically more ‘correct’ form γεννηθείσης instead of κτισθείσης.

b: instead of ἐτροποφόρησας of the majority of the mss, here the reading ἐτροφοφόρησας of ms e is followed (see below in the commentary).

c: instead of κατὰ ἀνακύκλησιν a, y, and z have ἀντανακύκλησις (with ἰοβηλησαῖος ὁ ἔστιν added as a gloss in a), and the margin of e reads κατ’ ἀνάκλυσιν ἐν ἄλλῳ (= in another ms).

General Comment

In the opening paragraph, God is thanked for his institution of the Sabbath and festivals. Its final line (“that we may be reminded of the Wisdom [understood as the Christ] created by you”) leads over into §2, which consists of a credal formula celebrating Christ’s deeds. §§3–4 mention the exodus, the wanderings through the desert, and the Lawgiving, and the Sabbath (the seventh day) is again emphasized, which leads to a eulogy of the number seven. §5 continues the praise of the Sabbath, but §§6–7 then heavily stress that Sunday is after all superior to the Sabbath, and the prayer ends with praise of Christ and his grace.

Since on several occasions the compiler of the AC urges his readers to keep the Sabbath (e.g. 2.36.2; 2.59.3; 5.20.19; 7.23.3),¹⁹¹ it might be argued that the major parts of this prayer are his work. It is, as Fiensy (181) rightly argued, mainly the fact that the position of this prayer in the sequence of AC 7.33–38 is exactly the one its Jewish counterpart has in the order of the Seven Benedictions for the Sabbath, which strongly pleads in favour of the Jewish origin of this prayer: both are in the fourth position and both glorify the Sabbath. Here we clearly have a case where the inter-

¹⁹¹ On Sabbath observance in early Christianity see W. Rordorf, *Sabbat und Sonntag in der alten Kirche* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1982); D. A. Carson (ed.), *From Sabbath to the Lord’s Day. A Biblical, Historical and Theological Investigation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982); S. Bacchiocchi, *From Sabbath to Sunday. A Historical Investigation of the Rise of Sunday Observance in Early Christianity* (Rome: Pontifical Gregorian University Press, 1977); H. Weiss, *A Day of Gladness: The Sabbath among Jews and Christians in Antiquity* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2003). See also the references in G. Rouwhorst, “Jewish Liturgical Traditions in Early Syriac Christianity,” VC 51 (1997): 92 n. 42, 93 n. 55.

ests of the compiler partly coincided with those of the author of the original Jewish prayer. It is probably for that reason that here the compiler tried to christianise the Jewish *Grundlage* much more explicitly and emphatically, for instance by inserting credal statements, than is the case in the other prayers.

Notes

(1) After removing the obvious interpolation “through Christ” and the editorial phrase “for training in your laws” ([εἰς μελέτην τῶν σῶν νόμων] however Jewish that may sound, but the compiler also inserted it into his source in 2.36.2 and 6.23.3),¹⁹² we are left with “Lord almighty, you created the world and you have instituted the Sabbath in memory of the fact that it was on that day that you rested from your works” (Κύριε παντοκράτορ, κόσμον ἔκτισας καὶ σάββατον ὥρισας εἰς μνήμην τούτου ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ κατέπαυσας ἀπὸ τῶν ἔργων). The reference is to Gen 2:2–3, the passage that is also quoted or referred to in the prayer for the sanctification of the Sabbath in the Jewish liturgy, the *Qiddush* or *Qedushat ha-Yom* (*Qiddush ha-Yom*), but since Gen 2:2–3 does not mention the Sabbath explicitly, this phrase may also reflect the fourth commandment of the Decalogue in the version of Exod 20:8–11 where Sabbath and creation are mentioned in tandem (as distinct from the version in Deut 5:12–15). That the Sabbath was instituted by God in memory of his creation of the world (*zekher le-ma’aseh bere’shit* in later terminology) is also an element in the said Jewish liturgical prayer, as is the motif of the Sabbath being a gift for rejoicing and gladness. This whole phrase therefore derives from the source.

“You have also ordained festivals for the gladdening of our souls, so that we may be reminded of the Wisdom created by you.” As was already remarked in the text-critical notes, the statement that Wisdom is created is, in view of the immediately following identification of Wisdom with Christ (cf. 1 Cor 1:24, 30), a heretical statement from an orthodox Christian point of view (hence the correction in the mss), but more blatantly so than one would expect from our slightly arianizing compiler. That may be a reason to retain that phrase for the *Grundlage*, the more so since the creation of Wisdom is a common theme in Jewish writings (Prov 8:22; Sir 1:15; 24:8; etc.). Yet Fiensy regards the phrase “so that we may be reminded etc.” as work of the compiler in view of his tendency to associate the creation of the world with Wisdom (182). We doubt whether that observation suffices to settle

¹⁹² Fiensy, *Prayers* 75 n. 2, rightly objects to Darnell’s translation (*OTP* 2:682) which makes God the logical subject of training in the laws.

the matter, but prefer to leave it as a *non liquet*. If, however, the phrase did belong to the source, it may be that the motif of being reminded of God's Wisdom has to be closely linked to the preceding training in his laws. Then it would be an instance of the identification of Torah and Wisdom also found elsewhere in Jewish sources of the era.

(2) In spite of the efforts of Kohler, Bousset, and Goodenough to save parts of this paragraph for the Jewish source,¹⁹³ Fiensy is certainly right in seeing all of this section on the life of Jesus Christ as a Christian interpolation. Also Goodenough's insistence that the final line, with its explanation of the name Israel as "seeing God" (ὁρῶν θεόν), must be Jewish because of the prominence of this theme in Philo (e.g., *Leg.* 3.38, 3.186, 3.212; *Post.* 92; *Fug.* 208; *Congr.* 51; *Mut.* 81; *Abr.* 57; *Her.* 78), fails to convince in view of the fact that after Philo it is so often repeated by the Church Fathers (e.g., Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 1.9; Origen, *De princ.* 4.3).¹⁹⁴ Note that the participles and pronouns in the Greek, although referring back to Σοφία, are now in the masculine form because the compiler identifies Wisdom with Jesus Christ.¹⁹⁵ The emphasis on the "feast of the resurrection" to be celebrated on Sunday is repeated in § 6.

(3) This whole paragraph is likely to derive from the Jewish source. It contains no vocabulary or themes that are the compiler's favourites, and the words "our fathers" (in τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν ἐξήγαγες ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου) for the generation of the exodus suggest a Jewish origin, "our fathers" also being mentioned in the Hebrew counterpart. For "saved from an iron furnace" see Deut 4:20, 3 Kgdms 8:51, and Jer 11:4; for "making of bricks" see Exod 1:14; for "you redeemed them from the hand of Pharaoh" see Exod 18:10, Deut 7:8;¹⁹⁶ for "through the sea as through dry land" see

¹⁹³ For instance by assuming that the last sentence originally ran, "For through *her* [i.e., Wisdom] you have brought *us* to yourself ..."

¹⁹⁴ See G. Delling, "The 'One Who Sees God' in Philo," in his *Studien zum Frühjudentum* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 364–378, and now esp. the exhaustive treatment in C. T. R. Hayward, *Interpretations of the Name Israel in Ancient Judaism and Some Early Christian Writings. From Victorious Athlete to Heavenly Champion* (Oxford – New York: Oxford University Press, 2005). Goodenough's defense of the clause is to be found in *By Light, Light* 312. Also Miller, "Liturgy and Communal Identity," takes the clause to belong to the Jewish *Vorlage*. The motif is also found in the redactional passage AC 8.15.7.

¹⁹⁵ For God's Wisdom as a personification see, e.g., Prov 8:22–31 and Wis 10–12.

¹⁹⁶ References to God's redemption of Israel in the exodus are frequent in Jewish prayers (and exorcistic formulas), e.g., 3 Macc 6:4; see P. W. van der Horst, "The God who Drowned the King of Egypt: A Short Note on an Exorcistic Formula," in his *Jews and Christians in Their Graeco-Roman Context* 280–284.

Exod 14:21–31 (cf. Ps 65[66]:6). “With all sorts of good things” (παντοίοις ἀγαθοῖς) is probably an allusion to the quails, the manna, the water at Mara, and the like. Other translations render ἐτροποφόρησας αὐτούς by “you endured their character” (Fiensy), “you bore with their manners” (Darnell), etc. and this is indeed the meaning given by LSJ 1872b (“to bear with another’s mood”). But the important ms e offers the variant reading ἐτροφοφόρησας which is probably correct since it is clear that the passage is based upon Deut 1:31 ὡς ἐτροφοφόρησέν σε κύριος ὁ θεός σου (with ἐτροποφόρησεν as *varia lectio*; cf. the allusion to this passage in Acts 13:18 where one finds the same textual uncertainty), where the verb renders Hebrew *nasa*’, “to lift up, carry, bear” (“how the Lord your God bore you as a man bears his son”). It is very probable that ἐτροφοφόρησας is the original reading and it is very improbable that the LXX translators wanted to render the verb *nasa*’ here with a Greek word carrying negative overtones in an otherwise completely positive context (Deut 1:30–31, like Acts 13:17–18, lists the good things God has done for Israel in the desert). For that reason, the LXX lexa give for the neologism τροφοφορέω the meaning “to sustain (by providing food).”¹⁹⁷ By taking the verb to mean “to sustain” the immediately following παντοίοις ἀγαθοῖς becomes much more readily understandable.¹⁹⁸

(4) “You gave them the Law of the ten words spoken by your voice and written by your hand.” The first words are no problem, the giving of the Law being also mentioned in the corresponding Jewish morning prayer for the Sabbath.¹⁹⁹ But the restriction to the Decalogue (“the ten words,” lit. oracles, λόγια) is too much reminiscent of the compiler’s theory of the Second Legislation (which he took over from the *Didascalia*, albeit in a modi-

¹⁹⁷ See T. Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Louvain: Peeters, 2002), 563; J. Lust, E. Eynikel, K. Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1996), 482; see also the note on this neologism in J. W. Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Deuteronomy* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 18.

¹⁹⁸ Fiensy, *Prayers* 77 n.12, suggests to solve the problem of παντοίοις ἀγαθοῖς by inserting the verb “bestowing” before “all kinds of good things” in the translation, which is rather improbable.

¹⁹⁹ See, e.g., Hirsch, *Siddur* 326–327. Note, however, that there Moses’ mediating role in the giving of the Law is emphasized, whereas in our text this role seems to have been eliminated. Miller, “Liturgy and Communal Identity,” rightly points out that §§ 3–4 actually refer to the three main Jewish festivals: Pesach, Sukkot, and Shavuoth (= the giving of the Law). He also refers to Neh 9:9–15 as the first instance of a prayer in which these three events (exodus, wilderness, giving of the Law) are mentioned together.

fied form²⁰⁰) to go unsuspected, even though there are no stock words or expressions of the compiler to be found here. On the other hand one could argue that the author of the prayer follows the outline of the book of Exodus and has now arrived at Exod 20 where God gives the Decalogue (although the designation “Ten Words” occurs only in Exod 34:28 and Deut 10:4).²⁰¹ That cannot dissipate all doubts, however, so for safety’s sake, unlike Fiensy, we do not take the clause “of the ten words” to belong to the source. “Written by your hand”: Deut 9:10 says that the two tables of the law had been written by God’s finger.²⁰²

“You commanded them to keep the Sabbath” (see Exod 20:8–11; Deut 6:12–15) no doubt was in the source,²⁰³ but the following words, “not in order to give them a pretext for laziness but an opportunity for piety,” are, as Fiensy (183) rightly notes, “reminiscent of a familiar theme in AC (2.36.2 and 6.23.3; and cf. Ps-Ignatius, *Magn.* 9),” so it is safer not to regard them as part of the source, although it should be noted that Philo, too, explicitly states in a discussion of the Sabbath that Moses’ law is not an “adviser of idleness” (*Spec.* 2.60; cf. *Hyp.* 7.14).²⁰⁴ This may have its origin in apologetic aimed at non-Jews; for examples of pagan accusations of Jewish indolence on the Sabbath see Seneca *ap.* Augustine, *Civ. Dei* 6.11; Juvenal, *Sat.* 14.96–106; Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.4.1 (GLAJJ nrs. 186, 281, 301). As to the phrase “for the knowledge of your power, for the prevention of evil,” unlike Fiensy, we see no reason to regard it as added by the compiler since it does not reflect the compiler’s vocabulary and it is thematically related to the first sentences of § 5, which are most probably from the source. The message is that knowledge or study of the Law of Moses induces people to live morally better lives.

The phrase “by confining them as it were within a sacred precinct for the sake of instruction” (ὡς ἐν ἱερῷ καθείρξας περιβόλω διδασκαλίας χάριν)

²⁰⁰ See the Introduction above and P. W. van der Horst, “I Gave Them Laws that Were not Good.”

²⁰¹ Note that in Exod 34:28 and Deut 10:4 the Decalogue is designated as δέκα λόγοι, but in Deut 4:13 as δέκα ῥήματα (our text has δέκα λόγια).

²⁰² See P. W. van der Horst, “The Finger of God. Miscellaneous Notes on Luke 11:20 and its *Umwelt*,” in: W. L. Petersen, J. S. Vos, H. J. de Jonge (eds.), *Sayings of Jesus: Canonical & Non-Canonical. Essays in Honour of Tjitze Baarda* (NovT Sup 89; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 89–104.

²⁰³ Again cf. Hirsch, *Siddur* 326–327.

²⁰⁴ See on these and other passages A. Mendelson, *Philo’s Jewish Identity* (BJS 161; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 82–86. Fiensy here again makes the mistake of rejecting these words in his commentary on p. 183, but at the same time printing them as part of the source on p. 200.

does not contain the compiler's favourite words or expressions and belongs to the source. A "sacred precinct" (ἱερός περίβολος) is usually a temple precinct,²⁰⁵ but since Jews were not "confined" to the temple precinct on the Sabbath, it must mean something else. Fiensy takes it to mean the Sabbath limit (*techum*) of 2,000 cubits (see *m. Eruvin* 4:3), his argument being that both περίβολος and *techum* meant basically a district or precinct (77 n.14). But this makes nonsense of the words "for the sake of instruction." It is exactly the phrase διδασκαλίας χάριν that makes it more than probable that the "sacred precinct" meant here was, in the Jewish *Grundlage*, the synagogue, which according to an abundance of ancient sources was primarily a place of instruction in the Law (see e.g. the Theodotus synagogue inscription [= *CIJ* 1404]: εἰς ἀνάγνωσιν νόμου καὶ διδαχὴν ἐντολῶν).²⁰⁶ That περίβολος can mean a synagogue is proved by a passage in Philo, *Flacc.* 48, and probably by a synagogue inscription from Egypt, *JIGRE* 9.²⁰⁷ That the synagogue was called "sacred" or "holy" is known from both literary and inscriptional evidence,²⁰⁸ and that temple terminology was used to designate the synagogue building is also explicitly attested.²⁰⁹ So what is said here is that God commands his people to attend synagogue services on the Sabbath because it is there that they can learn Torah. One could argue that the fact that the phrases "training in your Laws" and "searching of the Laws" in §§ 1 and 5 are probably redactional militates against this conclusion, but it is exactly the casual and non-emphatic reference to "instruction," without mention of the Torah (that being self-evident), that makes it probable that this phrase is from the source. It is possible that the compiler adopted a phrase about instruction in the Torah from his Jewish source and re-used it in §§ 1 and 5. Because there remains some uncertainty, however, we do not print the words "for the sake of instruction" in bold type.

²⁰⁵ See the instances in Fiensy, *Prayers* 77 n.14.

²⁰⁶ See for further references H. A. McKay, *Sabbath and Synagogue: The Question of Sabbath Worship in Ancient Judaism* (RGRW 122; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 61–88, with the critical comments by P. W. van der Horst, "Was the Ancient Synagogue a Place of Sabbath Worship?" in his *Japheth in the Tents of Shem: Studies on Jewish Hellenism in Antiquity* (Louvain: Peeters, 2002), 55–82.

²⁰⁷ See P. W. van der Horst, *Philo's Flaccus. The First Pogrom* (PACS 2, Leiden: Brill, 2003), 146–147.

²⁰⁸ S. Fine, *This Holy Place. On the Sanctity of the Synagogue During the Greco-Roman Period* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997), *passim* (97–105 on inscriptional evidence).

²⁰⁹ L. I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue. The First Thousand Years* (New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2000), 184–190 *et aliter*.

“... for rejoicing in the number seven. For this reason there are one seven (week), seven sevens (weeks), the seventh month, the seventh year, and according to its cycle the fiftieth year for remission” (διὰ τοῦτο ἑβδομάς μία καὶ ἑβδομάδες ἑπτὰ καὶ μὴν ἑβδομος καὶ ἑνιαυτὸς ἑβδομος καὶ τούτου κατὰ ἀνακύκλησιν ἔτος πεντηκοστὸν εἰς ἄφεσιν). This strong emphasis on the importance of the number seven (*hebdomas*) is totally atypical of the compiler, so it belongs to the source.²¹⁰ It has striking parallels, for instance, in the hebdomadic speculations of the Jewish exegetes and philosophers Aristobulus (fragment 5, *ap.* Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* 13.12.9–16) and especially Philo of Alexandria (see for instance his *Opif.* 89–128; *Leg.* 1.8–16; *Spec.* 2.71–192 [note “the sacred number of seven sevens” in 176]).²¹¹ The number seven plays a dominant role in several of the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, e.g., 4Q403 1 i 1–29 and 4Q403 1 ii 18–31 (cf. also 4Q404 and 405, 11Q17). There is also a remarkable string of hebdomadic verses by some “epic poets” (the Jewish pseudo-Homer and pseudo-Hesiod) quoted by Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* 5.14.107) and Eusebius (*Praep. Ev.* 13.13.34).²¹² Also outside Jewish circles it was well known that Jews had a preference for the number seven and hebdomadic speculations; see, e.g., Censorinus, *De die natali* 11.6: “... the number seven, which rules the whole of human life, as Solon writes, and this the Jews follow in their general division of days, and so also the Etruscan books dealing with religious ceremonies seem to declare” (*GLAJJ* nr. 447).²¹³ The “fiftieth year” is of course a reference to the Jubilee year (Lev 25), which followed after a recurring cycle (ἀνακύκλησις) of 7x7 years. It is called here a year for “remission” (ἄφεσις) with the terminology of Lev 25 LXX.

(5) The first half of this paragraph (up to and including “... to speak a word in anger on the day of Sabbath”) probably derives from the source,

²¹⁰ Note that in the morning prayer for the Sabbath it is said that God “took pleasure in the seventh day”; Hirsch, *Siddur* 328–329.

²¹¹ See D. T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria on the Creation of the Cosmos according to Moses* (PACS 1; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 260–308. Also J. Leonhardt, *Jewish Worship in Philo of Alexandria* (TSAJ 84; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 55–63. Note that in *Spec.* 2.71–192 Philo, too, deals with the seventh year, the fiftieth year, the feast of weeks, and the seventh month (New Year). On early Jewish numerical symbolism in general see A. Yarbro Collins, “Numerical Symbolism in Jewish and Early Christian Apocalyptic Literature,” *ANRW* II 21.2 (1984): 1222–1287 (on seven 1228–9, 1247–8, 1256–7).

²¹² See H. Attridge in *OTP* 2:823–824.

²¹³ In his review of J. H. Kühn & U. Fleischer (eds.), *Index Hippocraticus* (1986–1989) in *Mnem.* 42 (1992): 182–186, J. Mansfeld even suggests a Jewish origin for the pseudo-Hippocratic *Περὶ ἑβδομάδων*.

not only because the compiler's hand is nowhere traceable, but also since there is a parallel in the *Siddur*, where precisely in the prayer for the Sabbath morning service God is asked to guard the tongue from evil.²¹⁴ Note also that the Damascus document states that "No man shall speak any useless or stupid word on the Sabbath day" (CD 10.17–18 = 4Q266 8 iii 17–8). That the instruction in the Torah on Sabbath is meant to remove any excuse to pretend ignorance is also stated by Josephus (*C.Ap.* 2.176–8, *Ant.* 4.209–211). The seeming switch from singular (πᾶν σάββατον) to plural (τῶν σαββάτων) is probably no more than the same phenomenon that is also to be observed in New Testament Greek where τὸ σάββατον and τὰ σάββατα are used indiscriminately to indicate a single Sabbath day; see BDAG 909b.

The rest of § 5 ("For Sabbath means resting ... the gifts he gave to humankind") can be suspected to be the work of the compiler since the expressions "resting from creation" and "searching of the laws" have parallels elsewhere in the AC, where they probably derive from his hand (for ζήτησις in an exegetical sense in Patristic literature see PGL 591b). It cannot be excluded, however,²¹⁵ that the final words, "thankful praise to God for the gifts he gave to humankind" (αἶνος εἰς θεὸν εὐχάριστος ὑπὲρ ὧν ἀνθρώποις ἐδωρήσατο), are just the compiler's rephrasing of the closing phrase of the Jewish *berakhab*: "Blessed be you, O Lord, who hallows the Sabbath."²¹⁶

(6–7) There is not the slightest doubt that these two paragraphs were appended by the Christian compiler, "in einer fast verblüffend ungenierten Weise" (Bousset 444), in order to demonstrate that, even though his community kept the Sabbath – with which he fully agreed – still Sunday is to be regarded as superior to the Sabbath.²¹⁷

²¹⁴ See Hirsch, *Siddur* 335.

²¹⁵ As Fiensy, *Prayers* 183, rightly remarks.

²¹⁶ Hirsch, *Siddur* 329.

²¹⁷ Compare what Eusebius says about the Ebionites: "They observed the Sabbath and the other Jewish customs (...), yet on the other hand each Lord's day they celebrated rites similar to ours, in memory of the Saviour's resurrection" (*Hist. Eccl.* 3.27.2). On the basis of this and other passages one could argue that προύχουσα ("surpassing") in § 6 does not imply a call for replacement of the sabbath by Sunday, as is rightly noted by Miller, "Liturgy and Communal Identity."

*Apostolic Constitutions VII 37**Bibliography*

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Metzger, *Constitutions apostoliques* 3.86–89.

Translation

(1) **You who have fulfilled the promises made through the prophets, who showed mercy on Zion and had compassion on Jerusalem by exalting the throne of your servant David in its midst, by the birth of Christ who according to the flesh was born of his seed from a virgin alone, O Master (and) God, please do accept also now the prayers which come from the lips of your people which are out of the gentiles, of those who call upon you in truth, as you accepted the gifts of the righteous in their generations.**

(2) First you beheld the sacrifice of Abel and accepted it,²¹⁸ then that of Noah when he had come out of the ark,²¹⁹ that of Abraham after he left the land of the Chaldaeans,²²⁰ of Isaac at the well of the oath,²²¹ of Jacob in Bethel²²² [Bethlehem^a], of Moses in the wilderness,²²³ of Aaron in the midst of the living and the dead,²²⁴ of Joshua the son of Nave at Gilgal,²²⁵ of Gideon at the rock and the fleeces before his sin,²²⁶ of Manoah and his wife in the plain,²²⁷ of Samson when he was thirsty before his transgression,²²⁸ of Jephtha in the war before his rash promise,²²⁹ of Barak and Deborah in the time of Sisera,²³⁰ of Samuel at Mizpah,²³¹ (3) of David on the threshing

²¹⁸ Gen 4:4.

²¹⁹ Gen 8:20–21.

²²⁰ Gen 12:7.

²²¹ Gen 26:23–25. The reference is to Beersheba, translated in the LXX as φρέαρ τοῦ ὄρκου.

²²² Gen 35:1, 14–15.

²²³ Exod 12:43–51 *et aliter*.

²²⁴ Num 16:46–48.

²²⁵ Josh 5:10.

²²⁶ Judg 6:19, 39.

²²⁷ Judg 13:15–20.

²²⁸ Judg 15:18–19.

²²⁹ Judg 11:29–33.

²³⁰ Judg 4.

²³¹ 1 Sam 7:5–11.

floor of Ornan the Jebusite,²³² of Solomon in Gibeon and Jerusalem,²³³ of Elijah on Mount Carmel,²³⁴ of Elishah at the barren fountain,²³⁵ of Jehoshaphat in war,²³⁶ of Hezekiah in his sickness and at the time of Sennacherib,²³⁷ of Manasseh in the land of the Chaldaeans after his transgression,²³⁸ of Josiah at Pesach²³⁹ [in Phassa^b], of Ezra at the return,²⁴⁰ (4) of Daniel in the den of the lions,²⁴¹ of Jonah in the belly of the whale,²⁴² of the three boys in the furnace of fire,²⁴³ of Hannah in the tabernacle before the ark,²⁴⁴ of Nehemiah in the time of the rebuilding of the walls and of Zerubbabel,²⁴⁵ of Mattathias and his sons in their zeal for you,²⁴⁶ of Jael in her praises.²⁴⁷ (5) **Accept therefore** also now **the prayers of your people** *which are offered to you in acknowledgement (?) through Christ in the Spirit.*

Text-critical Notes

a: here all mss erroneously read “Bethlehem;” the correct reading should be “Bethel” (see Gen 35:1, 15; the error may have been caused by the mention of Bethlehem in Gen 35:19).

b: H and v read φασσῶ, fam. N reads σαφφά. Both must be errors for πᾶσχα (see 2 Chron 35:1, where the LXX has φασεχ or φασεκ).

General Comment

The prayer opens with an appeal to God to accept Israel’s prayers just as he accepted the sacrifices and prayers of righteous Israelites in the past. The body of the prayer (§§ 2–4) consists of a long list of examples of such sacrifices and prayers from the Bible, running from Abel to the Maccabees.

²³² 2 Sam 24:10–17; 1 Chron. 21:7–17.

²³³ 1 Kings 3:5–14; 8:22–64.

²³⁴ 1 Kings 18:20–40.

²³⁵ 2 Kings 2:19–22. But note that there is neither a sacrifice nor a prayer in this scene.

²³⁶ 2 Chron 18.

²³⁷ 2 Kings 19–20.

²³⁸ 2 Chron 33:10–13.

²³⁹ 2 Chron 35.

²⁴⁰ Ezra 8.

²⁴¹ Dan 6:10–24.

²⁴² Jonah 2.

²⁴³ Dan 3.

²⁴⁴ 1 Sam 1:9–20.

²⁴⁵ 2 Ezra 2–7; Neh 3.

²⁴⁶ 1 Macc 2–4.

²⁴⁷ Judg 4:17–23.

§ 5 closes the prayer with a repeated call for acceptance of the petitions of God's people.

The corresponding prayer in the Jewish liturgy, the seventeenth *berakhah* of the Amidah, called *Avodah* (Temple service), also makes the connection between acceptance of Israel's sacrifices and its prayers, but it should be added that the sixteenthth *berakhah*, called *Shomea' Tefillah* (He who hears the prayer), also shows clear thematic resemblances with our prayer,²⁴⁸ as does the fifteenth, *Tsemach David* (Sprout of David). See the notes *ad* § 1.

Notes

(1) Since almost all the parallels to *berakhhot* in the Amidah occur in § 1, it is certain that much of that paragraph goes back to the source. The most obvious interpolation is of course the clause about the birth of Christ, meant to christianize the line by clarifying *how* God has showed compassion on Jerusalem and exalted the throne of David. Fiensy (185) suggests further that also the words “which are out of the gentiles” is a christianizing addition. Finally, “as you accepted the gifts of the righteous in their generations” is an introduction to §§ 2–4, which are redactional from beginning to end, and should therefore certainly be attributed to the compiler. What then remains is: “You who have fulfilled the promises made through the prophets, who showed mercy on Zion and had compassion on Jerusalem by exalting the throne of your servant David in its midst, O Master (and) God, please do accept also now the prayers which come from the lips of your people.”²⁴⁹ The problem with this text, however, is that the parallel passages in neither *Avodah* nor *Tsemach David* nor *Shomea' Tefillah* speak about God's having already done the things the text mentions (πληρώσας, ἐλεήσας, οἰκτειρήσας, ἀνυψῶσαι). The various versions of these *berakhhot* we know usually ask God to bring about these things as soon as possible (e.g.: “Speedily cause the offspring of David, your servant, to sprout, so that his horn may be lifted up by your salvation”; “Restore the worship to your holy sanctuary”). So it would seem that even in this restored form there is still more redactional work of the compiler to be seen, since as a Christian he wanted to demonstrate that what the Jews prayed for in this prayer had already been fulfilled in Christ's coming. Fiensy suggests that he altered an original form which ran like this: “Fulfill the promises of the prophets and have mercy on Zion and compassion on Jerusalem, and exalt the throne of David, your servant in its midst.” It looks like the compiler “remolded the

²⁴⁸ As was noted by Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers* 200 n. 147.

²⁴⁹ Whether the last words (“of those who call upon you in truth”), which echo Ps 144[145]:18, belong to the source, remains uncertain.

source in favour of contemporaneity” (184). Of course, this is bound to remain a guess, but it is an informed guess which, in view of the blatantly Christian interpolation in the middle of the sentence, sounds rather plausible. It should further be noticed that the main parallel with *Avodah* is the theme of acceptance²⁵⁰ of prayers (and sacrifices), but that the sixteenth *berakhab* of the Amidah, *Shomea‘ Tefillah*, stresses, apart from the hearing of prayers,²⁵¹ also the element of God’s compassion and mercy, and that *Tsemach David* has the motif of the exalting of the horn of God’s servant David.²⁵² It would seem, therefore, that the original Jewish prayer was a fusion of these three *berakhot*, or that the prayer originated in a phase of development of the Amidah when these benedictions were not yet strictly separate ones. But we have no means of knowing that for sure.

(2–4) The compiler evidently had a penchant for listing Old Testament heroes,²⁵³ as we have seen before (see 7.33.4–6; 7.38.2),²⁵⁴ and it is for that

²⁵⁰ The form πρόσδεξι in § 1 is actually the only imperative in our six prayers (it is repeated here in § 5). On the predominant use of the aorist in prayer imperatives see W. F. Bakker, *The Greek Imperative: An Investigation into the Aspectual Differences between the Present and Aorist Imperatives in Greek Prayer from Homer up to the Present Day* (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1966), 98–141, with the comments in S. Pulleyn, *Prayer in Greek Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 221–226. See, for instance, the string of thirteen aorist imperatives in lines 2–5 of the prayer in *Pap. Eger-ton 5*, elsewhere in this volume. For various instances of imperatives of δέχομαι and its compounds in pagan Greek prayers see Pulleyn, *Prayer in Greek Religion* 144 n. 23 and 218. The fact that the six prayers dealt with here contain hardly any imperatives may be explained by the nature of the seven *berakhot* for the Sabbath: these are mainly about praise and thanksgiving, while it is the middle *berakhot* of the Amidah (nrs. 4–16, omitted on Sabbath) that have the character of petitions.

²⁵¹ For pagan parallels to the motif of divine hearing of prayers see J. Teixidor, *The Pagan God: Popular Religion in the Greco-Roman Near East* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 7–11.

²⁵² On “servant (παῖς) of God” in prayers see Löhr, *Studien* 320–321. On the believer as servant of God see H. W. Pleket, “Religious History as the History of Mentality: The ‘Believer’ as Servant of the Deity in the Greek World,” in H. S. Versnel (ed), *Faith, Hope and Worship: Aspects of Religious Mentality in the Ancient World* (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 152–192, esp. 159–171.

²⁵³ The list has the appearance of being chronologically ordered, but the persons from the book of Judges are presented in a rather random order; especially Jael is strangely lagging behind, after the Maccabees. Moreover, she does not pray or sacrifice in the biblical story, although she does so in Pseudo-Philo’s *LAB* 31.7. Maybe it was such a post-biblical tradition about Jael’s prayer that induced the author to include her in this list.

²⁵⁴ Fiensy, *Prayers* 185, further lists: AC 2.55.1; 5.7.12; 6.12.13; 6.30.6; 7.5.5; 7.37.2–4; 7.38.2; 7.39.3; 8.5.3–4; 8.12.21–27.

reason that we must assume the whole rest of the prayer to derive from his hand, even though, as Fiensy (*Prayers* 207 n.68) admits, similar lists of OT examples can be found in Selichot prayers; see for instance m. *Ta'anith* 2:4; further lists in Sir 44–50; 3Macc 6.6–9; 4 *Ezra* 7.106–111; CD 2.14–3.12 etc.²⁵⁵ So here we may have a case where a favourite theme of the compiler coincided with what he found in his source. Because there is no way to decide whether or not this list was in the source, for caution's sake we do not print the text in bold type.

(5) This paragraph is just a restatement of the request in §1 and may therefore partly (“accept the prayers of your people” [πρόσδεξι τὰς τοῦ λαοῦ σου προσευχάς]) belong to the source.

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Translation

(1) **We thank you for all things, almighty Master, for you have not taken your pity and your compassion away from us, but in each and every generation you save, deliver, help, and protect us.**

(2) For you helped (us) in the days of Enos and Enoch, in the days of Moses^a and Joshua, in the days of the Judges, in the days of Samuel and Elijah and the other prophets, in the days of David and the other kings,²⁵⁶ in the days of Esther and Mordechai, in the days of Judith, in the days of Judas Maccabaeus and his brothers.

(3) *Also in our own days you helped us through your great High Priest Jesus Christ, your Son.* For he **delivered us from the sword and saved us**

²⁵⁵ See also the commentary to AC 7.33.4–6, and esp. Newman, *Praying by the Book* 159–171. For the role that God's acceptance of the sacrifices of godly men in the Old Testament played in early Christian liturgies see H. Lietzmann, *Mass and Lord's Supper* (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 73–74.

²⁵⁶ For this translation of Σαμουήλ καὶ Ἡλίας καὶ τῶν προφητῶν and Δαυίδ καὶ τῶν βασιλέων compare the expression Πέτρος καὶ οἱ ἄπόστολοι = Peter and the *other* apostles (Acts 5:29). Other instances in BDAG 494 *s.v.* καὶ 1g.

from hunger by nourishing us, he healed (us) from disease, and protected (us) from an evil tongue.

(4) For all these things, *through Jesus Christ*, we give thanks to you, who have given us an articulate voice to give thanks to you, and have endowed upon us a harmonious tongue as an instrument, in the manner of a *plectrum*, and a useful (sense of) taste, an appropriate touch, vision for seeing, hearing for sounds, smelling for vapours, hands for working, and feet for travelling.

(5) And you form all that from a little drop in the womb, and bestow upon it after its formation an immortal soul and bring forward into the light this rational being, the human. You have educated him with laws and enlightened him with statutes. You bring on dissolution for a while, but you promised the resurrection.

(6) Therefore, what lifetime is sufficient and what length of ages will be enough for humans to give thanks? To do so adequately is really impossible, yet to do so as well as one can is a holy duty.

(7) For you saved us from the ungodliness of the polytheists, you rescued us from the heresy of the Christ-killers, and you have freed us from the ignorance of those gone astray. You sent Christ to humankind as a human, although he is the only begotten God, you made the Paraclete dwell in us, you set angels over us, you put the devil to shame. You made those who did not exist, you watch over those who have come into being, you measure out life, you provide nourishment, and you promised repentance.

(8) For all these things be glory and worship to you, *through Jesus Christ*, now and forever. Amen.

Text-critical Notes

a: All mss have either Μωσῆ or Μωσῆϊ , and Metzger's emendation into Μωϋσῆως is not necessary. Μωσῆ was evidently regarded as a genitive, and Μωσῆϊ is just a variant spelling of it.

General Comment

The prayer opens with thanksgivings to God for his benefactions. It follows in § 2 with a short list of biblical periods in which God helped his people. In § 3 God's help through Jesus Christ is mentioned and instanced. The next paragraph again thanks God, now for his having endowed humans with speech, the senses, hands and feet. § 5 lists various other benefactions of God, and § 6 expresses feelings of inadequacy to thank God for all that. § 7 again thanks God for having saved us from various errors through sending Christ and the Spirit, and § 8 is a concluding doxology. So in its present form the whole prayer has a rather rambling structure.

The equation of (the *Urform* of) this prayer with the eighteenth benediction of the Amidah, *Hoda'a* (or *Hodaya*), is based on the combination of the striking similarity of the opening formulas (see the notes on § 1) and the position of the prayer in the sequence of the Seven Benedictions. However, as in the case of the previous prayer, here too elements from other prayers of the Sabbath morning service have crept in.

Notes

(1) Most versions of the *berakbah Hoda'a* have an opening line that runs as follows: “We give thanks unto you because you are the Lord, our God, (...) the shield of our salvation through every generation.”²⁵⁷ The similarities with the opening line in our prayer, “We thank you for all things, almighty Master, for (...) in each and every generation you save, deliver, help, and protect us” (εὐχαριστοῦμέν σοι περὶ πάντων, δέσποτα παντοκράτορ, ὅτι καθ' ἑκάστην γενεὰν καὶ γενεὰν σώζεις, ῥύη, ἀντιλαμβάνη, σκεπάζεις) are far too great to be considered a case of pure coincidence. There may be a slight rewording by the compiler here (“almighty Master” might be his), but surely the substance of the whole of § 1 derives from the Jewish source. There are echoes here of Ps 79:13: “We your people (...) will give you thanks for ever and repeat your praise to every generation.” Note that the motif of thanksgiving is also dominant in the Qumran *Hodayot* (= Thanksgiving Hymns), although there usually the grammatical subject is in the singular (“I give thanks to you...,” *passim*), and, naturally, thanksgiving is a common feature in ancient Graeco-Roman prayers as well.²⁵⁸ God’s “pity and compassion” (ἔλεος καὶ οἰκτιρμός) is frequently mentioned in Jewish prayers and has its origin in Exod 34:6 Κύριος ὁ θεὸς οἰκτιρῶν καὶ ἐλεήμων.²⁵⁹

(2–3) The list in § 2 falls again in the category of listings of OT examples that our compiler is so fond of (see also the notes *ad* 7.37.2–5), and the opening statement of § 3 is patently Christian. The real problems begin with the line, “For he delivered us from the sword and saved us from hunger by nourishing us, he healed (us) from disease, and protected (us) from an evil tongue.” As the sentence stands in its present context, it cannot refer to any-

²⁵⁷ See for instance L. Finkelstein, “The Development of the Amidah,” in J. J. Petuchowski (ed.), *Contributions to the Scientific Study of Jewish Liturgy* (New York: Ktav, 1970), 171.

²⁵⁸ For the abundant literature on this aspect of Greek and Latin prayers see G. Freyburger & L. Pernot, *Bibliographie analytique de la prière grecque et romaine (1898–1998)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 333 (*s.v.* “action de graces”).

²⁵⁹ Instances are listed in Löhr, *Studien* 237–238; and see the note on AC 7.33.2 above.

one else but Jesus. The problem is, however, that Jesus did nothing of the sort (delivering from the sword, or saving from hunger,²⁶⁰ or protecting from an evil tongue), healing excepted. If one takes the line about Jesus Christ at the beginning of § 3 to be an interpolation but takes the list in § 2 to belong to the source, as Bousset and Goodenough did,²⁶¹ it refers to Judas Maccabaeus, the last one mentioned in the list before Jesus; and to Judas indeed the whole sentence fits better (though the words “he healed us from disease” remain problematic in relation to this Maccabee).²⁶² If on other grounds, however, one declares § 2 to be the work of the compiler and takes § 3b to refer to a person in the preceding list, then the whole of § 3b should be said to derive from the compiler as well. There is, however, a third possibility. The vocabulary of the passage (§ 3b) is atypical for the compiler. If on that ground we may take it to derive from the source, the whole sentence could refer to God. It was Perles who noted long ago²⁶³ that this passage has a very close parallel in an early Jewish prayer for the Sabbath morning service called *Nishmat kol chay*:²⁶⁴ “You have fed us in famine and satisfied us in plenty. You have delivered us from the sword, freed us from pestilence, and relieved us from severe and lasting diseases.”²⁶⁵ In view of this strikingly close parallel, there can be little doubt that the composer of our prayer had a form of the *Nishmat kol chay* in mind when he wrote down these phrases. As we will see, his use of this synagogal prayer is further confirmed by the contents of § 4. When the compiler had to recast the prayer so as to make it fit in with his interpolated clause on Jesus Christ, he had to change the second person singular to the third person. So the original *Grundform* may have read something like the following: “We thank you for all things, Lord our God, for you have not taken your pity and your compassion away from us, but in each and every generation you save, deliver, help, and protect us. For you delivered us from the sword and you

²⁶⁰ Unless one takes the feeding of the 5,000 as ‘saving from hunger’ (Mk 6:35–44 par.), which seems farfetched.

²⁶¹ Bousset, *Gebetssammlung* 447; Goodenough, *By Light, Light* 314.

²⁶² See also Löhr, *Studien* 55 n. 345. I relegate to a footnote the fanciful theory of Kohler (“Origin” 422–3) that “your great High Priest Jesus” refers to Jesus ben Phiabi, a high priest from the time of Herod the Great (Josephus, *Ant.* 15.322).

²⁶³ F. Perles, “Notes critiques sur le texte de la liturgie juive,” *REJ* 80 (1925): 98–105, esp. 101–102.

²⁶⁴ See for details Nulman, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Prayer* 255–256. The Talmud attests to the existence of forms of this prayer in the early rabbinic period (*Pes.* 118a; *Ber.* 59b; *Ta’an.* 6b).

²⁶⁵ Hirsch, *Siddur* 300.

saved us from hunger by nourishing us, you healed us from disease, and protected us from an evil tongue.”

(4) Apart from the obvious interpolation “through Jesus Christ,” much of § 4 may be regarded as deriving from the source.²⁶⁶ To be true, there are no similarities here to the sixth of the Seven Benedictions, but, apart from the fact that there are also no reminiscences of the compiler’s favourite themes and expressions, as in the previous paragraph the contents of § 4 are clearly paralleled in the *Nishmat kol chay*, in a passage almost immediately following upon the one just quoted: “Therefore the limbs which you have apportioned for us, the spirit and soul which you have breathed into our nostrils, and the tongue which you have put into our mouth, shall all render homage, bless, praise, glorify, exalt and declare the power, the holiness and dominion of your Name, O our King.”²⁶⁷ In how far the differences between this text and the text of § 4 in our prayer are due to some rewording by the compiler or to the fact that originally the *Nishmat kol chay* had a somewhat different wording from the versions in use nowadays, is impossible to determine. For the tongue as plectrum see, e.g., Pollux 2.104 (p. 80 ed. Becker) ἡ γλῶττα ... καλεῖται ... καὶ πλῆκτρον ... ὅτι πλήττουσα τὸν ἀέρα τὸν λόγον ἐργάζεται (this formulation [“striking the air”] also in the prayer in AC 8.12.10); cf. Plato, *Tim.* 67b; Aristotle, *De anim.* 2.8 (420b5–22), *Probl.* 11.23 (901b16–22), 11.51 (904b27–33); Diogenes Laertius 7.55 [in the Stoic book]; Philo, *Deus* 83; Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 6.7.57.4; Origen, *C. Cels.* 2.72 (ἀήρ πεπληγμένος ἢ πληγῆ ἀέρος ἢ ὃ τι ποτὲ λέγεται ἐν τοῖς περὶ φωνῆς, “vibrated air, or a concussion of air, or any other definition in the [text-books] on sound”). The imagery probably has its origin in Stoic theories about sound and voice as air struck by the tongue; see the Stoic definitions of voice or sound as ἀήρ

²⁶⁶ There is a translation problem in the opening line: περὶ πάντων σοι διὰ Χριστοῦ εὐχαριστοῦμεν, ὁ ... δωρησάμενος. The problem is that ὁ δωρησάμενος is a *nominativus pendens*, and that it is unclear whether it refers to σοι (God) or to Χριστοῦ. In the text as it stands it may refer to Christ, but it is more probable that both in the original Jewish source and in the Christian prayer it refers to God as creator.

²⁶⁷ Hirsch, *Siddur* 302. It should be conceded that the five senses are missing here. This parallel with the *Nishmat kol chay* was noted already by F. Perles, “Notes critiques sur le texte de la liturgie juive” 101–2. Bousset, *Gebetssammlung* 448, points out that Philo says: “If you give thanks for one individual, do not divide your thankfulness in expression into gratitude for minute trifles and inconsiderable matters, but take in your view the most comprehensive circumstances, first of all his body and soul, of which he consists, and then his speech, and his mind, and his senses, for such gratitude cannot of itself be unworthy of being listened to by God, when uttered for each of these particulars” (*Spec.* 1.211).

πεπληγμένος (SVF 74) and πληγῆ ἄερος (SVF 138).²⁶⁸ The motif of being endowed with ‘a harmonious tongue’ is to underline the duty of thanking God (in the preceding line). Since the phrase about the five senses is reminiscent of the probably redactional passage in AC 7.34.6 (‘You bestowed upon him fivefold sense perception’) and has no parallel in the *Nishmat kol chay* passage quoted above, we regard it as deriving from the compiler.

(5) I agree with Fiensy (186) that the mention of the human body in § 4 induced the compiler to insert some further material on one of his favourite topics, the formation of man, this time in the womb. There is a purposeful contrast between “a little drop” (of semen) and “this rational being” (on which see again *ad* 7.34.6) stressing the greatness of God’s creative activity. Also the themes of education in the Law, man as a rational being, and death and resurrection belong to his stock themes. The whole of this paragraph is, therefore, from the compiler’s hand. Note that in the phrase “you promised the resurrection” the compiler uses ἀνάστασις, whereas in the redactional passages of 7.33.3 and 34.8 he used παλιγγενεσία for the resurrection (see the notes *ad loc.*).

(6) Since the need to give thanks to God is such an overriding theme in *Hoda’a*, it may very well be that § 6, which stresses this theme, belonged to the source. To claim, however, as Fiensy does, that it is from the Jewish stratum since “it expresses what both the Babylonian and Palestinian versions say at their conclusions” (187), is perhaps somewhat overstating the case. The extent to which the compiler may have recast the original Jewish text here, is impossible to gauge. Even so, it is highly probable that the original Jewish prayer text stopped at the end of § 6. “Really” is an attempt to render the emphatic adverb ἦ. “Holy duty”: εὐαγῆς (originally “pure, undefiled,” hence “holy”) does not occur in the Bible but is frequent in Philo and the Church Fathers.

(7–8) Apart from the fact that the expression “you saved us from the ungodliness of the polytheists” (which in itself might be Jewish) is a stock-phrase in Pseudo-Ignatius (=the compiler), the whole triad of pagans (polytheists), Jews (Christ-killers),²⁶⁹ and heretics (those gone astray) is so traditionally Christian that one must assume that most if not all of § 7 is from the

²⁶⁸ For the doxographic material περί φωνῆς see H. Diels, *Doxographi graeci* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1965 = reprint of the 1879 ed.), 407–409 (cf. also 500, 515, 525), with the thorough discussion in J. Mansfeld, “Illuminating what is Thought: A Middle Platonist Placitum on Voice in Context,” *Mnem.* 58 (2005): 358–407.

²⁶⁹ The term χριστοκτόνος for Jews occurs also in AC 2.61.1 and 6.25.1 (χριστοκτονία in 6.5.5); it is frequent in Christian writings from the fourth century onwards, see *PGL* 1531a.

compiler. The references to Christ and the Paraclete (= Holy Spirit)²⁷⁰ are self-evident cases; the final line (“You made those who did not exist, you watch over those who have come into being, you measure out life, you provide nourishment, and you promised repentance”) less explicitly so, but its themes are quite familiar from the AC. So we may conclude that these lines, together with § 8 that goes with it, are from the compiler’s hand. Note that the phrase “you put the devil to shame” (τὸν διάβολον ἤσχυνας) is the only passage in our six prayers in which the devil (or Satan) is mentioned; demons are not mentioned either. Apparently the compiler of the prayers had little or no interest in demonology or satanology.²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ This terminology is from the Gospel of John.

²⁷¹ Elsewhere in the AC, however, the compiler does refer to demons and the devil; see the *index vocabolorum* in Funk’s edition, 654 (δαίμων), 655 (διάβολος), 692 (σατανᾶς).

II. A Communal Prayer (Pap. Egerton 5)

Introduction

In 1935, the British papyrologists H. I. Bell and T. C. Skeat published their well-known work *Fragments of an Unknown Gospel*.¹ It was the publication of Papyrus Egerton 2, which contained large fragments with fascinating portions of a hitherto unknown early Christian Gospel text that drew a great deal of attention from the scholarly world. The concentration of the ensuing debate on Pap. Egerton 2 diverted attention from the other, smaller Greek texts published in the same volume, Papyri Egerton 3–5, all three of them being regarded by their editors as early Christian texts, as the subtitle of their book clearly indicated. Pap. Egerton 5 is described by Bell and Skeat as a “Leaf from a Liturgical Book” (56). It is a single leaf from a codex, measuring 19x17 cm., with 17 lines of text on both sides, to be dated to the end of the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century C.E. Where in Egypt it was found is unknown; the papyrus is now in the British Library.² The editors say it is from a Christian liturgical book, even though they admit that its text is “if anything, more difficult than most of the earlier finds to identify” (56). The claim that it is from a *Christian* liturgical book that this papyrus leaf derives is, as we shall presently see, highly debatable. We will argue that it is much more probable that this prayer text is an abbreviated adaptation of the Amidah (= Tefillah or Shemoneh Esreh). The text bristles with biblical language and as such is a good example of ‘scripturalization’ of prayer.³

¹ *Fragments of an Unknown Gospel and Other Early Christian Papyri* (London: British Museum, 1935).

² For a description of its physical features see also E. G. Turner, *The Typology of the Early Codex* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977), 142; and J. van Haelst, *Catalogue des papyrus littéraires juifs et chrétiens* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1976), 300, no. 921 (where the papyrus is called P.Lond.Christ. 4). It is nr. 5811 in the Leuven Database of Ancient Books (LDAB; see <http://ldab.arts.kuleuven.be>). Why the LDAB website describes our papyrus as a bilingual Greek-Coptic text is totally unclear. A photo of the papyrus can be seen in G. Cavallo & H. Maehler, *Greek Bookhands of the Early Byzantine Period (300–800 AD)* (London: Institute of Classical Studies, 1987), Plate 14b; and in P. W. van der Horst, “Papyrus Egerton 5: Christian or Jewish?,” *ZPE* 121 (1998): 173–182, Plate II.

³ On that phenomenon see J. H. Newman, *Praying by the Book: The Scripturalization*

Unfortunately, the text breaks off in the middle of the prayer. The letters A and B in the upper margins of verso and recto respectively might be taken to be page numbers, but the occurrence of the letter B at the end of line 13 at page A seems to point in another direction. If the prayer in the middle of which the first page (verso) begins is prayer A, the header may have been added to indicate that fact, just as B may well have been added as a header to the second page (recto) to indicate that this page continues the text of prayer B which had started at line 14 of the previous page. So it would seem that we have here the last thirteen lines of prayer A and the first twenty-one lines of prayer B. However, the disrupted ending of text A and the equally disrupted beginning of text B seem to militate against the assumption that we have to do here with the complete text of liturgical prayers, the editors say. They compare for this numbering of prayers the Byzantine *Prayers of the Faithful* (Εὐχαὶ πιστῶν A, B) and suggest that “the papyrus contains some part of the Mass of the Faithful” (56). At the same time, however, they have to admit that the text of the prayers does not show the slightest resemblance to any of the *Prayers of the Faithful* in Byzantine liturgies. Phraseology and vocabulary are entirely different and there is no reference whatever to the Oblation. Also comparison with the Egyptian Rite or other extant liturgies turns out to be of little help for there is no trace of similarity to be found in the prayers of these documents. The prayers of the papyrus do use for the most part a biblical vocabulary but the composer made no use of quotations from the biblical text,⁴ much unlike “the centos of Biblical phrases which make up so large a part of extant liturgies” (57). After having noted the composer’s preference for epic diction,⁵ the editors leave it at that.

This is not a very satisfactory situation and one might have expected that other scholars would try to find solutions to the enigma this prayer text poses to us. As we will see, in the more than seventy years since its publication only two scholars have paid attention to this text, both of them regarding it as an early Jewish prayer text.

The first one was Joseph Wahrhaftig.⁶ In the *Journal of Theological Studies* of 1939 he published a short article to the effect that the papyrus

of Prayer in Second Temple Judaism (SBLEJL 14; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999); J. L. Kugel (ed.), *Prayers That Cite Scripture* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

⁴ With the possible exception of Ps 78:13 in line 8.

⁵ They point to words such as ἄδεκτος, ἀφθίτος, κοτέειν, ἐπικήριος, τέκος, εὐκτήριος.

⁶ So far I have not been able to trace any biographical data about this scholar.

contains a Jewish prayer.⁷ Wahrhaftig points out that the editors' thesis that the prayer is Christian involves great difficulties. "For instance, the text lacks any allusions to anything specifically Christian and cannot be related to any known liturgy" (376). Even though the text cannot be identified with any extant Jewish prayer either, there are nevertheless several points of connexion between the fragment and Jewish liturgy. Wahrhaftig says that not only does the text not contain anything characteristically Christian, it also contains passages which cannot possibly be Christian at all. Moreover, many of the expressions in the text can be directly and completely translated back into Hebrew, which suggests that the author thought in Hebrew or followed a Hebrew model. Using biblical language and allusions without direct quotations is characteristic of many ancient Jewish prayers, as for instance Ben Sira 51 and the Eighteen Benedictions. The litany-like repetitions also have their parallels in Jewish prayers. Resemblances of these repetitions with passages in the apostle Paul's epistles are not to be explained by assuming knowledge and use of Paul's letters by the composer – as Bell and Skeat did – but by the fact that "in such passages Paul uses the Jewish prayer-style" (377). Wahrhaftig discovers five complete sections in our text: lines 2–8 ask God to sanctify, protect etc. his people; lines 9–13 contain a petition for the healing of the soul; the third section, lines 14–21, is a prayer for protection from and forgiveness of sins; lines 22–26 praise God's great goodness; section five, in lines 27–33, contains a petition to accept the prayers. The concluding lines, 33–35, are the beginning of a new prayer, most of which is now lost. Seemingly Christian vocabulary, as for instance the use of *φωτίζειν* in line 4, can be completely explained in Jewish terms; giving it its Christian connotations – here "to baptize" – would make nonsense of the text. Seeing an allusion to Jesus Christ in the petition for healing is unnecessary since similar petitions occur in Jewish prayers as well. Whereas the word *εὐχαριστία* in the singular is used in Christian literature of the period always in the sense of "eucharist," its use in the plural here undoubtedly is the equivalent of *berakboth*. The emphasis on "the people," that God has "sanctified, sustained, gathered, governed, established, glorified, confirmed, pastured, raised up, enlightened, pacified, administered, and perfected" (2–5) is too typical of Jewish prayers as to be able to receive a Christian interpretation. Lines 14–16 and 28–32 have striking parallels in the liturgy for the Day of Atonement. And the expression *αἰώνιος βασιλεύς*

⁷ "A Jewish Prayer in a Greek Papyrus," *JTS* 40 (1939): 376–381. The article was translated from the German by J. N. Sanders, who occasionally inserts some critical notes of his own.

(34) is a rendering of *melekh ha'olam*. It is not a perfect rendering, but the composer sometimes made minor mistakes in translating Hebrew terms. So, for instance, in line 6 he speaks of the people $\delta\nu \acute{\epsilon}\kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\omega$, "which Thou hast created," whereas it should probably have been "which Thou hast acquired," *'am zu qanita*.⁸ Wahrhaftig concludes that our text is most probably a paraphrase of the Shemoneh 'Esreh. Section 1 (sanctification, sustenance, etc.) parallels the first benediction of the Shemoneh 'Esreh, section 2 (healing) the fourth benediction, section 3 (forgiveness) the second benediction, section 4 (mercy) the third benediction, section 5 (the acceptance of prayer) the fifth benediction, and the final lines echo the sixth benediction of the Shemoneh 'Esreh. The order is almost identical, and in view of some echoes of the liturgy for Yom Kippur (fasting, vigils) it would seem that the papyrus contains a paraphrase of the Amidah for the Day of Atonement of which the form was not yet fixed in those early days. Wahrhaftig concludes: "Thus the intention of the author of the text preserved in this fragment was to put before a congregation of Egyptian Jews who spoke Greek and had very little command of Hebrew – or before one such Jew – the heart of the daily prayer – perhaps of that for the Day of Atonement – namely, the Shemoneh 'Esreh."

Some four years later, Arthur Marmorstein published an article in the *Jewish Quarterly Review* on what he called the oldest form of the Eighteen Benedictions.⁹ In this important study Marmorstein tries to demonstrate that this new Greek fragment is a new source in the never ending search for the oldest form of the Amidah. He agrees in many respects with Wahrhaftig, but at the same time he is of the opinion that it was not the Shemoneh 'Esreh for the Day of Atonement that was the source of the Greek prayer. "The text is a translation of the daily *Sh(emoneh) E(sreh)*" (138). Marmorstein sees in the papyrus "a leaf from the oldest Jewish prayerbook extant" (138), in use among the Greek-speaking Jews from Egypt, and possibly in other parts of the Diaspora as well. He conjectures that the text is probably contemporaneous with the Hebrew Ben Sira and hence he welcomes the find, "although presented in Greek" (138), as of major importance in rediscovering the earliest form of the Amidah.

How much Marmorstein differs from Wahrhaftig in the details of interpretation may be clear from the following. The thirteen requests for God's people in the form of imperatives, which form the opening lines of the prayer, are not just the equivalent of the first benediction of the Amidah but

⁸ Wahrhaftig is right here but for the wrong reasons; see below the note on line 6.

⁹ "The Oldest Form of the Eighteen Benedictions," *JQR* 34 (1943/44): 137–159.

can be identified with several *berakhoth* in the Shemoneh 'Esreh, some of them easily, others with some difficulty. The easy instances are the following: "sanctify" (1) is the *Qedushah* (3), "sustain" (2) is the *Birkat ha-Shanim* (9), "gather" (3) is the *Qibbutz Geluyoth* (10), and "govern" (4) is *Hashavat ha-Mishpat* (11). Marmorstein says that it cannot be pure accident that the numbers 2, 3, and 4 of the fragment are in the same order as *berakhoth* 9, 10, and 11 in the Amidah. The remaining imperatives are to be divided into two groups, one of which can still relatively easily be identified, the other however less easily. Probably the tenth, "enlighten," is *Da'at* (4), and the eleventh, "bring peace," is the *Birkat Shalom* (19). Maybe the twelfth, "administer," could refer to *Avodah* (17), and the seventh, "pasture," could have arisen from a misreading of *Ge'ula* (7) in which the initial word *r'h* (*re'eh*) was read as *r'h* (*ro'eh*). But from here onwards the identifications begin to become more and more uncertain. In the end Marmorstein is left with five items for which he cannot find an equivalent in the Amidah.

Then he turns to the four longer prayer sections of the papyrus and remarks that the thirteen one-verb-petitions plus the four longer prayers add up to seventeen, which "is the actual number of the original *Sh.E.*" (141). These four prayers (on health, forgiveness, thanksgiving, acceptance) show their originally Hebrew character in vocabulary, style, and thought from beginning to end, says Marmorstein. The prayer for health turns out to be the equivalent of *Refu'a* (8), the one for forgiveness is *Selichah* (6), thanksgiving is *Hoda'a* (18), and the one for the acceptance of prayers is *Shomea' Tefillah* (16). Marmorstein then indulges in speculations about the Hebrew 'Urform' of these prayers and about the mistakes which the translator made in producing the Greek version, but that can be left aside for the moment. He further points out a remarkable coincidence: the fourth of the longer prayers contains fifteen different expressions for liturgical forms and gestures (lines 27–33), while three liturgical texts from the Siddur, namely the *Kaddish*, the *Yishtabach*, and the *Emet we-yatziv*, also contain fifteen expressions of praise and glory, and there are to be found fifteen expressions of praise in the *Barukh she-amar* as well, as had already been remarked in the Middle Ages.¹⁰ Marmorstein then summarizes the provisional results of his search: the Greek prayer contains seventeen benedictions, as did the original Shemoneh Esreh, ten of which can be regarded with certainty as corresponding to one another, and two hypothetically; five are lacking a clear counterpart. These five are in the Greek text "establish" (5), "glorify" (6), "confirm" (7), "raise up" (9), and "perfect" (13); and in the Shemoneh

¹⁰ Ibid. 147.

Esreh *Avoth* (1), *Gevuroth* (2), *Teshuva* (5), *Al ha-tzadiqim* (13), and *Bin-yan Yerushalayim* (14), the latter combined with *Mashiach ben David* (15) according to the old Palestinian version. The *Birkat ha-minim* (12) had not yet been made part of the Amidah at the early date Marmorstein adopts for it. He now identifies “glorify” (6) with *Avoth*, since “the keynote of the benediction is the *glorification of God*” (151). The *glorification of the people* that the Greek text speaks of is to be understood as glorification of God *through* his people. “Confirm” (7) is probably to be identified with *Gevuroth* since that benediction confirms the people’s trust in God as *mechayyeh ha-metim* and “the similarity of *gavar* or *chazaq* (as used in the old text of the Palestinian rite) may be considered as a connecting link between the present *Sh.E.* and the original Hebrew prayer used by the Greek translator” (152). The request “perfect” (13) can now be seen to be the equivalent of *Teshuva* since true repentance means perfection. “Raise up” (9) must remain doubtful if only because the Greek text is only partly readable here and uncertain, but as well as “establish” (5) it “may have been the forerunner of the benediction for Jerusalem” (153). These cannot but remain guesses. Finally Marmorstein demonstrates that the five relative clauses all of which begin with “the people which ...” (lines 5–8) contain thoroughly biblical and Jewish conceptions. He concludes his study with a curious piece of pre-critical Talmud exegesis to the effect that the Amidah with seventeen benedictions is a very ancient institution that existed long before the destruction of the Second Temple. The Greek fragment may reflect that prayer in one of its earliest stages of development. In this shape the prayer survived until after the destruction of the Temple. The final ordering and arrangement of the benedictions as well as the elaboration of their contents were undertaken in Javneh, but our papyrus demonstrates that in many cases the seventeen benedictions grew out of only one word (one verb) or very brief formulae. “The development of the *Sh.E.* proved that the oldest form was actually very brief. As late as the middle of the third century such short *Sh.E.* [sic] have been current, e.g. the prayer called *Havinenu* (see b. *Ber.* 29a, pal. *Ber.* 2.4)” (158–9). Marmorstein also suggests that the shortened forms of the Shemoneh Esreh actually reflected the older forms and that these enable us to see that the earliest form of the Amidah was very different from the final composition of the Amoraic period. Thanks to the papyrus find, “we may have recovered the oldest form of Jewish prayer used in the last century of the Temple. We recover further a clear and eloquent testimony for the high religious standard of the ordinary Jew in the time of Jesus” (159). Thus Marmorstein.

It is a remarkable fact that one cannot but say that, after the thorough treatment by Marmorstein, our papyrus fragment has fallen victim to almost complete neglect. As far as we are able to see, there are no publications whatever on our text during the last sixty years.¹¹ In the comprehensive *Encyclopedia Judaica* not a single word is devoted to our document, as far as one can judge on the basis of the Index volume. Neither does David Flusser mention the papyrus in his exhaustive overview of prayer materials from the period between 200 B.C.E. and 200 C.E.¹² Victor Tcherikover and Alexander Fuks do not even refer to it in their *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum*,¹³ even though they do include much material of which the Jewish origin is a matter of debate. The *Berichtigungslisten der griechischen Papyrusurkunden aus Ägypten* do not mention any publications on our papyrus either.¹⁴ Elias Bickerman does mention the papyrus, albeit only in a footnote, to the effect that the great historian of Hellenistic religions, Arthur Darby Nock, had told him that there is no reason to suppose that the prayer is Jewish, his argument being as follows: “Since both Jewish and Christian prayers used the Old Testament phraseology, there are necessarily some parallels to the Amidah in P. Egerton 5,”¹⁵ a remarkably superficial observation on the part of such a famous scholar. It is hard to say what are the reasons for this long-lasting neglect of such a fascinating and potentially important document

¹¹ The study by P. W. van der Horst, “Neglected Greek Evidence for Early Jewish Liturgical Prayer,” *JSJ* 29 (1998): 278–296 (reprinted in his *Japheth in the Tents of Shem: Studies on Jewish Hellenism in Antiquity* [CBET 32; Leuven: Peeters, 2002], 37–54), is not taken into account here because it was written after the above statement was penned and since it also forms the basis of the present chapter.

¹² D. Flusser, “Psalms, Hymns and Prayers,” in: M. E. Stone (ed.), *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period* (Assen-Philadelphia: Van Gorcum-Fortress, 1984), 551–577.

¹³ 3 vols., Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1957–1964.

¹⁴ M. Lattke, *Hymnus. Materialien zu einer Geschichte der antiken Hymnologie* (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag – Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), 265, still lists Pap. Egerton 5 under Christian Papyri and does not give any bibliography after 1935. C. H. Roberts, *Manuscript, Society and Belief in Early Christian Egypt* (London-New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 78, just mentions the papyrus (here called “P. Lond. Christ. 5”) as one that has “been thought to be Jewish.” H. Leclercq, in the lengthy lemma “Papyrus” in the *Dictionnaire d’archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* XIII (1937): 1370–1520, quotes all of the papyrus (in both Greek and French) as a Christian “fragment liturgique” (1474).

¹⁵ E.J. Bickerman, “The Civic Prayer for Jerusalem,” *HTR* 55 (1962): 169 n. 28; repr. in his *Studies in Jewish and Christian History*, vol. 2 (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 296 n. 27 (290–312); in the new and enlarged edition of these *Studies* (*AJEC* 68, 1–2; Leiden: Brill, 2007) the article is found in vol. 1, 563–584, the quote at p. 569 n. 27.

that deserves to be saved from oblivion. A fresh look at the material is long overdue, and in the following paragraphs we will make a modest beginning of this badly needed investigation.

Let us begin by raising the most obvious question: is the prayer text Christian or Jewish? The case of the two Jewish scholars is strong here. Of course, the fact that there is not to be found anything specifically Christian in the prayer text does not in itself constitute a compelling proof that the prayer is non-Christian. There are some other instances of ancient prayers that we know to be Christian on other grounds but whose contents are completely devoid of Christian characteristics. A striking example is Pap. Berlin 9794, a document from the second half of the third century containing five Christian prayers for various occasions, four of which are explicitly Christian but one of which is only implicitly so; it lacks anything characteristically Christian, being in fact no more than a free rendering of the concluding prayer of the Hermetic treatise *Poimandres* (ch. 31–32).¹⁶ So the lack of Christian specifics is not conclusive of itself.¹⁷ However, (1) it is in fact only a very tiny minority of the hundreds of early Christian prayer texts extant to which this applies;¹⁸ (2) these kinds of non-explicitly Christian prayers are always very short texts. In longer Christian prayer texts sooner or later either Jesus Christ is mentioned or there is an otherwise undeniable reference to some Christian idea or a New Testament passage. The fact that in our two full pages of prayer text there is nothing of the sort militates strongly against a Christian origin, the more so since the emphatic passage on forgiveness (14–19) has no reference whatever to Christ's mediatorship in regard to God's forgiveness.¹⁹ Moreover, in this case this negative argument is reinforced by positive ones, the most important of them being the following. Firstly, many elements in the papyrus text have their closest parallels in Jewish prayer texts. Now Jewish prayer texts could have been adopted and used by Christians, as is clearly proven by the collection of Jewish liturgical documents in the seventh book of the *Apostolic Constitu-*

¹⁶ See the text in C. Wessely, "Les plus anciens monuments du christianisme écrits sur papyrus," *Patrologia Orientalis* 18 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1924), 430.

¹⁷ See also J. R. Davila, *The Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha: Jewish, Christian, or Other?* (JSJS 105; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 74–119.

¹⁸ As will be confirmed by a glance at the almost 250 papyri with Christian prayer texts listed by J. van Haelst, *Catalogue* 263–330.

¹⁹ The claim by Bell and Skeat (60) that the enumeration in lines 31–32 is based upon 2 Cor 11:23.27 can be dismissed; see below.

tions.²⁰ In such known cases, however, the originally Jewish documents were always christianized to a greater or lesser degree. Not the slightest christianization is discernible, however, in Pap. Egerton 5. Secondly, not only are the closest parallels those in Jewish prayer texts, but these parallels derive for the most part from one specific Jewish prayer, namely the Amidah, as both Wahrhaftig and Marmorstein have abundantly demonstrated. It would seem, therefore, that we can safely follow them in their assumption that the prayer is Jewish.²¹

Does that imply that we also have to swallow their suggestion that we have here a very early Greek form of the Amidah? That brings us to our second question: how convincing are Wahrhaftig's and especially Marmorstein's hypotheses to the effect that the papyrus represents one of the oldest stages of the Amidah? Here the ground becomes more slippery. Even though Marmorstein had a very fine intuition, that does not mean that this great scholar was always right. Wahrhaftig, who knew the Shemoneh 'Esreh very well, could find parallels to only six benedictions of this prayer, whereas Marmorstein found parallels to no fewer than sixteen *berakhoth* of the Amidah. This should make us wary of overhasty conclusions. Marmorstein may have suffered from a certain degree of 'Entdeckerfreude' which always makes one see more than there really is. Also the enormous differences between what he sees as the oldest form of the Amidah on the one hand and the reconstruction of such an early form by, e.g., Louis Finkelstein on the other, cannot fail to make us very cautious.²² We should also bear in mind that comparison of our papyrus text with the Amidah is much complicated by the fact that there has *never* been a time in which there was a fixed text of all *berakhoth* that was accepted as authoritative by all Jewish communities. All we have is a variety of versions, so a comparison should focus on motifs and meanings rather than on words and phrases.

Let us begin with the very different evaluations of the thirteen opening imperatives by Wahrhaftig and Marmorstein. Of course, they most probably were not the opening lines of the prayer, since they lack any form of address, but we have no way of knowing what preceded these lines; perhaps

²⁰ See D. A. Fiensy, *Prayers Alleged to be Jewish. An Examination of the Constitutiones Apostolorum* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985). See also elsewhere in this volume.

²¹ That the leaf is from a codex is no argument to the contrary. Even though the codex was probably an early Christian invention, after the third century Jews started to use the codex instead of the scroll; see Roberts, *Manuscript, Society and Belief* 75–76.

²² See L. Finkelstein, "The Development of the Amidah," *JQR* n.s. 16 (1925/26): 1–43 and 127–170, reprinted in J. J. Petuchowski (ed.), *Contributions to the Scientific Study of Jewish Liturgy* (New York: Ktav, 1970), 91–180.

only “O Lord” or a section of praise before the requests. Now Wahrhaftig regards these as a rendering of or the equivalent of the first *berakhah* of the Amidah (*Avoth*), without giving any arguments for this view, whereas Marmorstein sees in them short versions of no less than thirteen *berakhoth* of the Amidah, only δόξασον (“glorify,” line 3) corresponding to *Avoth*. Is either of these suggestions very probable and, if so, which is the more probable one? It seems to be totally unwarranted to see these thirteen imperatives, followed – to be sure – by “the people which you have made your own” etc., as in any way equivalent to the first Benediction, whichever version of that *berakhah* one takes. But it is hardly easier to believe that the imperativial statement “glorify your people” could render the gist of the benediction in *Avoth*. Thus both scholars have presented a very weak case here.

What about Marmorstein’s other identifications of the list of imperatives? It has to be admitted that here he sometimes makes a stronger case. That “sanctify” (ἀγιάσον) reminds one of the *Qedushah*, even though there it is God himself not his people who is sanctified, cannot be denied. And that the second, third, and fourth of the imperatives (“sustain, gather, govern”) show a strong similarity in both subject and order to the ninth, tenth, and eleventh of the *berakhoth* in the Amidah (*Birkat ha-Shanim*, *Qibbuts Geluyoth*, and *Hashavat ha-Mishpat*) is clear to any reader. So here Marmorstein seems to move towards firmer ground. That there is a thematic affinity between the imperative “enlighten” (sc. your people) and the fourth *berakhah*, i.e., *Da’at*, and between “give peace” and the *Birkat Shalom* (19), also stands to reason. But the other identifications as far as the thirteen imperatives are concerned are much too speculative. It is hard to see, for instance, how “administer” (οἰκονόμησον) could possibly be a form of the benediction *Avodah*, and that ‘perfect’ (τελείωσον) is to be identified with *Teshuva* since repentance leads to perfection is ingenious but hardly constitutes a convincing proof. On the other hand we would suggest one further identification: “raise up” (ἀνάστησον) with *Gevuroth* (2) because of that *berakhah*’s emphasis on the resurrection of the dead (*techiyyat ha-metim*).

But we are still left with the four longer prayers in lines 9–33. It is a fascinating observation that on Marmorstein’s count the papyrus’ text contains seventeen prayers, the number of *berakhoth* the Amidah originally had. But it is hard to say what value we can attribute to that fact. It may after all be sheer coincidence. The same applies to his observation that the fourth of the longer prayers contains fifteen terms for liturgical acts, a number that is identical to that of the expressions of praise in other prayers of the Siddur. We will leave this aside for the moment in order first to exam-

ine whether Marmorstein's identifications of these four prayers with *berakhoth* in the Amidah can stand up to criticism.

We would submit that here Marmorstein has his strongest case. It can hardly be coincidental that these four prayers on healing, forgiveness, thanksgiving, and acceptance of prayers have their precise counterparts in the benedictions *Refu'ah*, *Selichah*, *Hoda'a*, and *Shomea' Tefillah*. One might of course object here that themes such as healing, forgiveness, thanksgiving and acceptance of prayers are so commonplace in ancient prayers that nothing can be built on such an observation. But Marmorstein's observations cannot be dismissed that easily. When we take a closer look at the materials we see, for instance, that in both the papyrus and the Amidah the prayers for health or healing contain three imperatives and an expression of praise, that the prayers on forgiveness of sins show a remarkable similarity in wording ("forgive us for we have sinned" – "forgive us what we have sinned"), that both thanksgiving prayers stress God's never-ending goodness and beneficence, and that both prayers for acceptance are repetitive in that they stress the theme of God's acceptance of the prayers by means of various ways of phrasing it.²³ We suggest that all this cannot be sheer coincidence. There must at least be some connection between these Greek prayer texts and the Hebrew Amidah. Let us face the facts: here is a prayer text that bristles with biblical language and motifs; it cannot possibly be Christian (and definitely is not pagan), so it must be Jewish; at least ten of the seventeen petitions (six in the series of thirteen short imperatives, four in the longer prayers) show an undeniable thematic affinity with *berakhoth* in the most central one of Jewish prayers, the Amidah. And this counting is based only on those of Marmorstein's identifications which are likely to be right. We could add two equations of our own: the already mentioned "raise up" with *Gevuroth*, and that of the final line, "We beseech Thee to act (?) according to our pitiful state" (35), with *Ge'ula*, the seventh *berakhah*, which begins with "Look upon our affliction." In that case we could establish at least twelve links between the papyrus and the Amidah. What are we to make of that?

Marmorstein says that we have here the oldest form (or one of the oldest forms) of the Amidah, dating back to the Second Temple period, but this dating is unacceptable. The papyrus is to be dated to the final decades of the fourth or the opening decades of the fifth century, and even though the prayer text can reasonably be assumed to be older than that, there is no

²³ This becomes even clearer if comparison is made with the expanded versions (compare *qolenu*, *tefillatenu*, *tachanunim* with *euchai*, *deêseis*, *aitêseis*, *axiôseis*).

proof whatever that it derives from the period before 70, let alone the beginning of the second century B.C.E., as Marmorstein would have us believe. In our opinion there are from a theoretical point of view four possibilities.

The first one is that we have to do here with a Jewish prayer but that the thematic similarities with *berakhoth* in the Shemoneh Esreh are pure coincidence and due to the fact that these are quite common requests for any Jewish prayer. This possibility cannot be ruled out, but it is not the most likely one. The second one is that we have here an early form of the Amidah that demonstrates that many if not all of the *berakhoth* developed out of a single imperative. This is Marmorstein's position, but the problem here is that it is very hard to envisage a stage in which only a small number of these imperatives had begun to develop into more elaborated prayers whereas the others remained in their rudimentary form. Moreover, why would this very early form remain in use in Egypt some 400 to 500 years after its composition? The third possibility is that we have here an abbreviated Amidah, a *tefillah qetsarah*, in which the Amidah (or part of it) is reduced to its essentials. We know that this kind of shortened Shemoneh Esreh existed in Tannaitic and Amoraic times and the Talmud even presents us with the full text of a beautiful example of such a condensed version of the Amidah (the so-called *Havinenu*).²⁴ So this suggestion by Marmorstein should be seriously considered, even though one need not accept his corollary thesis that this shortened form reflected the oldest form of the Amidah. One has to explain, however, why in the Greek papyrus some of the *berakhoth* were so drastically shortened that nothing more than one word (an imperative) was left and that in this way thirteen benedictions were compressed into one, whereas four (or five) others were left unaltered. Here, however, the fact that the manuscript indicates by means of an A and a B that there is a distinction between the section with the string of imperatives on the one hand and the longer prayers on the other may be of some use. The Bavli's example of a

²⁴ See *m. Ber.* IV 3 with *b. Ber.* 29a (also *t. Ber.* III 7 and *j. Ber.* IV 3, 8a). Samuel's well-known version of an abbreviated Shemoneh 'Esreh in the Bavli runs as follows: "Give us discernment (*havinenu*), O Lord, to know Thy ways, and circumcise our heart to fear Thee, and forgive us so that we may be redeemed, and keep us far from our sufferings, and fatten us in the pastures of Thy land, and gather our dispersions from the four corners of the earth, and let them who err from Thy prescriptions be punished, and lift up Thy hand against the wicked, and let the righteous rejoice in the building of Thy city and the establishment of the Temple and in the exalting of the horn of David Thy servant and the preparation of a light for the son of Jesse the Messiah; before we call mayest Thou answer; blessed art Thou, O Lord, who hearkenest to prayer" (*b. Ber.* 29a).

shortened Shemoneh Esreh in *Berakhoth* 29a makes clear that according to the rabbis (or some rabbis) not all *berakhoth* lent themselves to abbreviation. According to Talmud Bavli, Mar Samuel (third cent. C.E.) included the much abbreviated contents of only the thirteen (or twelve) middle benedictions into one; the first three and the last three he leaves intact. Now unfortunately neither can the thirteen imperatives from the Greek prayer's opening lines be said to coincide with the thirteen (or twelve) middle benedictions of the Amidah nor can the four longer prayers be said to coincide with the first and last three benedictions, even though there is some overlap. The important issue, however, is the principle of distinction: some prayers (thirteen in both cases!) may be shortened, others may not. In this respect one could reasonably suggest that Samuel's example was just one of many possibilities of which we now see another one in our papyrus.²⁵ If the verso side of the papyrus would contain the opening line of the prayer – which is not certain, as we have seen – its abruptness is nicely paralleled by what Joseph Heinemann has called “the aggressive manner of address” of several forms of *tefillah qetsarah*.²⁶ What remains problematic in this solution, however, is that exactly in the abbreviated part we find a rather drastic expansion: lines 5–9, with their five times repeated “the people,” cannot really be said to contribute to the shortening of the prayers. Therefore, a somewhat more sophisticated solution is to be offered, and that brings us to the fourth possibility.

This fourth option is no more than a revision or adaptation of the third. We envisage the following process. The Shemoneh Esreh gradually evolved in the period from the first through the fourth centuries. If ever there was an ‘Urtext’ – which is very doubtful²⁷ – we will never be able to reconstruct it because the materials at our disposal simply do not enable us to do so. Our Greek papyrus does not contain the ‘oldest form,’ let alone the ‘Urtext,’ of

²⁵ On abbreviated versions of the Seven Benedictions of the Amidah see J. Heinemann, “One Benediction Comprising Seven,” *REJ* 125 (1966): 101–111.

²⁶ J. Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud* (SJ 9; Berlin-New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1977), 188.

²⁷ Elias Bickerman remarks about the Amidah: “It would be absurd to try to fix the ‘original’ wording of a traditional text. What we can hope to attain is the original meaning of a benediction” (“Civic Prayer” 164). Cf. also K. Kohler, “The Origin and Composition of the Eighteen Benedictions with a Translation of the Corresponding Essene Prayers in the Apostolic Constitutions,” *HUCA* 1 (1924): 387–425, at 392: the Amidah is “the product of a gradual growth and development.” But see now especially the treatment by S. C. Reif, *Judaism and Hebrew Prayer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), chs. 3–4.

the Amidah either. As soon as the Amidah, with a *not yet fixed* number of *berakhoth* in a *not yet fixed* order²⁸ and a *not yet fixed* textual form,²⁹ began to spread outside Palestine, various Diaspora communities developed their own variants of this prayer in Greek, suited to their own needs and, in a predominantly Greek environment, sometimes with originally Greek elements added.³⁰ Especially in areas of the Diaspora where the rabbis had not yet gained influence or dominance, the communities felt free to develop their own brand of Amidah. Maybe one should not even speak about the Amidah here, but about a generally recognized model or pattern of prayer that was adopted by both Palestinian and Diaspora Jews and adapted differently in different communities, and that contained the building blocks of what in the hands of the later rabbis was to become the Amidah. In Egypt, the small Jewish communities left after the destructive war of 115–117 C.E., developed their own forms of prayer in the period from the middle of the second to the middle of the fourth century. The community(-ies) from which our papyrus derives possibly knew a tradition about a shortened Amidah, or perhaps even knew only a shortened Amidah, but a different one from Samuel's instance mentioned in the Bavli (which is by and large section A of the papyrus). This community also had traditions about other prayers connected to the shortened Amidah but of a more elaborate nature, which in their community had taken on a somewhat different shape than in rabbinic circles (which is by and large section B of the papyrus, though we do realize that one has to assume then that the copyist erred in putting the B four lines too late, in 13 instead of in 9). Different *berakhoth* than in rabbinic circles were abbreviated, different ones were kept in a longer form, but nonetheless, due to the fact that they worked with traditional material, their text is still recognizable for us as a form of the Amidah. The objection that the rabbis rule that an abbreviated Amidah is only meant to be used in a situation of emergency or pressing need³¹ is not valid, for, as Elbogen already remarks, there is evidence that "even in public worship these abridged forms were in use."³² Apart from that, rabbinic rules were quite often ignored by the other people.

²⁸ Cf. *b. Ber.* 34a: "The intermediate benedictions have no fixed order."

²⁹ See e.g., I. Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy* (Philadelphia – New York – Jerusalem: Jewish Publication Society, 1993), 28; and Heinemann, *Prayer*, *passim*.

³⁰ See, for instance, below the note on line 24. For references to synagogal liturgies in Greek see Reif, *Judaism and Hebrew Prayer*, 350 n. 47.

³¹ See, e.g., M. Nulman, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Prayer* (Northvale NJ: Jason Aronson, 1993), 171, who states this is the rule on the basis of rabbinic sources.

³² *Jewish Liturgy* 54.

If there is truth in the hypothesis that we have here an early form of what was to become the Amidah, one of its striking aspects is that the text is totally devoid of references to the Patriarchs, to the people of Israel, to Jerusalem, and to the Messiah. In other words, national elements which would have made the prayer immediately recognizable as Jewish are absent. How is that to be explained? It cannot be excluded that in an early phase of its development the Amidah did lack these elements. It is also possible that, if some or all of these elements *were* present in one version in circulation, they were lacking in another. And one should not rule out the possibility that in an abridged version these elements simply dropped out. After all, the Bavli text of the *Havinenu* lacks the names of the Patriarchs, of Israel, and of Jerusalem; only the reference to the Messiah is retained. Be that as it may, the absence of these references cannot be taken to imply that the prayer is not Jewish. However, we have to concede honestly that a very different explanation cannot altogether be ruled out. As was indicated before, we know that in some early Christian communities Jewish communal prayers were taken over and slightly christianized by adding references to Jesus Christ and the New Testament. Do we here perhaps have a case of a Jewish prayer, an abridged Amidah, taken over by Christians and ‘christianized’ only by deleting the explicitly Jewish references? It does not seem a very viable hypothesis, but nothing is impossible in the religious world of late antiquity.

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Commentary

Translation

(1) A [Verso]

(2) Sanctify, nourish, gather, govern, (3) support, glorify, establish, herd, (4) raise up, enlighten, bring peace (to), (5) administer, make perfect --- the people (6) that you have made your own, your special people, (7) the people that you have redeemed, the people that (8) you have called, your people, the sheep which (9) you graze. Of our sick soul you (10) are the only doctor, keep those who are sick in your joy (?), (11) heal us, do not reject us (12) as not capable of receiving your healing. The word (13) that goes out from your mouth is the giver of health.

[B] (14) These things we ask you, Master, forgive us (15) all the sins we did, keep in check (?) what may lead us (16) to sin, and do not write down against us all the (17) unlawful acts we committed. Forgiveness of sin

(18) B [Recto]

(19) is the work of your forbearance. It is fitting, (20) O Imperishable One, not to act in wrath against mortals who are doomed to die, (21) who have only a short life, who live on a toilsome earth. (22) You do well without interruption, for you are free from envy, (23) you give everything whereas you take nothing, for (24) you are in need of nothing, every good thing is yours, evil (25) alone is not yours, wickedness is what you do (26) not want, (it is) a product of our thoughts. (27) Accept from us these psalmodies, (28) these hymnodies, these prayers, these appeals, (29) these entreaties, these petitions, these (30) expressions of gratitude, these requests, these thanksgivings, (31) this zeal, this earnestness, these vigils, (32) these [fasts?], this lying on the ground, (33) these prayerful sounds. Since we have a humane (34) Master in you, O King of the Ages, (35) we beseech you (to act?) in agreement with your compassion for our present circumstances ...

Notes³³

(2) “Sanctify” (ἀγιάσον):³⁴ Cf. Ezek 20:12 ἐγὼ Κύριος ὁ ἀγιάζων αὐτούς; Lev 19:2 ἅγιοι ἔσεσθε ὅτι ἐγὼ ἅγιος, Κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν. Also Exod 19:6, 31:13; Lev 27:14; Wis 17:2 etc. Marmorstein sees in the third benediction of the Amidah, *Qedushah*, the counterpart of this request, but there it is God himself who is called holy. “Nourish” (διάθρεψον): Cf. Gen 50:20 ἵνα διατραφῇ λαὸς πολὺς. This prayer corresponds to the ninth benediction of the Amidah, *Birkat ha-shanim*, where God is asked to bless the fruits of the earth. “Gather” (ἐπισύναξον): Ps 105(106):47; 146(147):2; Isa 11:12; 27:12; 56:8; Hab 1:9. This request parallels the tenth benediction of the Amidah, *Qibbutz Geluyoth*, on the ingathering of the exiles. “Govern” (διοίκησον): Wis 8:14 διοικήσω λαούς. Cf. Wis 12:18; 15:1. The nearest equivalent in the Amidah is the eleventh benediction, *Hashavat ha-Mishpat*, although there the emphasis is on dispensing justice.

(3) “Support” (στήρισον): Cf. Ps 111(112):8; 1 Macc 14:14. There is no clear parallel in the Amidah. “Glorify” (δόξασον): See 1 Esd 9:52 ὁ γὰρ Κύριος δοξάσει ὑμᾶς. Cf. Ps 14:4; Isa 4:2. Here, too, there is no parallel in the Amidah. “Establish” (βεβαίωσον): Ps 118(119):28 βεβαίωσόν με ἐν τοῖς λόγοις σου. Cf. Ps 40(41):13. Marmorstein’s identification of this prayer with the benediction *Gevuroth* is improbable since that *berakhah* is much more clearly reflected in ἀνάστησον in line 4. “Herd” (ποιμανον): Ps 22(23):1 Κύριος ποιμαίνει με. 2 Kgdms 7:7 ποιμαίνειν τὸν λαὸν μου Ἰσραήλ. Cf. also Hos 13:5; Mic 7:14. Marmorstein’s forced identification with the seventh benediction of the Amidah, *Ge’ulah*, (see above) should be dismissed.

(4) “Raise up” (ἀνάστησον): See Amos 9:11 ἀναστήσω τὴν σκηνὴν Δαυὶδ τὴν πεπτωκυῖαν. Cf. Amos 7:2, 5 etc. Although the sense of “resurrecting” (the dead) is not necessarily present here, the verb ἀνίστημι can hardly have failed to evoke eschatological notions; see, e.g., 2 Macc 7:9, 14. For that reason it makes sense to see the nearest parallel in the Amidah in the second benediction, *Gevuroth*, in which God is praised as the *mechayyeh ha-metim* (reviver of the dead). See also the (originally Jewish) prayer in AC 7.34.8 with the commentary *ad locum* (elsewhere in this volume). “Enlighten” (φώτισον): Mic 7:8 Κύριος φώτειέ μοι. Cf. Hos 10:12;

³³ References in the following notes are to the LXX.

³⁴ Note that all imperatives here are in the aorist. On the predominant use of the aorist in prayer imperatives see W. F. Bakker, *The Greek Imperative: An Investigation into the Aspectual Differences between the Present and Aorist Imperatives in Greek Prayer from Homer up to the Present Day* (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1966), 98–141.

Ps 12(13):4; 33(34):6. Φωτίζειν in the metaphorical sense of “instructing (in the Torah)” is especially frequent in the Psalms (as is φωτισμός); see also Sir 45:17. Note also the similar use of *illuminare* in LAB 12:2; 18:4; 23:6, 7, 10; 30:2.³⁵ The most obvious parallel in the Amidah is the fourth benediction, *Da‘at*, in which God is asked to grant his people knowledge and understanding. “Bring peace” (εἰρήνευσον): “Bring peace to your people” would seem to me to be a more adequate translation of εἰρήνευσον than “pacify” as Bell and Skeat have it. Cf. Job 5:24 εἰρηνεύσει σου ὁ οἶκος. Also 2 Chron 14:4–5. The nineteenth benediction of the Amidah, *Birkat ha-shalom*, asks God to bring peace (*sim shalom*) to the people of Israel.

(5) “Administer” (οἰκονόμησον): Cf. Ps 111(112):5 χρηστὸς ἀνὴρ ... οἰκονομήσει τοὺς λόγους αὐτοῦ ἐν κρίσει. The verb οἰκονομεῖν does not occur in the LXX with God as a grammatical subject. Marmorstein suggests that “administer” could be a form of the seventeenth benediction of the Amidah, *Avodah*, but that would imply that God administers his people by means of the temple service, which is unlikely, although it is hard to come up with a more probable explanation of οἰκονόμησον. “Make perfect” (τελείωσον):³⁶ Deut 18:13 τέλειος ἔση ἐναντίον Κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ σου. Compare Matt 5:48 ἔσεσθε ... τέλειοι; and in a prayer context, *Didache* 10.5. Marmorstein’s argument that “make perfect” could be seen as the equivalent of the fifth benediction of the Amidah, *Teshuva*, since “true repentance means perfection,” can hardly be maintained.

Between the lists of imperatives and “the people” the papyrus has a blank space with a stroke in the centre of the line. It may be tentatively suggested that it is the space where the Tetragrammaton should have been written in Hebrew characters but the scribe did not know how to write it.³⁷

(6) “(The people) that you have made your own” (τὸν λαὸν ὃν ἐκτίσω): Here one has to read ἐκτίσω instead of the ms’s ἐκτίσω – an evident case of iotacism – in view of the fact that κτίζω is never used in medial forms and that Exod 15:16 reads ὁ λαὸς σου ὃν ἐκτίσω, in a passage that has more echoes in lines 5–9. Note that in Deut 32:6 it is said that God both ἔκτισεν and ἐκτίσαστο his people Israel.³⁸ “Your special people” (τὸν λαὸν τὸν

³⁵ Further references in W. Lechner-Schmidt, *Wortindex der lateinisch erhaltenen Pseudepigraphen zum Alten Testament* (Tübingen: Francke Verlag, 1990), 88.

³⁶ The papyrus has τελίωσον.

³⁷ For other examples see C. H. Roberts, *Manuscript, Society and Belief in Early Christian Egypt* (London – New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 76–77.

³⁸ On the frequent confusion of *ktis-* en *ktês-* in LXX manuscripts see P. Walters, *The Text of the Septuagint: Its Corruptions and Their Emendations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 219–225.

περιούσιον): Cf. Exod 19:5 ἔσεσθέ μοι λαὸς περιούσιος ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἔθνῶν; exactly the same phrase in 23:22; cf. also Deut 7:6; 14:2; 26:18, all passages about Israel's being elected by God from among all the nations, a notion also found in 4Q503 frgs. 24–25 vii 4 (*'asher bachar banu mikol hagoyim*). The expression λαὸς περιούσιος occurs also in Titus 2:14. The term emphasizes the fact that Israel is not just one of the nations of the world but God's chosen people.

(7) “The people that you have redeemed” (τὸν λαὸν ὃν ἐλυτρώσω): Exod 15:13 τὸν λαὸν σου τοῦτον ὃν ἐλυτρώσω. Cf. further Exod 6:6; Deut 7:8; 9:26; Isa 52:3; the prayer of Mordechai in Esth 4:17g (= add. C 9) μὴ ὑπερίδης τὴν μερίδα σου ἦν σεαυτῷ ἐλυτρώσω ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου. 1 Macc 4:11 καὶ γινώσκονται πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ὅτι ἔστιν ὁ λυτρούμενος καὶ σῶζων τὸν Ἰσραήλ.

(8) “(The people) that you have called” (τὸν λαὸν ὃν ἐκάλεσας): Hos 11:1 ἐξ Αἰγύπτου μετεκάλεσα τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ. Isa 45:3 ὁ θεὸς ὁ καλῶν τὸ ὄνομά σου, θεὸς Ἰσραήλ. The motif of God calling Israel occurs in a wide variety of contexts in the Bible.³⁹

(8–9) “Your people, the sheep which you graze” (τὸν λαὸν σου [καὶ] πρόβατα τῆς νομῆς σου): This is the only literal quote in this prayer of a biblical passage, Ps 78(79):13 ὁ λαὸς σου καὶ πρόβατα τῆς νομῆς σου.⁴⁰ Cf. for the imagery further Ps 22(23):1; 94(95):7; 99(100):3 etc. The image of Israel as God's flock is widespread in prayer contexts.⁴¹ Here ends the section with the long serious of imperatives. The sections with longer prayers now follow.

(9–10) “Of our sick soul you are the only doctor” (ψυχῆς ἡμῶν νοσοῦσης ἰατρὸς μόνος εἶ συ): Jer 17:14 ἴασαί με, Κύριε, καὶ ἰαθήσομαι; also 40:6; Num 12:13; Ps 6:3; 40(41):5; 87(88):11; Sir 38:9; 4Q286 1 ii 5; also the prayer in 1 Clem. 59:4. Cf. *b. Shab.* 12a: God is the *rophe' choley 'ammo Yisra'el* (the healer of the sick of his people Israel). The parallel in the Amidah is here clearly the eighth benediction, *Rephu'a*, which begins with “Heal us, Lord, and we will be healed.” In our text, the idea of health is spiritualized, whereas in the benediction *Rephu'a* in the Babylonian version of the Amidah the accent is more on the healing of the physically ill.

³⁹ For literature see J. Lust, E. Eynikel, K. Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1996), 225.

⁴⁰ If Bell and Skeat are right in reading τὰ in the small gap, where I suggest to read καὶ, the quote would be slightly less than literal, but the sense remains the same. Καὶ has an explicative meaning here.

⁴¹ See H. Löhr, *Studien zum frühchristlichen und frühjüdischen Gebet* (WUNT 160; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 221–222.

However, the Palestinian version reads: “Heal us ... from the sickness of our *heart*.”⁴²

(10) “Keep those who are sick in your joy (?)”: This translation is a mere guess since the reading of the Greek is very uncertain. The papyrus has ση αγαλλ[.....]ρει which the editors tentatively restore to ση ἀγαλλι-άσει τήρει, which is strange Greek, however. In the gap there is space for seven or eight letters and possibly the verb ending on -ρει that has to be supplied is a different one than τηρεῖν, although it is very hard to think of a suitable verb here. In the LXX, ἀγαλλιᾶσθαι is mostly used for human religious joy or ecstasy. The noun ἀγαλλίασις occurs frequently in Psalms, but it never designates God’s joy.

(11–12) “Do not reject us as not capable of receiving your healing” (μη ἡμᾶς ἀπορρίψης ὡς ἀδέκτους σῆς θεραπείας): The Greek phrase μη ἡμᾶς ἀπορρίψης derives from Ps 50(51):13 or 70(71):9 (where the object is “me” not “us”) and also looks like a literal translation of the phrase *’al tashlikhenu* in various *selichot*, e.g., those in the liturgy for Yom Kippur. For ἀπορρίπτειν with a personal object see Jer 8:14 ὁ θεὸς ἀπέρριψεν ἡμᾶς; 4 Kgdms 13:23; Hos 10:7; Mic 2:9. The phrase ἀδέκτος θεραπείας is unusual; ἀδέκτος does not occur in the LXX, θεραπεία does but not in the sense of healing. In combination with a genitive ἀδέκτος means “not receptive of something” (LSJ *s.v.*). The point of the phrase is to urge God not to regard the pray-ers as sinners beyond repair.

(12–13) “The word that goes out from your mouth is the giver of health” (σοῦ ἀπὸ στόματος λόγος ὑγείας ἐστὶν δοτήρ): See Ps 106(107):20 ἀπέστειλεν τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἰάσατο αὐτούς. Wis 16:12 ὁ σὸς, κύριε, λόγος ὁ πάντας ἰώμενος. Cf. Isa 55:11 οὕτως ἔσται τὸ ῥῆμά μου ὃ ἐὰν ἐξέλθῃ ἐκ τοῦ στόματός μου οὐ μὴ ἀποστραφῇ ἕως ἂν συντελεσθῇ ὅσα ἐθέλησα; Isa 1:20; Mic 4:4; 15; Hos 6:5; Ps 18(19):15. “The word that goes out from your mouth” may have to be understood as the Torah, as in Ps 18(19):15. For God as giver of health see further Exod 15:26; Isa 9:5; Ezek 47:12; and the note on lines 9–10.

(14) “These things we ask you, Master” (ταῦτ’ αἰτούμεθα παρὰ σοῦ, δέσποτα): Though by far not as frequently as κύριος, as a form of address for God δεσπότης is often found in the LXX, and sometimes both are used in combination, as in Gen 15:8 δέσποτα κύριε.

⁴² See W. Staerk, *Altjüdische liturgische Gebete* (KT 58; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1930), 12. Löhr, *Studien* 213–214, discusses the theme of healing in Jewish and Christian prayers. See also N. B. Johnson, *Prayer in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha* (Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, 1948), 16–18.

(14–15) “Forgive us all the sins we did” (παρὲς ὅσα ἡμάρτομεν): Cf. Ps 50[51]:3–4 ἐξάλειψον τὸ ἀνόμημά μου, ἐπὶ πλεῖον πλῦνόν με ἀπὸ τῆς ἀνομίας μου καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀμαρτίας μου καθάρισόν με. Cf. also *Pr. Man.* 13. Note that here the somewhat unusual παρήμι is used while line 19 has the more common ἄφεις ἀμαρτιῶν. The parallel in the Amidah is the sixth benediction, *Selichah*.

(15–16) “Keep in check (?) what may lead (us) to sin” (κάτ[ε]χεῖ εἴ τι ἀμαρτάνειν φέροι): The reading “keep in check” is uncertain; it is based on the conjectural restoration κάτ[ε]χεῖ. For the various meanings of κατέχειν (usually “to hold down, to hold back”) see BDAG 532–3. Cf. also Matt 6:13.

(16–17) “Do not write down against us all the unlawful acts we committed” (καὶ μὴ ἡμῶν καταγράφης ὅσα παρανόμως ἐπράξαμεν): Here the idea is that of a heavenly book in which humankind’s good and bad deeds are recorded; cf. Phil 4:3; Rev 3:5; 5:1; 13:8; 20:15 etc.⁴³ For καταγράφειν see Exod 17:14 etc. For καταγράφειν κατὰ τινος see *1 Esd.* 2:12. One expects here καθ’ ἡμῶν, but the single ἡμῶν such as here is possible as well. For παρανόμως cf. Job 34:20; Prov 21:27 (παράνομος in the sense of “against the Torah” occurs seventy-five times in the LXX).

(17–19) “Forgiveness of sin is the work of your forbearance” (σῆς ἀνεξικακίας ἔργον ἄφεις ἀμαρτιῶν): The word ἀνεξικακία occurs only once in the LXX, Wis 2:19. Here it denotes God’s patient endurance (more commonly called μακροθυμία) of human evil-doings which he forgives them time and again without resentment. Cf. 2 Tim 2:24 (of Christians). Forgiveness of sin is said to be the “work” (ἔργον), i.e., either the result or the manifestation (LSJ *s.v.* I 4, III 2; RBLG 283), of God’s patient endurance. Cf. 4Q504 xv 8–9 “Please, Lord, act as is your character, by the measure of your great power, for you forgave our fathers when they rebelled against your command;” *4 Ezra* 8:31–32 “Because of us sinners you are called merciful; for if you have desired to have pity on us, who have no works of righteousness, then you will be called merciful;” Sir 17:29.

(19–20) “It is fitting, O Imperishable One, not to act in wrath against mortals who are doomed to die” (εὐπρεπές⁴⁴ ἔστιν, ἄφθιτε, θνητοῖς μὴ κοτέειν⁴⁵ ἐπικήροισ): Behind the term εὐπρεπές (fitting) one may surmise the ancient philosophical conception of the θεοπρεπές (= *dignum deo*):⁴⁶ it

⁴³ See L. Koep, *Das himmlische Buch in Antike und Christentum* (Bonn: Hanstein, 1952).

⁴⁴ The papyrus has εὐπρεπόν by mistake.

⁴⁵ The papyrus has κίτεειν by mistake.

⁴⁶ See O. Dreyer, *Untersuchungen zum Begriff des Gottgeziemen in der Antike* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1970).

would be unworthy of an immortal deity whose character is one of patient endurance to act wrathfully against weak mortals. The somewhat archaic verb κοτέειν (mainly in epic and lyric poetry) does not occur in the LXX (although ἐγκοτεῖν does twice: Gen 27:41; Ps 54(55):4, said of humans). In the Greek philosophical tradition, it was especially the idea of a deity's anger or wrath that was regarded as unfitting for a God.⁴⁷ "Who are doomed to die" translates ἐπίκηροι, "subject to death," a word that does not occur in the Greek Bible. It is here put in opposition to ἄφθιτος, "imperishable, immortal," a term not used of God in the Greek Bible but a common epithet of deities in Greek literature.⁴⁸ An equivalent in biblical Greek is the frequent use of αἰώνιος and periphrastic constructions such as, e.g., Ps 89(90):2 ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος σὺ εἶ.

(21) "Who have only a short life, who live on a toilsome earth" (ὀλιγοβίοις, ἐπίμοχθον γῆν ἔχουσιν): The short life of humans is again contrasted with God's being ἄφθιτος, and their living on a toilsome earth is perhaps an implicit contrast with the "easy life" of the deity, ῥεῖα ζῶοντες being a traditional epithet of deities since Homer (*Il.* 6.138; *Od.* 4.805); see further Euripides, *Phoen.* 689; Ps-Aristotle, *De mundo* 398b12, 400b10; Iamblichus, *Vit. Pyth.* 139.⁴⁹ But the words ἐπίμοχθος γῆ may also be an oblique reference to what God says to Adam in Gen 3:17 ἐπικατάρατος ἡ γῆ ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις σου. ἐν λύπαις φάγη αὐτὴν πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς ζωῆς σου. The contrast between the short life-span of mortals and God's eternity is also the theme of Ps 89(90).

(22) "You do well without interruption, for you are free from envy" (εὐεργετῶν οὐ διαλείπεις, ἄφθονος γὰρ εἶ συ): On God as benefactor see Ps 12(13):6 ἄσω τῷ κυρίῳ τῷ εὐεργετήσαντί με; 56(57):3 τὸν θεὸν τὸν εὐεργετήσαντά με etc. The motif of God's (or the gods') being ἄφθονος does not occur in the LXX, but it is a common theme in ancient Greek and early Christian literature (it originated in Plato, *Phaedrus* 247a and *Timaeus* 29e).⁵⁰ Note that ἄφθονος can mean not only "free from envy, un-

⁴⁷ See P. W. van der Horst, "Philo of Alexandria on the Wrath of God," in his *Jews and Christians in Their Graeco-Roman Context* (WUNT 196; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 128–133.

⁴⁸ See M. Treu, "Griechische Ewigkeitswörter," *Glotta* 43 (1965): 1–24.

⁴⁹ But cf. also the prayer in 2 *Bar.* 54:2 "You are the one for whom nothing is hard, but you are the one who easily accomplishes all with a nod."

⁵⁰ See W. C. van Unnik, *De ἀφθονία van God in de oudchristelijke letterkunde* (Amsterdam-London: Noordhollandse Uitgeversmaatschappij, 1973); also E. Milobenski, *Der Neid in der griechischen Philosophie* (Wiesbaden: Harassowitz, 1964). The only early Jewish instance might be Ps-Phocylides 71.

grudgingly” but also “bounteous, copious, abundant.” It is to be noted that the element of thanksgiving here has its parallel in the eighteenth benediction of the Amidah, *Hoda’a*.

(23–24) “You give everything whereas you take nothing, for you are in need of nothing” (πᾶν δίδως οὐθέν λαμβάνων, ἀνενδεής γὰρ εἶ): Line 23 is almost literally identical to *Corpus Hermeticum* 5:10: πάντα δίδως καὶ οὐδὲν λαμβάνεις, but the idea expressed is so common that it is not necessary to assume that the author of the prayer here borrowed the formula from a Hermetic source. It is emphasized here that God does not lack anything (ἀνενδεής, “in need of nothing”), which is an idea derived from the later Platonic *theologia negativa* (but cf. Acts 17:25).⁵¹

(24–26) “Evil alone is not yours, wickedness is what you do not want, (it is) a product of our thoughts” (κακὸν δὲ μόνον οὐ σόν, φαῦλόν ἐστιν ὁ μὴ θέλεις, τέκος ἐννοιῶν ἡμετέρων): That God is far removed from any evil is a commonplace in the Hellenistic and Roman period among not only Greeks but Jews and Christians as well. That evil is here called “a product of our thoughts” (τέκος ἐννοιῶν ἡμετέρων) emphasizes again that whatever evil there is, is never God’s responsibility but only that of humans who have thought it up (in contradiction to Isa 45:7). Τέκος is a rather solemn word that is mainly used by the epic and tragic writers of the archaic and classical periods, again a proof that the author of our poem was at home in Greek literature, albeit that his was a distant acquaintance.

(27) “Accept from us ...”: Note that in almost all versions of the Amidah the seventeenth benediction (*Avodah*) begins with “Be pleased with, find acceptable ...,” followed by words for prayer or supplication. But a much closer parallel in the Amidah is the sixteenth benediction, *Shomea’ Tefillah*. For προσδέχομαι indicating God’s acceptance of something offered him by humans see Mal 1:8, 10; Mic 6:7; Amos 5:22 etc., particularly his acceptance of sacrifices (e.g. Ezek 20:40–41), which suggests that prayer is seen here as a substitute for sacrifice (cf. Dan 3:39).⁵²

(27–33) “These psalmodies, these hymnodies, these prayers, these appeals, these entreaties, these petitions, these expressions of gratitude, these requests, these thanksgivings, this zeal, this earnestness, these vigils,

⁵¹ See A.-J. Festugière, *La revelation d’Hermès Trismégiste IV: Le dieu inconnu et la gnose* (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1954), 1–140; R. Stolina, “Negative Theologie,” *RGG* 6 (2003⁴): 170–173. D. Carabine, *The Unknown God: Negative Theology in the Platonic Tradition* (Louvain: Peeters – Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995).

⁵² For various instances of imperatives of δέχομαι and its compounds in pagan Greek prayers see S. Pulleyn, *Prayer in Greek Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 144 n. 23 and 218.

these [fasts?], this lying on the ground, these prayerful sounds” (τὰς ψαλμωδίας, τὰς ὕμνωδίας, τὰς εὐχάς, τὰς παρακλήσεις, τὰς δεήσεις, τὰς ἄξιώσεις, τὰς ἔξομολογήσεις, τὰς αἰτήσεις, τὰς εὐχαριστίας, τὴν προθυμίαν, τὴν σπουδὴν, τὰς ἀγρυπνίας, τὰς [.....], τὰς χαμευνίας, τὰς εὐκτηρίους φωνάς): This list of fifteen grammatical objects of “accept from us” is striking because of its repetitive pathos, but also because (as Marmorstein noticed) these fifteen different expressions for liturgical forms and gestures, are strongly reminiscent of three liturgical texts from the Sid-dur, namely the *Kaddish*, the *Yishtabach*, and the *Emet we-yatziv*, which also contain fifteen expressions of praise and glory. “Psalmodies” does not occur in the Greek Bible but is common in early Christian literature from the second century onwards. “Hymnodies” is not current either but ὕμνωδέω does occur in 1 Chr 25:6. “Appeals” (παρακλήσεις): although the word παράκλησις does not have this sense in the Greek Bible, the verb παρακαλέω can mean “appeal” (to God), see Deut 32:36; Ps 89(90):13. “Entreaties” (δεήσεις) is common in the LXX, e.g., Sir 35:13 δέησιν ἡδίκημένου εἰσακούσεται; Job 8:6; 16:20. “Petitions” (ἄξιώσεις) as a noun does not occur in the Greek Bible but ἀξιοῦν in the sense “to pray” does (Jer 7:16; Dan 6:6[LXX]; 1 Macc 11:28); this verb occurs also in the opening line of the prayer for vengeance from Rheneia (see elsewhere in this volume). “Expressions of gratitude” (ἔξομολογήσεις): The word ἐξομολόγησις in the sense of “thanksgiving” does not occur before the LXX but there it is frequent (26 times), e.g., Jos 7:19; 1 Chr 25:3. “Requests” (αἰτήσεις): 3 Kgdms 2:16; Job 6:8 (αἰτέω is more frequent).

“Thanksgivings” (εὐχαριστίας): The words εὐχαριστέω and εὐχαριστία (together 10 times in the LXX) occur mainly in the later books of the Greek Bible, e.g., 2 Macc 2:27; Sir 37:11; Jdt 8:25; Wis 16:28. “Zeal ... earnestness” (προθυμίαν ... σπουδὴν): both Greek terms can designate zeal or eagerness, but the latter one has the additional notion of earnestness.⁵³ For προθυμία see Sir 45:23; for σπουδὴ Wis 14:17. “Vigils” (ἀγρυπνίας): for sleepless nights in a prayer context see Ps 101(102):8; cf. 126(127):1; Job 21:32. Philo, *De vita contemplativa* 83, reports about vigils held by the Jewish Therapeutae in Egypt. “Fasts” is a conjecture (the papyrus has a gap here) that was apparently made by Wahrhaftig (see *JTS* 40 [1939] 377 n. 4) and that formed part of the basis for his contention that we have here the Amidah for Yom Kippur. If only the vigils are left, this basis is very weak since Yom Kippur apparently was not the only occasion for vigils (see the

⁵³ See C. Spicq, *Notes de lexicographie néotestamentaire* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978), 816–825.

reference to the Therapeutae, above). The combination of vigils, fasts and lying on the ground is also to be found in Athanasius' *Vita Antonii* 4.1: ... ἀγρυπνοῦντι ... ἐν νηστείαις καὶ χαμευνίαις. This parallel does not constitute proof in any way that the prayer is Christian for lying awake on the ground during fasting in the night probably was a common practice. Of course, the prayer's diction may have been influenced here by Christian vocabulary. "Lying on the ground" (χαμευνίας): the Greek word does not occur in the Bible, but see Job 1:20 πεσῶν χαμαὶ προσεκύνησεν; Dan 8:11,12,18; *1 Esdr* 8:88 (χαμαιπετής). "Prayerful sounds/voices" (εὐκτηρίου φωνάς): The word εὐκτήριος does not occur in the Greek Bible but is common in patristic literature; it may have been borrowed from Christian usage.

(33–34) "A humane Master" (φιλόανθρωπον δεσπότην): The word group φιλοανθρωπ- occurs only in the later books of the LXX (2 Macc 4:11; 3 Macc 3:15,18; 4 Macc 5:12; Wis 1:6; 7:23); it denotes "affectionate concern for and interest in humanity" (BDAG 1055), especially on the part of rulers. In the NT it is said of God in Titus 3:4.

(34) "King of the ages" (τὸν αἰώνων βασιλέα): The papyrus has here the impossible τὸν αἰωνίων βασιλέα, which one has to read here as either τὸν αἰώνιον βασιλέα (Eternal King) or τὸν αἰώνων βασιλέα (King of the Ages), the latter of course being more likely since it is strikingly similar to, if not identical with, *melekh ha-'olam(im)*, a formula that is found in many early Jewish prayers, e.g., Tob 13:6(7), 4Q200, and several later synagogal prayers.⁵⁴

(35) "We beseech you (to act?) in agreement with your compassion for our present circumstances ..." (ἱκετεύομεν τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς οἴκτου ἄξια): The translation of this final line is far from being certain, both because the sentence is incomplete and because the precise meaning of τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς οἴκτου ἄξια is unclear: Literally it says, "the things that deserve (your) compassion for (?) us," although this use of κατὰ is unusual (for κατὰ with accusative meaning "concerning, about" see, however, LSJ s.v. B IV 2, VII 2). The words ἱκετεύομεν and οἴκτου, however, make clear that it is a prayer for

⁵⁴ For instances see Löhr, *Studien* 293–295; cf. also 1 Tim 1:17. On the motif of God's kingship in early Jewish literature see the essays in M. Hengel & A. M. Schwemer (eds.), *Königsherrschaft Gottes und himmlischer Kult im Judentum, Urchristentum und in der hellenistischen Welt* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991); also Chr. Zimmermann, *Die Namen des Vaters: Studien zu ausgewählten neutestamentlichen Gottesbezeichnungen vor ihrem frühjüdischen und paganen Sprachhorizont* (AJEC 69; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 271–281.

compassion,⁵⁵ which has its closest parallel in the seventh benediction of the Amidah, *Ge'ulah*, which begins with, "Look upon our misery." Cf. the prayer in the Qumran *Words of the Luminaries*, 4Q504 xix 12 "Look upon our affliction."

⁵⁵ For God as οἰκτίρων see Exod 34:6 *et passim*.

III. A Prayer for Protection against Unclean Spirits (Pap. Fouad 203)

Introduction

In 1951 a French Dominican scholar, Pierre Benoit (of the *École Biblique et Archéologique* in Jerusalem), published a papyrus with a prayer text that he identified as a Jewish prayer for protection against unclean spirits.¹ It is a leaf of 16 × 11 cm., that is now preserved at the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology (IFAO) in Cairo under the siglum Pap. Fouad 203.² Being part of a scroll, the leaf is inscribed only on the recto side, where it contains nineteen lines of Greek text in what Benoit calls “une calligraphie extrêmement soignée” (549). On the basis of comparison with other, datable papyri, both Benoit and van Haelst date Pap. Fouad 203 to the end of the first or the beginning of the second century C.E. Since there are traces of letters of the right edge of the immediately preceding and the left edge of the subsequent column and it is clear that both the beginning and the end of the prayer are missing, it stands to reason that we have here only a part of a larger text, although there is no way of knowing how much was lost. It is unknown where and when the papyrus was found. Because the papyrus has been damaged and at places the ink has faded rather much, it is sometimes hard to read, but even when readable, the text poses several serious translation problems which will be addressed in the commentary.

About the structure of the prayer as a whole nothing definitive can be said since not enough of the text has survived to be sure about this. Since the leaf is part of a scroll, it is far from unimaginable that the prayer text was only one of a collection of similar magical apotropaic prayers and formulae to be used when a specific occasion arose. Following Benoit and van Haelst, we suggest that the prayer text had the function of an amulet, for that much is clear that the God who demonstrated his great power in liberating Israel from bondage in Egypt is here invoked to use this power by throwing the unclean spirits who keep someone in their nefarious grip, into an abysmal place of annihilation. Although it cannot be entirely ruled out that the text

¹ P. Benoit, “Fragment d’une prière contre les esprits impurs?,” *RB* 58 (1951): 549–565.

² In the catalogue by J. van Haelst, *Catalogue des papyrus littéraires juifs et chrétiens* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1975), 297–8, it is no. 911. In the Leuven Database of Ancient Books (LDAB; see <http://ldab.arts.kuleuven.be>) it is no. 443.

is of Christian origin, both the contents and the date of the papyrus make it much more probable that it has a Jewish provenance.³

Bibliography:

Benoit, P. "Fragment d'une prière contre les esprits impurs?," *RB* 58 (1951): 549–565.

³ On other Jewish prayers for demon riddance see N. B. Johnson, *Prayer in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha* (Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, 1948), 18.

Commentary

Translation

1. ... the honourable name,
2. and you are unclean. May
3. he send out to you
4. his angel who
5. guided this
6. people at the exo-
7. dus, who appeared to Joshua
8. the son of Naum, and who cast
9. you into the abyss,
10. into the place of destruction,
11. and who covered (you)
12. with chaos. For that reason you will not appear
13. anymore neither will you exist to
14. harm any soul.
15. Honour and glory be to the Lord
16. forever. For the one who is exorcised (?)
17. [...] and for all
18. those who belong to him and
19. are with him ...

Notes

(1) “the honourable name” (τὸ ἔντιμον ὄνομα): The ἔντ[ε]ιμον ὄνομα (note *τίμη* for *τίμη* also in 15) can hardly be anything else than the name of God (probably the tetragrammaton in one of its Greek forms: *Iao*, *Adonai*); see, e.g., Deut 28:58 φοβεῖσθαι τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ἔντιμον καὶ τὸ θαυμαστὸν τοῦτο, κύριον τὸν θεόν σου; Tob 3.11; *Pss. Sol.* 8.26; 17.5 The name of the God of Israel played an important role in ancient magical adjurations, both Jewish and pagan (see, e.g., PGM 4.609, 3072; 12.85; 13.4, 147–8).⁴ Since the syntactical unit of which “the honourable name”

⁴ D. Aune, “*Iao*,” *RAC* 17 (1996): 1–12.

was a part is lost for the most part, it is hard to say what function the mentioning of the name had, but in view of comparable material in other adjurations, it is a reasonable guess that it functioned in a threat addressed to the unclean spirits that are mentioned immediately afterwards.⁵ See, e.g., the phrase “...] have relied [upon] your Name” in the exorcistic fragment 11Q11 ii 8 (= 11QApocryphal Psalms).⁶

(2) “and you are unclean” (καὶ ἔστε ἀκάθαρτα): This reading is not wholly certain since the first five letters are damaged. Benoit (553 n. 4) reports A.-J. Festugière’s suggestion to read [ἐξορκίζω] τὸ ἔντειμον ὄνομα κατὰ σε, ἀκάθαυτε, but states that the traces of the uncertain letters do not confirm this emendation. In view of what follows, especially the expression κακοποιῆσαι ψυχὴν in 14, it seems reasonably clear that with the ἀκάθαρτα “unclean spirits” (πνεύματα ἀκάθαρτα) or demons are meant; see for this expression, e.g., Zech 13:2; T. Ben.5.2; Mk 1:23, 26; PGM 4.1238 (as Greek loanwords in a Coptic spell).⁷

(2–3) “May he send out to you ...” (ἐξαποστείλαι ἡμεῖν): Benoit rightly states that ἐξαποστείλαι cannot be taken to be the imperative of the medial aorist (then one would expect “your angel” not “his angel”), neither as the infinitive of the active aorist (ἐξαποστεῖλαι) since that would hang in the air, so it must be an optative form, as in Ps 19:3 ἐξαποστείλαι σοι βοήθειαν ἐξ ἁγίου καὶ ἐκ Σίων ἀντιλάβοιτό σου. The same formula is found also in Deut 28:20. The verb ἐξαποστέλλειν or ἀποστέλλειν is often

⁵ See the discussion of this kind of material by W. Heitmüller, *Im Namen Jesu: Eine sprach- und religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zum Neuen Testament, speziell zur altchristlichen Taufe* (FRLANT 1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1903), 211–212 (‘Mit dem Namen vertreibt man die Dämonen’). Also R. Hirzel, *Der Name: Ein Beitrag zu seiner Geschichte im Altertum und besonders bei den Griechen* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1927), 17–30. Jewish material in G. F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era*, vol. 1 (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1927), 423–442; E. E. Urbach, *The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1975), 124–134.

⁶ See on this text E. Puech, “11QPsAp: un rituel d’exorcisme. Essai de reconstruction,” *RevQ* 14/55 (1990): 377–408.

⁷ There is abundant literature on the demonology of the New Testament and its Graeco-Roman and Jewish *Umwelt*; see, e.g., J. M. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic and the Synoptic Tradition* (London: SCM Press, 1974); G. H. Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist* (WUNT II/54; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1993); but esp. the very rich and book-length encyclopedia article “Geister (Dämonen),” *RAC* 9 (1976): 546–796, written by C. Colpe, J. Maier, J. ter Vrugt-Lenz, C. Zintzen, E. Schweizer, A. Kallis, P. G. van der Nat, and C. D. G. Müller. For more recent lit. see *RGG* 2 (1999): 533–544 s.v. “Dämonen.”

used in the Greek Bible for the sending of angels, e.g., Gen 24:40; Ps 56(57):4; 151:4; Mal 3:1; Acts 12:11 etc.⁸ The form ἡμεῖν cannot be right and should be emended to ὑμῖν, which was pronounced in an identical way;⁹ it would not make sense in this context to have the angel sent to “us.” The ὑμεῖς are certainly the evil spirits who are threatened here. A neat parallel is found in the exorcism in 11Q11 iv 5 “in the fury of his anger he will send a powerful angel against you.”

(4–7) “His angel who guided this people at the exodus” (τὸν ἄγγελον αὐτοῦ τὸν προκαθηγησάμενον τοῦ λαοῦ τούτου τῆ ἑξαγωγῆ): This angel is the one who is mentioned in Exod 14:19 ἐξῆρεν δὲ ὁ ἄγγελος τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ προπορευόμενος τῆς παρεμβολῆς τῶν υἰῶν Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἐπορεύθη ἐκ τῶν ὄπισθεν, and in 23:23 πορεύσεται ὁ ἄγγελός μου ἡγούμενός σου (but see also Joshua 5:13–14, where Joshua, during his encampment before Jericho, is meeting with an angel [“a man,” v.13] who reveals himself to him: ἐγὼ ἀρχιστράτηγος δυνάμεως κυρίου νυνὶ παραγέγονα, which Benoit [554] thinks is the source of this line in view of vv. 7–8). In the very rare word¹⁰ προκαθηγησάμενον one could see a combination of προπορευόμενος of Exod 14:19 and of ἡγούμενος of Exod 23:23 with a typically Hellenistic accumulation of prepositional prefixes. The expression “this people” instead of “the people of Israel” may be taken as an indication of the Jewish provenance of the adjuration. The word ἑξαγωγή for “exodus” does not occur in the Greek Bible, but it does as the title of the second cent. B.C.E. Jewish playwright Ezekiel’s drama about the exodus from Egypt, the *Exagoge*,¹¹ and also Philo calls the book of Exodus by the same title, *Migr.* 14; *Heres* 251. The verb ἐξάγειν, however, does occur frequently in the Greek Bible as designating God’s (or Moses’) act of liberating Israel from bondage in Egypt; see, e.g., Exod 3:10, 12; 7:4; Jer 38:32, 39:21; Ezek 20:6; Acts 7:36; Heb 8:9.¹²

(7–8) “who appeared to Joshua the son of Naum” (ὡς ὤφθη τῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ υἱοῦ Ναύμ): We take ὡς to stand for οὗς, a quite common mistake (the

⁸ For angels being sent from heaven in the magical papyri see, e.g., PGM 1.75–76; 3.338–339; 4.3025; 7.478 etc.

⁹ See F. T. Gignac, *A Grammar of the Greek Papyri of the Roman and Byzantine Periods, vol. 1: Phonology* (Milan: Cisalpino – Goliardica, 1975), 262–267.

¹⁰ See Benoit, “Fragment” 554 with n. 1, and LSJ *s.v.*

¹¹ See H. Jacobson, *The Exagoge of Ezekiel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

¹² For occurrences in the Pseudepigrapha see A.-M. Denis, *Concordance grecque des pseudépigraphes d’Ancien Testament* (Louvain: Institut Orientaliste, 1987), 335.

two words sounded identical¹³), and this puts this relative clause on a par with the participial “who guided this people.” With the reading $\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ we should have translated, “when he appeared ...,” which is more rambling and much less satisfactory. The sentence refers to the scene depicted in Joshua 5:13–15 (quoted in the previous note), but the function of this reference in the present prayer is quite unclear. Maybe it is the threatening appearance of the angel in this biblical scene, or his impressive words, that accounts for this reference (see the phrase in v. 13, “a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand,” and the angel’s words in v. 14, “I am here as the captain of the army of the Lord”). The orthography of both names is strange, for one expects Ἰησοῦ and Ναυή (Naveh). The first spelling occurs also elsewhere, e.g., *Pap. Oxy.* 1152 and 1384,¹⁴ and on some Jerusalem ossuaries.¹⁵ Benoit calls the spelling Ἰεσοῦς “une orthographe populaire” (554). The spelling Ναύμ for the usual Ναυή is more puzzling, however. To be sure, a sloppily written H in uncial script could be mistaken for a M, so that this confusion could readily arise. However, Benoit suggests another possibility: He suggests influence of the name of the prophet Ναούμ (Nahum) and even maintains the possibility that the scribe of the papyrus followed an older tradition in which the name of Joshua’s father, *Nun* in Hebrew, was rendered as Νούμ or Νούν, for in 1 Chr 7:27 we find the form Νούμ used for this person, which would imply that the current Ναυή is a corruption. But he overlooks that the change from Νούμ to Ναυή implies not only the quite possible mistake of M for H, but also the much less likely mistake of OY for AY.

(8–9) “and who cast you into the abyss” (καὶ κατερείφας ἡμᾶς εἰς ἄβυσσον): This is a problematic phrase. Apart from the fact that, like in line 3, the form ἡμᾶς probably has to be read as ὑμᾶς, the word καί is preceded by ε[.] which can hardly be read as anything else than εἰ, but εἰ καί is normally followed by an indicative, not by a participle. The form κατερείφας could in itself be taken to be the indicative aorist of καταρρίπτω and to stand for κατέρριφας (note Lam 2:1 κατέρριψεν ἔξ οὐρανοῦ εἰς γῆν δόξασμα Ἰσραήλ), but the fact that it stands in line with the unmistakable aorist participle ἐπικαλύφας in line 11 makes it highly probable that we have to take it to be the aorist participle of κατερείπω, “to cast down, to

¹³ For this interchange see Gignac, *A Grammar of the Greek Papyri of the Roman and Byzantine Periods*, vol. 1: *Phonology*, 275–278.

¹⁴ For the interchange of ε and η in papyri see Gignac, *A Grammar of the Greek Papyri of the Roman and Byzantine Periods*, vol. 1: *Phonology*, 242–249.

¹⁵ Instances in T. Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity*, vol. 1 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 127.

ruin.” So the concessive expression εἰ καί is impossible here, though it is equally impossible to think of another reading. Anyway, a concessive sense is wholly out of place here and since throwing into the abyss is typically the work of angels (e.g., 11Q11 iv 7 “(the angel) who will bring you down to the great abyss”), it stands to reason to read the nominative participle here as a mistake for the accusative in line with τὸν προκαθηγησάμενον in v.5 (an error one often sees in lists which begin with an oblique case but end in nominatives, here facilitated by the intervening phrase with ὃς ὤφθη). If one would take εἰ καί to be a mistake for ὁ καί, we would get the perfect sentence “the one who guided this people at the exodus, who appeared to Joshua, who is also the one who casts you down into the abyss.” The aorist participle does not necessarily indicate an activity in the past but can also refer to present (and future) actions: the casting of the evil spirits into the abyss may happen any moment. Since ἄβυσσος, primarily the primeval ocean (see Gen 1:2), can be used also for other very deep waters, it is possible that the text alludes here to the story of the drowning of the Egyptian army in the Red Sea in Exod 14. Such an allusion to this drowning would be meant to frighten the unclean spirits, as one finds more often in magical papyri (e.g., PGM 4.3053–3055) and as we are reminded by Origen when he says that in his days (third cent. C.E.) the formula “the God who drowned the king of Egypt and the Egyptians in the Red Sea” was often used in exorcisms, even by pagans, “to overpower demons and other evil powers” (*Contra Celsum* 4.34).¹⁶ But it should also be kept in mind that in early Jewish and Christian literature the ἄβυσσος was regarded as the place of punishment of the rebelling angels (see Gen 6:1–4) and their offspring, the evil spirits; see, e.g., *1 En.* 21.7 (gr.) *et passim*; Rev. 20:3; Luke 8:31; further BDAG *s.v.*¹⁷ In view of what follows, it is the latter sense of ἄβυσσος that predominates, although there is no need to make a strict distinction here.

(10) “Into the place of destruction” (εἰς τόπον ἀπωλείας): This is in apposition to “the abyss” in the previous line. For ἀπόλεια in the sense of eschatological annihilation see Rev 17:8.11; 2 Pet 3:7, 16; Phil 3:19; 2 Thess 2:3; *T. Abr.* 11:11; *1 Enoch*, *passim*. As Benoit remarks (556), in the LXX this word often stands in parallel with θάνατος, τάφος and ἕδης, e.g., Job 26:6, 28:22; Ps 87(88):12; Prov 15:11, 27:20. For τόπος cf. the expression τόπος κολάσεως in *Apoc. Pet.* 6.21.

¹⁶ See P. W. van der Horst, “‘The God Who Drowned the King of Egypt.’ A Short Note on an Exorcistic Formula,” in his *Jews and Christians in Their Graeco-Roman Context* (WUNT 196; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 280–284.

¹⁷ Also Denis, *Concordance* 92–93.

(11–12) “and who covered you with chaos (?)” (καὶ ἐπικαλύψας υ[...]
 χάος): The uncertainty in this translation is caused not only by the gap in
 the papyrus but also by the fact that the word χάος is an accusative (not
 nominative) instead of the dative one rather expects (but see below). If the
 word in the gap has to be restored as ὑμᾶς, or rather ὑμῖν, we would find
 here the first correct spelling of “you” (plur.) with υ (instead of the η in
 the preceding lines). The term “chaos” denotes more or less the same
 as “abyss,” “gouffre primordial et souterrain” (Benoit 557), the infinite
 darkness of the netherworld, with the slightly different semantic nuance
 that “chaos” lays more emphasis on the yawning character and “abyss”
 more on the bottomless nature of the pit.¹⁸ Note that χάος and ἀπώλεια
 occur in combination in a spell in PGM 4.1247–8 παραδίδωμί σε εἰς τὸ
 μέλαν χάος ἐν ταῖς ἀπωλείαις. Cf. also 1 *En.* 10:13 (gr.), where the evil
 spirits are brought to the place of their punishment which is called τὸ χάος
 τοῦ πυρός. The syntactical construction of the sentence could be explained
 by taking χάος as the object of the verb ἐπικαλύπτειν, meaning “to place
 as a cover over something/someone” (LSJ *s.v.* II), as in Num 4:11, 13. This
 would argue for the reading ὑμῖν, not ὑμᾶς, for which 1 *En.* 10:5 (gr.) ἐπικ-
 ἄλυσον αὐτῶ τὸ σκότος offers a good parallel.

(12–13) “For that reason you will not appear anymore” (διὸ οὐκέτ
 ὀφθήσεσθε): The persons addressed in this and the following phrase
 (οὐκέτι ... οὐδέ) are still the unclean spirits of line 2. The reading
 ὀφθήσεσθε is not wholly certain because the first letter is illegible and the
 third hardly legible, but there are no serious alternatives, and Festugière’s
 conjecture (reported by Benoit 558) is convincing. “You will not be seen
 anymore” means that they will not be able to manifest themselves anymore;
 for this common meaning of ὀφθῆναι see BDAG *s.v.* ὀράω A1d.

(13–14) “Neither will you exist (anymore) to harm any soul” (οὐδ
 ὑπάρξετε κακοποιῆσαι ψυχὴν): The verb ὑπάρχειν is used here in the
 sense of “to remain in existence,” see e.g., Ps 36(37):10 οὐ μὴ ὑπάρξῃ
 ὁ ἁμαρτωλός.¹⁹ It is followed by an infinitive with a consecutive sense,
 κακοποιῆσαι ψυχὴν, “so that you could do evil to a soul.” Ψυχὴ should
 be taken to mean here “any living being” or “anyone.” Cf. Luke 6:9 ...
 ἀγαθοποιῆσαι ἢ κακοποιῆσαι, ψυχὴν σῶσαι ἢ ἀπολέσαι.

(15) “Honour and glory be to the Lord” (ἡ δὲ τειμὴ καὶ ἡ δόξα κυρίῳ):
 This is the beginning of the closing(?) doxology in which typically biblical

¹⁸ See for details P. W. van der Horst, “Chaos,” *DDD* (2nd ed.): 185–186 (there lit.).

¹⁹ Benoit, “Fragment” 558 n. 3, lists other instances from the book of Psalms where this
 verb is used “appliqué aux impies qui ne sauraient subsister.”

language of praise is used, e.g., Ps 28(29):1 ἐνέγκατε τῷ κυρίῳ δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν. Cf. Ps 95(96):7 etc. and from the NT: Rom 11:36; Gal 1:5; 1 Tim 1:17 (θεῷ τιμὴ καὶ δόξα).

(16) “Forever” (δι’ αἰῶνος): The Greek formula is striking in that it rarely occurs in the Greek Bible, and that only outside doxological contexts, e.g., Deut 5:29, 12:28; Isa 60:21; Jer 20:11. The usual biblical phrases in contexts of praise are εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα and εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας (τῶν αἰώνων), but our author prefers a more classical Greek formula.

(16–19) “For the one who is exorcised (?)” (τῷ ἐξορκιζομένῳ): Although at first sight one is inclined to assume that this participle in the dative is to be connected to κυρίῳ, it is not immediately clear how then to interpret it. Ἐξορκίζειν usually means “to compel someone to do something by invoking a transcendent power” (BDAG *s.v.*, hence “to command” in exorcisms > “to exorcise”), but it can also mean “to adjure” in the sense of “to call upon,” like ἐπικαλεῖσθαι in the prayer for vengeance from Rheneia (IJO Ach 70; see elsewhere in this volume); cf. PGM 5.121, where ἐπικαλεῖσθαι is used in a phrase where one expects ἐξορκίζειν. So in the passive, ἐξορκίζεσθαι may mean “to be invoked.” The translation would then be “the Lord ... who is adjured/invoked.” However, the problem is that this phrase is followed by καὶ τοῖς παρ’ αὐτοῦ πᾶσιν καὶ συμπαροῦσιν. It seems reasonable to interpret these datives in the same way as the preceding one (τῷ ἐξορκιζομένῳ) since they are connected by καί. This makes it much more probable that one should put a full stop after “forever” and to make the following words belong to a new sentence which is broken off in the middle. Then the translation would be: “For the one who is exorcised the ([3 letters])²⁰ and for all those who belong to him and are with him ...” Benoit (559–560), who takes ἐξορκιζομένῳ to belong to κυρίῳ, assumes that “all those who ... are with him” are the heavenly retinue of God, the angels, and that this dative, too, depends upon τιμὴ καὶ δόξα, although he leaves open the other possibility, which seems more probable.

²⁰ For this gap Paul Maas suggested (to Benoit) τῷ [δεῖ(να)], ‘for so-and-so (or: NN),’ the usual way in magical formularies to indicate the person concerned.

IV. A Prayer for Vengeance from Rheneia

Introduction

This very unusual epitaph with a prayer for vengeance was found in 1834 on two tombstones from Rheneia, a little island near Delos (in the Aegean Sea) that served as Delos' cemetery.¹ The wording of the text on the two stones, one now in Bucharest and the other in Athens, is identical except for the names of the deceased women: the one of nr. 70 (in the *IJO* collection of Noy c.s.; see bibl.) is called Heraclea, the one of nr. 71 Martine. The text of nr. 70 is inscribed in almost identical form on both sides of the stone, so we have this text in three well-nigh identical versions. It is written almost without errors, which is exceptional for inscriptions. On the basis of the lettering, the inscriptions are to be dated to the late second or early first century B.C.E.

There are many echoes of LXX vocabulary and phraseology in the text. Ἐπικαλεῖσθαι, ἀξιοῦν, θεὸς ὕψιστος, ἐκχεῖν αἷμα ἀναίτιον, πᾶσα ψυχή, ταπεινοῦσθαι, αἷμα ἐκδικεῖν etc., are all of them common terms and expressions in the LXX. The most interesting and puzzling aspect of this prayer is that it might have been customary to pray it on the Day of Atonement (see the comments below). A fascinating aspect is also that above the text of nr. 70 a pair of hands lifted up towards heaven have been sculpted.²

¹ For data about Jewish (and Samaritan) presence at Delos see the documentation in E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, rev. ed. by G. Vermes *et al.*, vol. 3 (Edinburgh: Clark, 1986), 70–71. On Rheneia see A. Külzer, “Rheneia,” *DNP* 10 (2001): 952–953 (lit.).

² For a picture see *IJO* I 236 and F. Cumont, “Il sole vindice dei delitti ed il simbolo delle mani alzate,” *Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia (serie III): Memorie I/1* (Rome: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1923), 65–80, Plate IV. On the lifting up of hands as a prayer gesture in antiquity see Th. Ohm, *Die Gebetsgebärden der Völker und das Christentum* (Leiden: Brill, 1948), 251–265, esp. 256, and K. Gross, *Menschenhand und Gotteshand in Antike und Christentum* (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1985), 14–24, esp. 19. Cf. J. Leonhardt, *Jewish Worship in Philo of Alexandria* (TSAJ 84; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 135, who refers to *Mos.* 2.36 and *Contempl.* 66. See for biblical instances *Lam* 2:19; *Ps* 63:5, 141:2; and note that Agatharchides of Cnidos (second cent. B.C.E.) says that Jews pray “with outstretched hands,” see *GLAJJ* 30a = *FGH* 86F20. That representations of uplifted hands can

Comparable pagan and Christian prayers for vengeance are, for instance, the first or second century C.E. pagan inscription from the island of Amorgos published by Th. Homolle, “Inscriptions d’Amorgos,” *BCH* 25 (1901): 414–415 (= IG XII 7, nr. 1) and the Christian prayer in the sixth century *Papyrus Rainer* 19929 published by C. Wessely, “Les plus anciens monuments du christianisme écrits sur papyrus,” *Patrologia Orientalis* 18 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1924), 440–441.

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also indicate a demand or request for vengeance is argued by B. Forsén & E. Sironen, “Zur Symbolik von dargestellten Händen,” *Arktos* 23 (1989): 55–67 (see also the article by Cumont, mentioned above).

Commentary

Translation

1. I call upon and entreat God
2. the Most High, the Lord of the spirits
3. and of all flesh, against those who have treacherously
4. murdered or poisoned the wretched
5. Heraclea, who died untimely, and who have
6. unjustly shed her innocent blood,
7. that the same may happen to them who have
8. murdered or poisoned her and
9. to their children, O Lord, you who see
10. everything, and you, angels of God, for whom every
11. soul humbles itself on the present day
12. with supplication, that you may avenge and requite
13. her innocent blood as soon as possible.

Notes

(1) “I call upon and entreat” (ἐπικαλοῦμαι καὶ ἄξιῶ): The verb ἐπικαλεῖσθαι is very common in the LXX for calling upon the divinity: Gen 4:26; Deut 4:7; Amos 4:12; Joel 2:32; Jon 1:6; in Sir 46:5 it is used with τὸν ὕψιστον as its object, as here. In *Tim.* 27c, Plato uses it in combination with εὔχεσθαι. Ἀξιῶν in the sense of “putting a request” to someone is much rarer, but see Num 22:16; Jer 7:16 and 11:14 (at both places in parallel to προσεύχεσθαι).

(1–2) “God the Most High” (θεὸς ὕψιστος) is a current designation of the God of Israel (Gen 14:18; Num 24:16; Mic 6:6; Ps 81:6), but it is also used in non-Jewish contexts for “highest” gods, e.g., Zeus. The cult of *Theos Hypsistos* in later antiquity was probably a syncretistic movement that tried to bridge the gap between polytheism and monotheism (esp. Judaism).³

³ See S. Mitchell, “The Cult of Theos Hypsistos Between Pagans, Jews, and Christians,” in P. Athanassiadi & M. Frede (eds.), *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 81–148. Mitchell argues that many of the so-called ‘Godfearers’ may have been worshippers of *Theos Hypsistos*.

That here the Jewish God is meant is clear from the immediately following phrase, κύριος τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός, which is an almost literal citation of Num 16:22 and 27:16 (there θεός instead of κύριος). As a form of address in a prayer setting it occurs also in *Jub.* 10:3. Πνεύματα are here angels (the ἄγγελοι that are invoked some lines further), as in Heb 1:14 (and cf. *I Clem.* 64).⁴

(3–4) “Those who have treacherously murdered or poisoned the wretched Heraclea” (τοὺς δόλω φονεύσαντας ἢ φαρμακεύσαντας τὴν ταλαίπωρον ... Ἡράκλεαν) is reminiscent of the biblical description of a deliberate murder in Exod 21:14 ἀποκτεῖναι αὐτὸν δόλω. According to Noy c.s., the use of φαρμακεύειν “most probably does not indicate that the deceased woman was really poisoned, but is part of a standard expression adopted by the Jewish community on Delos, as indicated by its repetition in l.8 and Ach71.”⁵ More convincingly, Gager suggests that, whereas the use of φαρμακεύειν here has usually been taken as indicating death by poison, “the word was used as frequently, if not more so, with reference to the casting of spells. Thus we must consider the possibility that the “cause of death” here was not poison but a binding spell. In view of this possibility we must also reconsider the traditional interpretation, which simply takes for granted that the women were murdered. We know that they died, but the text, by its use of the phrase “murdered *or* poisoned/put under a spell,” clearly indicates that the precise cause of their deaths was uncertain.”⁶

(5) The name Heraclea is not otherwise attested as a name used by Jews (but the name Martine does occur in a Jewish epitaph from Rome, *JJWE* II 582). “Who died untimely” renders the Greek adjective ἄωρος, which is often used in epitaphs for children who died young. It is for that reason that one has often assumed that Heraclea and Martine were children, unnecessarily so, however, since it could also be used for adults who died before getting married.⁷

(6) “Who have unjustly shed her innocent blood” (ἐχχέαντας [sic] αὐτῆς τὸ ἀναίτιον αἷμα ἀδίκως) is reminiscent of the formulation in Deut 19:10 καὶ οὐκ ἐκχυθήσεται αἷμα ἀναίτιον ἐν τῇ γῆ. The word combination “innocent blood” for “blood of an innocent person” occurs more often in the LXX, e.g., Deut 21:8–9; 4 Kgdms 21:16 (said about the crimes of Manasseh); 2 Kgdms 24:4; Sus 62. The phrase “innocent blood” is re-

⁴ On this meaning of πνεῦμα see BDAG 833.

⁵ *IJO* I 238.

⁶ *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells* 187 n. 38.

⁷ See van der Horst, *Ancient Jewish Epitaphs* 45–47.

peated below (“that you avenge her innocent blood”), indicating the severity of the offense.

(7) “That the same may happen to them” is the beginning of the curse, here expressed as a wish (ἵνα οὕτως γένηται).⁸ The borderline between a curse expressed as a wish and the so-called judicial prayer is often hard to draw, as here.⁹ The wording expresses the notion of exacting justice in conformity (οὕτως) with the crime (may they *too* be murdered or poisoned).¹⁰

(8) For “and to their children” (καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις αὐτῶν) see Exod 20:5 (“I visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children”) and Num 14:18.

(9–10) “O Lord, you who see everything” (Κύριε ὁ πάντα ἐφορῶν) is reminiscent of LXX Job 34:23; Esth 5:1; 2 Macc 7:35, 12:22, 15:2; 3 Macc 2:21 (and again *I Clem.* 64). It should, however, be added that ever since Homer (*Il.* 3.277; *Od.* 11.109 *et al.*) ὅς πάντ' ἐφορᾷ (καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούει) was also a standard epithet of the sun, or rather the Sun-god, in his function of guardian of justice; and it is notable that inscriptions invoking Helios or Sol in this function are often accompanied, as in our case, by two hands raised to heaven.¹¹ One wonders whether solar aspects of Yahwism still play a role here (see Ps 84:12; Mal 4:2[3:20 LXX]).¹²

⁸ For the various forms of curses in antiquity see W. Speyer, “Fluch,” *RAC* 7 (1969): 1160–1288; also S. Pulleyn, *Prayer in Greek Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 70–95. *Ibid.* 85–6, Pulleyn notes the frequency of optatives in curses; the fact that here a subjunctive is used may have to do with the construction of the sentence (ἐπικαλοῦμαι καὶ ἀξιῶ ... ἵνα οὕτως γένηται) but also with the gradual disappearance of the optative in postclassical Greek.

⁹ See H. S. Versnel, “Beyond Cursing: The Appeal to Justice in Judicial Prayer,” in C. A. Faraone & D. Obbink (eds.), *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 60–106; also his “Religious Mentality in Ancient Prayer,” in Versnel (ed.), *Faith, Hope and Worship: Aspects of Religious Mentality in the Ancient World* (SGRR 2; Leiden: Brill, 1981), 21–26.

¹⁰ See on this motif the study by S. Lieberman, “On Sins and Their Punishments,” in his *Texts and Studies* (New York: Ktav, 1974), 29–56.

¹¹ F. Cumont, “Il sole vindice dei delitti ed il simbolo delle mani alzate,” collected many examples of such inscriptions (our inscription is his nr. 19 at p. 77).

¹² See J. Maier, “Die Sonne im religiösen Denken des antiken Judentums,” *ANRW* II 19/1 (1979): 346–412; Mark Smith, “The Near Eastern Background of Solar Language for Yahweh,” *JBL* 109 (1990): 29–39; Morton Smith, “Helios in Palestine,” in his *Studies in the Cult of Yahweh*, vol. 1 (RGRW 130/1; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 238–262. Note also the hymn to Helios in the Jewish magical document *Sefer ha-Razim*.

(10) The elements of supplication, affliction, and omniscience are frequently found connected to Yom Kippur (on which see below) also in other texts.¹³ That the “angels of God” are invoked here as well does not necessarily imply a cult of angels (see the debate about the meaning of θρησκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων in Col 2:18¹⁴), but it does indicate that angels were regarded as beings that could be invoked and prayed to. Here the invocation of angels has to do with the idea that they are the ones who expedite God’s punishment.¹⁵

(10–12) Most interesting is the phrase “for whom every soul humbles itself on the present day with supplication” (ὅς πᾶσα ψυχή ἐν τῇ σήμερον ἡμέρᾳ ταπεινοῦνται μεθ’ ἱκετείας). It is strongly reminiscent of Lev 23:29, πᾶσα ψυχή ἥτις μὴ ταπεινωθήσεται ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ταύτῃ, which is about fasting on the Day of Atonement. “To humiliate one’s soul” is a biblical expression for fasting; see, e.g., Lev 16:29, 31; 23:27; Ps 34(35):13. So what we most probably have here is a prayer for vengeance on Yom Kippur, which was apparently observed by the Jewish community on Hellenistic Delos. The phenomenon of sending prayers for vengeance to God on Yom Kippur (albeit here by an individual; see the singular verbs in the first line) is otherwise unattested.¹⁶ A curious feature of the text is also the formulation πᾶσα ψυχή ... ταπεινοῦνται, in which a subject in the singular governs a verb in the plural. Noy c.s. state: “The use of a 3rd person plural verb with a singular subject in an inscription which is otherwise grammatically fairly correct may indicate that part of the clause was a citation, although not from the LXX.”¹⁷ But that is unnecessary for it should be borne in mind that “every soul,” although grammatically a singular, in fact refers to a multitude of people (it is comparable to “quite a number of people say ...” where “number” is a singular).

¹³ See Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur* 48 n. 172. At p. 58 he refers to the occurrence of the motif of God’s omniscience in connection with Yom Kippur in the Qumran Yom Kippur prayer 4Q508 2 1–6 (4: “You know the things hidden”), the pseudo-Philonian sermon *De Jona* 1.11, and the Talmudic prayer ‘atta yodea’ razei ‘olam in *b.Yoma* 87b.

¹⁴ See, e.g., C. E. Arnold, *The Colossian Syncretism: The Interface between Christianity and Folk Belief at Colossae* (WUNT II 77; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 8–102; on our inscription p. 44.

¹⁵ See J. Michl, “Engel,” *RAC* 5 (1962) 54–254; A. Meier, “Angel I” and J. W. van Henten, “Angel II,” *DDD* 45–53.

¹⁶ Deissmann suggests that the stone tablets may have been set up on the Day of Atonement.

¹⁷ *IJO* I 239.

(12–13) “That you avenge and requite her innocent blood as soon as possible” (ἵνα ἐγδικήσῃς¹⁸ τὸ αἷμα τὸ ἀναίτιον ζητήσεις καὶ τὴν ταχίστην) is based upon biblical expressions such as αἷμα ἐκδικεῖν and αἷμα ἐκζητεῖν, e.g., in Gen 9:5; 42:22; Deut 17:8; 4 Kgdms 9:7 etc.¹⁹ Cf. also 4 *Ezra* 15:9, 22. The present translation assumes that ζητήσεις καὶ is a mistake for καὶ ζητήσεις, which makes better sense, since two verbs following each other asyndetically is grammatically very problematic. Another possibility, however, might be leaving the asyndeton for what it is and taking καὶ before τὴν ταχίστην to mean “and that (as soon as possible).”²⁰ The final words “as soon as possible” (τὴν ταχίστην [sc. ὀδόν]) are reminiscent of the formula ἦδη ἦδη ταχὺ ταχὺ (“soon soon quickly quickly”) that very frequently occurs at the end of prayers of conjuration in the magical papyri.²¹

¹⁸ For ἐκδικήσῃς. On εγ for εκ see F. T. Gignac, *A Grammar of the Greek Papyri of the Roman and Byzantine Periods, vol. 1: Phonology* (Milano: Cisalpino-Goliardica, 1975), 173–176.

¹⁹ Gager notes that in Joel 3:21 (LXX) ἐκδικήσω and ἐκζητήσω are variant readings (187 n. 45).

²⁰ For that meaning of καὶ see J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), 291.

²¹ See, e.g., PGM 4.1594; 19a.17; 43.26.

V. The Prayer of Manasseh

Introduction

As a prayer of confession that draws interpretively on scriptural wording and ideas, the Prayer of Manasseh is akin to a family of early Jewish prayers with confessional elements such as those in Ezra 9, Nehemiah 9, Daniel 9, Baruch 1:15–3:8, LXX Dan 3, the *Words of the Heavenly Luminaries* (4Q504), *Pss. Sol.* 9, 1QS 1:24–2:1, CD 20:28–30, LXX Prayer of Esther; and 3 *Macc* 2:1–20¹. Yet the Prayer of Manasseh is distinct in its own right in terms of its formal character, its content, its provenance, and its *Nachleben*. As an individual rather than corporate prayer, it is likened most frequently to the individual confession of Psalm (LXX50) 51, but the similarity is thematic rather than verbal.² Both prayers affirm God’s abundant mercy, acknowledge the petitioner’s own sin in the face of divine righteousness, request remission of severe punishment, and pledge to thank or praise God if saved. Yet these themes are common to other prayers of petition and aside from the use of language drawn from Exod 34:6, which is language common to a number of psalms and prayers of confession, the Prayer of Manasseh reveals no direct literary dependence on Psalm 51.

Assessing the provenance and use of the Greek Prayer of Manasseh in early Judaism and Christianity is complicated by its earliest appearance in two quite different Christian literary contexts, one being the early church teaching documents, the *Didascalia Apostolorum* and the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the other being the collections of odes appended to the book of Psalms in certain Greek biblical manuscripts. The different settings for the Prayer of Manasseh reflect the prayer’s ambiguous status as something at the nexus of liturgy and scripture, between the praxis of worship and the instruction of adherents. Early Christianity evidently inherited a number of

¹ Although she does not describe a *Sitz-im-Leben* for this prayer, E. Osswald classifies the *Gattung* of this prayer as an “individuelles Klagelied,” “Das Gebet Manasses,” JSHRZ 4/1 (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1974), 20. On the increased emphasis of confession in post-exilic prayers, see R. Werline, *Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism: The Development of a Religious Institution* (SBLEJL 13; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998).

² The list of parallels adduced by J. Charlesworth are insufficient to justify his statement that “the author of the Prayer of Manasseh had this psalm in mind when he wrote;” *OTP* 2: 630.

liturgical practises from its elder sibling Judaism, thus we can make the tentative assumption that the Prayer of Manasseh played a similar role in early Judaism before being incorporated into the Christian tradition. Because the Prayer of Manasseh appears in two such different contexts, both within early Church Orders and within collections of odes, the implications of each setting for understanding the provenance and possible ritual functions of the prayer warrant separate treatment.

The oldest extant text of the Prayer of Manasseh is found in Syriac in the *Didascalia* which dates to the first half of the third century C.E. The prayer does not appear in any manuscript of the Peshitta before the ninth century, where it appears in a Parisian manuscript (9aI) as one of the Odes following the Psalms in a version only slightly different from that found in the Syriac translation of the *Didascalia* so the reasonable inference is that the versions in the Peshitta manuscripts derive from the *Didascalia*.³ There are no extant ancient Greek manuscripts of 2 Chronicles that contain the Prayer of Manasseh interwoven as part of the narrative history, yet the flat claim of Herbert Ryle that the prayer was never included in the Septuagint should surely be reconsidered, especially given the new understanding of the complexity of the biblical manuscript tradition in light of the pluriform shape of the biblical traditions at Qumran.⁴

The translation and transmission of the text in Latin defies complete reconstruction. The *Apostolic Constitutions* was translated into Latin by the sixth century, but the prayer is missing in older Latin Bible manuscripts and appears for the first time apparently in the thirteenth century, where it appears in at least fifteen manuscripts immediately after the books of Chronicles. It also was printed in the Vulgate edition of Robert Stephanus in 1540 where the text appears along with the Greek text after 2 Chronicles. Other Vulgate manuscripts reflect that order until the Council of Trent, after which the prayer was included in an appendix after the New Testament. Luther's Bible of 1534 included it, but the French Zwingli Bible (1527–29) omitted it.

³ See "The Prayer of Manasseh," *The Old Testament in Syriac According to the Peshitta Version* Part 4/fasc. 6 (ed. W. Baars and H. Schneider; Leiden: Brill, 1972), ii.

⁴ H. Ryle, "The Prayer of Manasseh," *APOT*, 1: 616. On the significance of Greek texts at Qumran for a revised understanding of the biblical text tradition, see E. Tov, *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research* (2nd ed. Jerusalem: Simor, 1997) and E. Ulrich, "The Septuagint Manuscripts from Qumran: A Reappraisal of Their Value," in *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Literature* (ed. G. Brooke and B. Lindars; SBLSCS 33; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 49–80.

Further complicating an understanding of the prayer's transmission not to mention the ongoing contacts between Christian and Jewish communities is the existence of a Hebrew version found in the Cairo Genizah which likely dates no earlier than the tenth century.⁵ The Hebrew prayer is included in a collection of six prayers and magical incantations, all of them pseudepigraphic. The Hebrew Prayer of Manasseh itself shows clear indications of being translated from a Syriac version, but also belies knowledge of rabbinic Hebrew in its wording in addition to aggadic traditions about Manasseh found in the Talmud.⁶ The folio provides no indications as to the prayer's exact use in Jewish circles nor how it may have arrived in Egypt from its presumed origins in Syria. Reimund Leicht suggests that the Prayer of Manasseh may have been inserted into the *Tahanunim* for Monday and Thursday, for Yom Kippur or any other calendarical observance, but also acknowledges no explicit sign of this use.⁷

B. *The Prayer of Manasseh as a Pseudepigraphon*

Whereas the precise social provenance and early Jewish use of the prayer remain obscure, its literary origins within the fertile early Jewish liturgical imagination are easier to trace. The origins of the Prayer of Manasseh as a pseudepigraphical prayer cannot be understood without some mention of the biblical narratives in 2 Kings 21 and 24 and the Chronicler's reworking of the story of King Manasseh's reign in 2 Chr 33. The account of the Deuteronomistic historian in 2 Kings 21 paints a dark picture of the king of Judah as an idolater who instituted worship of the Canaanite gods Baal and Asherah in Jerusalem and who rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had destroyed. He is said to have made his own son "pass through fire" which suggests an offering for the cult of the Moabite god Molek. 2 Kings 21:16 indicts him for having "shed very much innocent blood." For all these deeds and for having thus misled the people of Judah, he is blamed

⁵ The Hebrew text is the same as that included in *Magische Texte aus der Kairoer Geniza* vol. 2 (ed. P. Schäfer and Sh. Shaked; TSAJ 42; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 51–53.

⁶ Reimund Leicht also posits the possibility that the translator had access to a Greek text as well. Leicht includes both the Hebrew text from the Cairo Genizah as well as a necessarily limited discussion of its relation to the prayer's very complex textual transmission in his article, "A Newly Discovered Hebrew Version of the Apocryphal 'Prayer of Manasseh,'" *JSQ* 3 (1996): 359–73.

⁷ Leicht, "Prayer of Manasseh," 369.

in 2 Kgs 24:3–4 for the fall of Judah as punishment for sins that God was not willing to pardon.⁸ The Chronicler's narrative offers a considerably different account of his reign. After detailing his introduction of foreign cults which parallels the Kings account, 2 Chronicles introduces different material: after ignoring divine warning about such sin, as punishment Manasseh was arrested and deported to Babylon by the King of Assyria to Babylon.⁹ 2 Chr 33:12–13 describes his distress, entreaty to God and his restoration to Jerusalem by God, which allowed him to recognise that “the Lord was indeed God.” 2 Chr 33:18–19 mentions the historian's two sources for the account, both of which are said to include, *inter alia*, Manasseh's prayer: “the Annals of the Kings of Israel” and the “records of the seers.”¹⁰ A number of commentators have plausibly suggested that the Chronicler's version serves the purpose of explaining why Manasseh could have served such a long reign of fifty-five years and died peacefully, which

⁸ For a detailed examination of the accounts of Manasseh's reign in the respective histories, see B. Halpern, “Why Manasseh is Blamed for the Babylonian Exile: The Evolution of a Biblical Tradition,” *VT* 48 (1998): 473–514.

⁹ In her work on the Chronicler's history, Sara Japhet has pointed out that the reformulation of traditions about Manasseh's reign in 2 Chronicles shares a pattern with the reformulation of four other kings, Rehoboam, Joash, Amaziah, and Uzziah, in which a reign depicted by the Deuteronomistic Historian as uniform is reworked to depict both negative and positive phases, marked by a decisive transition. Manasseh's treatment by the Chronicler is unique among the five, however, because it is the only one that shows a rehabilitation of the king. The other four kings are depicted as devolving from good to bad. Manasseh's case is also unique because of his singular depiction in the Deuteronomistic history as the villain whose religious syncretism is blamed for the fall of the southern kingdom of Judah to the Babylonians. S. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles* (OTL; London: SCM Press, 1993), 1001. Japhet also weighs the likelihood that the traditions concerning Manasseh also contain historically reliable information that is distinct from the Deuteronomistic historian's biased portrait. See her discussion in *ibid.*, 1002–1003. She notes a precedent for Manasseh's treatment in the description of the exile to Assur and subsequent return of the Egyptian Pharaoh Necho preserved in Assurbanipal's records (*ANET*, 295). As for Manasseh's repentance which is triggered by his exile at the hands of the Assyrian king, she concludes: “This sequence is so much an integral part of the Chronicler's philosophy of history and the way in which he understands the historical process that it can hardly be accorded a reliability on its own.” *I & II Chronicles*, 1003.

¹⁰ Indeed, the two verses may reflect a duplication and only one historical source is meant; see W. Schniedewind, “The Source Citations of Manasseh: King Manasseh in History and Homily,” *VT* 41 (1991): 450–61. Schniedewind also makes the interesting suggestion that Manasseh's own “Babylonian exile” may be seen as a typological casting of the people's own exile and restoration.

would normally be viewed as a sign of divine blessing.¹¹ Moreover, the inclusion of a divine warning before punishment is in keeping with the Chronicler's view of divine retribution. The retrieval of the Manasseh narrative may reflect a concern with the corporate punishment inflicted on all the people of Judah for the sins of one man. The reworking of the story of Manasseh that appears in the *Didascalia*, an account appropriated with few modifications in the *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.22:4–14,¹² draws from both the Kings and Chronicles accounts, but also includes some additional material, narrative exposition as well as Manasseh's prayer. The *Didascalia* account can be seen as a further extension of his story, an adaptation of the already expanding tradition.¹³

Before describing the earliest extant version of the Prayer of Manasseh in the *Didascalia*, it is also important to consider a piece of evidence that points to a broader Manasseh tradition developing in the last two centuries B.C.E. Another "prayer of Manasseh" is found in a prayer collection of two Dead Sea Scrolls manuscripts, 4Q380–381, which have been dated paleographically to the first century B.C.E., although compositionally they can be dated no more firmly than the Persian-Hellenistic era.¹⁴ The two quite fragmentary manuscripts contain a collection of psalm-like prayers, indeed, some of the prayers contain language known from canonical psalms. Three "superscriptions" are found among the extant fragments which are suggestive in terms of pseudepigraphical attribution. One has the superscription

¹¹ See for example, H. Ryle, *APOT*, 612, or A. Wikgren, "Manasseh, Prayer of" *IDB* 3:256.

¹² D. Fiensy, *Prayers Alleged to Be Jewish*, 20.

¹³ A similar expansive trajectory can also be seen in the repentance of Solomon tradition in eastern Christian literature, which was developed to explain certain perceived deficits in the biblical Solomonic tradition. On the penitence of Solomon traditions in medieval Armenian literature, see M. Stone, "The Penitence of Solomon," *JTS* 40 (1978): 1–19.

¹⁴ For a discussion of the dating and character of 4Q381, see E. Schuller, *Qumran Cave 4 VI: Poetical and Liturgical Texts, Part 1* (DJD XI; Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), 87–172, as well as her earlier volume, *Non-Canonical Psalms from Qumran: A Pseudepigraphic Collection* (HSS 28; Atlanta: Scholars, 1986): 61–240. William Schniedewind has argued that the Qumran prayer of Manasseh in 4Q381 is likely a reflection of early biblical psalmody, perhaps even pre-exilic. His argument on the basis of an imputed meaning of the verb כָּחַשׁ in the prayer is less convincing than Schuller's argument for the appearance of features of Late Biblical Hebrew in the collection, although she does allow for the possibility of different origins for individual psalms. See Schniedewind's article, "A Qumran Fragment of the Ancient 'Prayer of Manasseh'?", *ZAW* 108 (1996): 105–107.

the “Psalm of Obadiah” (4Q380 1 ii, 8); another has the “Hymn of the Man of God” (4Q381 24 4) and a third is entitled, “Prayer of Manasseh, King of Judah when the King of Assyria imprisoned him” (4Q381 33 8). 4Q381 33 8–11 is one fragment of a larger scroll that contains multiple prayers. The explicit mention of imprisonment (וכלל) by the King of Assyria is a reference to an event mentioned in 2 Chronicles 33, not in the Kings account of Manasseh’s reign. The four fragmentary verses that are preserved of the prayer reveal no clear linkage to the Greek pseudepigraphon which is the focus of this commentary. Yet it is similar in theme as a penitential confession that anticipates divine salvation and emphasises divine mercy.

Moreover, the existence of another prayer attributed to Manasseh suggests that there was a practise of attributing prayers to the wayward king reflecting knowledge of the tradition of Manasseh’s imprisonment in Babylon by the King of Assyria found in the Chronicler’s history. Whether such prayers were originally written as pseudepigrapha or whether they gained that status at a later point is not always clear, although in the case of the Prayer of Manasseh, the answer seems to be that the text was composed *de novo* as a pseudepigraphon because of its close intertextual connection with scriptural narratives about Manasseh in Kings, Chronicles, and the targums. Such composition was presumably part of an imaginative exercise in liturgical piety in what we may call “retro-repentance” and an interesting twist on the practise of attributing psalms pseudepigraphically to King David. The appearance in the manuscript from Qumran of the prayer among other prayers, some of them psalm-like, lies in greater continuity with the appearance of the Prayer of Manasseh in the collection of odes appended to the end of the Psalter in later Greek manuscripts.

Nickelsburg’s suggestion that the Prayer of Manasseh may have originally been composed as part of the conflation and elaboration of the Deuteronomic and Chronicler’s accounts of Manasseh rather than a prayer composed and circulating independently is an intriguing one but probably incorrect.¹⁵ Based on the fact that all but one of the other compositions in the Odes are drawn from biblical contexts, he argues that the Prayer of Manasseh, too, was drawn from a narrative context to be included in the collection of canticles. The main counterindication to his argument that Nickelsburg overlooks is the pseudepigraphic superscription to the prayer in the *Didascalia* which interrupts the narrative flow of the text, so that it reads:

¹⁵ G. Nickelsburg, “Prayer of Manasseh,” *Oxford Bible Commentary* (ed. J. Barton and J. Muddiman; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 770.

And when he was afflicted exceedingly much, he entreated the face of the Lord his God, and humbled himself exceedingly before the God of his fathers; and he prayed before the Lord God and said: The Prayer of Manasseh. O Lord God of my fathers, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob and of their righteous descendants ...

The abrupt inclusion of a superscription suggests an independent circulation of the prayer. Nickelsburg's suggestion is nonetheless important because it underscores the ongoing compositional nature of scripture during the last centuries B.C.E. and the first centuries C.E. in order to involve the one praying in the ongoing world of scripture. The Prayer of Manasseh was composed and no doubt prayed as well with the story of Israel in mind, a narrative world in which those offering these pseudepigraphical prayers continued to participate.

Traditions about Manasseh in scriptural, pseudepigraphical, and other early Jewish literature contributed to the development of this narrative world. The Targum to 2 Chr 33:10–13 elaborates the Manasseh tradition by detailing his arrest and detention by the Assyrian army, his imprisonment in a mule of brass bored with holes around which was put on fire. According to the Targum, although Manasseh prayed, the angels sought to prevent God from hearing his petitions by shutting the doorways and windows of prayer in heaven, but God was moved by Manasseh's words. Other traditions appear throughout various works of the pseudepigrapha, such as the first century C.E. *Lives of the Prophets* which blames Manasseh for killing the prophet Isaiah by sawing him in two. According to this account, it was for this murder of the righteous prophet that Manasseh was punished by God through the Assyrians.¹⁶

B. *The Two Earliest Contexts of the Prayer of Manasseh*

B.1. *The Prayer of Manasseh in the Didascalia*

The provenance and dating of the *Didascalia* have met with agreement among scholars. The work is from the first half of the third century C.E.

¹⁶ *Liv. Pro.* 1:1; cf. also the mention of this tradition, expanded to include the mediating role of Satan in the killing, at the end of *Ascen. Isa.* 11:42–43. This tradition was included in both Jewish and Christian works, such as the thirteenth century *Chronicon* of the Jacobite Syrian bishop Bar Hebraeus. R. H. Connolly suggests that Bar Hebraeus may have relied on the *Historiarum Compendium* of Cedrenus for some of the elements of his account, *Didascalia Apostolorum*, 264. In later rabbinic tradition, the view of Manasseh is uniformly negative; see *EnJud* 2:854–855.

and of Syrian origin.¹⁷ A precise location of Antioch is often suggested because of the document's clear concern for Jewish practices adopted by Jesus' followers, but the setting of Antioch is without unequivocal internal or external support. Like the Prayer of Manasseh that is contained within, the *Didascalía* is itself a pseudepigraphical work, written in the name of the twelve apostles of Jesus, purportedly dating to the time of the first ecclesial council (Acts 15). Metzger's suggestion that the author was a bishop is plausible because the authorial voice sounds like a community leader of some sort.¹⁸ The precise use to which the *Didascalía* was put, in which exact social setting, is not clear. The authorial voice addresses various parties: men, women, widows, bishops, but in what particular context this would have been read, whether in public gatherings or private instruction, is not known.

Fonrobert has argued that the author of the *Didascalía* was sufficiently well-versed in Jewish hermeneutical method that he could argue for the relinquishing of the so-called "second law" using midrashic techniques of *notariqon*.¹⁹ Yet Fonrobert does not consider the issue of the *Didascalía*'s composition, nor more significantly from the perspective of understanding the origins of the Prayer of Manasseh, does she address the notion of the independent circulation of parts of the *Didascalía* prior to its composition. In our case, it seems likely that the Prayer of Manasseh did indeed circulate independently in written form. She argues cogently that both the authors of the *Didascalía* and the authors of the *Mishnah*, inhabit the same "discursive space" desiring to claim the authority of the scriptural tradition to support their rival claims to orthopraxis or orthodoxy; less plausible is her argument from silence that the compilers of the *Didascalía* knew of a compiled *Mishnah* and were consciously writing in order to counter its role in a Jewish community.

The Prayer of Manasseh appears in the seventh chapter of the *Didascalía* which is a chapter on the subject of repentance addressed to bishops. The chapter begins by addressing the bishops about their role in the penitential process: "Do therefore, O bishop, teach and rebuke, and loose by forgive-

¹⁷ F. X. Funk's discussion summarises the evidence, *Die Apostolische Konstitutionen*, 50–54.

¹⁸ M. Metzger, *Constitutions apostoliques I*, 16. For proposals about the author and community, see H. Achelis and J. Flemming, *Die Syrische Didascalía*, 266–317, and R. H. Connolly, *Didascalía Apost.* 261. A. Vilela suggests that the author is a deacon; *La condition collégiale des prêtres au III^e s.* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1971), 214.

¹⁹ C. Fonrobert, "The *Didascalía Apostolorum*: A Mishnah for the Disciples of Jesus," *J ECS* 9 (2001): 483–509.

ness. And know your place, that it is that of God Almighty, and that you have received authority to forgive sins”(trans. Connolly). Elsewhere in the chapter, bishops are chastised for having been too harsh in withholding mediated forgiveness from people, thereby driving them out of the Church. Thus the example of Manasseh’s successful penitence and the assurance of divine forgiveness for even the worst sinners is an example particularly for educating harsh bishops rather than a lesson aimed generally at the whole membership of the Church.

However it may have been used prior to its inclusion in the *Didascalia*, in terms of its use within the Christian community, the *Didascalia* does not explicitly instruct the bishops to require recitation of Manasseh’s prayer in the penitential process. The tale of Manasseh as a whole remains a piece of catechesis, and not to the laity but to the clergy to whom the chapter is addressed. King Manasseh becomes an *exemplum par excellence* of the efficacy of repentance for even the gravest sin, that of idolatry, as well as shedding innocent blood, i.e., the murder of righteous innocents. Given the anti-Jewish rhetoric elsewhere in the *Didascalia*, there is a double irony in using the story of Manasseh for the efficacy of repentance because he was forgiven by God without benefit of a bishop’s mediation, let alone that of Christ. Here the bishops are exhorted through the authorial voice of the first apostles to be merciful to those who repent; whereas the teaching document as a whole contains quite vehement polemic against Jews who observe the “second law,” that is, the legislation that was given to Moses after the restoration of the covenant in Exodus 34.²⁰

Given its inclusion in the *Didascalia*, the Prayer of Manasseh can of course date no later than the early third century C.E.. Determining the earliest date of its composition is more challenging. Although some scholars have suggested a date as early as the second century B.C.E., it seems a tentative dating in the first or second centuries C.E. may be more likely. We must rule out the suggestion of Nickelsburg that the Prayer was composed as part of the teaching document. Given its strong theme of the efficacy of repentance for the worst sinners, one would like to imagine its use as part of the Yom Kippur liturgy in Syrian synagogues, but there is simply no positive evidence to fix such a social setting for the prayer.

²⁰ On the nature of the “second law” and polemic against Jewish practise, see P. van der Horst, “I gave them laws that were not good: Ezekiel 20:25 in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity,” in *Sacred History and Sacred Texts in Early Judaism* (ed. J. N. Bremmer and F. García Martínez; Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1992), 94–118.

B.2. *The Prayer of Manasseh as One of the Odes*

The earliest extant appearance of the Prayer of Manasseh in Greek is its inclusion in the fifth century Codex Alexandrinus. The Prayer of Manasseh appears as one of the Odes following the book of Psalms, appearing in a number of later Greek manuscripts as well (see chart below for earliest witnesses to the tradition). We can consider the evolution of this diverse collection of odes included with certain Greek manuscripts as similar to the development of the collection of the Psalms itself. As has become evident from the publication and examination of the Dead Sea Scrolls, there were a number of psalms collections in circulation in late Second Temple Judaism.²¹ Like the slow composition-canonisation process of the Hebrew Bible itself in which the Torah, or first five books of scripture obtained a more definite form earlier than the prophets and writings, we can consider the “five books” of the psalms to have undergone a somewhat analogous process, in which the first two books had obtained a fixed sequence and stabilised before the latter collection. Indeed, there may be a reference to a collection of odes in the Greek version of Solomon’s prayer at the dedication of the Jerusalem temple. The end of his long prayer in 1 Kgs 8:53 contains the following addition to, or variant of, the Masoretic text of the Hebrew: “He manifested the sun in the heaven: the Lord said he would dwell in darkness: build thou my house, a beautiful house for thyself to dwell in anew. Look, is this not written in the book of the song?” (ἐν βιβλίῳ τῆς ᾠδῆς).²²

It is not possible to state with certainty the precise role in liturgical or ritual life played by the compositions that would eventually wind up in the collection of the odes. That said, there have been attempts to discern their use. Heinrich Schneider has devoted considerable attention to the later use of the odes especially in the eastern and western churches, but he does include some suggestions about their possible use in early Judaism.²³ He sug-

²¹ For a thorough discussion of the varieties of psalms scrolls found at Qumran and the implications for understanding the process of compilation, see P. Flint, *The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

²² This verse (in either Hebrew/Greek version) is missing entirely from the Chronicler’s parallel to this section of the Deuteronomistic narrative in 2 Chronicles 6. Sara Japhet explains the omission by arguing that it was omitted by the Chronicler because it does not accord with the Chronicler’s theological perspective which precludes the idea that the people of Israel were created as God’s inheritance (נַחֲלָה) once and only at the time of the Exodus, but rather had a continuous existence within the land; see S. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles* (OTL; London: SCM Press, 1993), 599–600.

²³ Heinrich Schneider’s series of three articles was published in the middle of the last century, thus prior to the impact of Qumran scholarship on the study of early Jewish and Christian prayer which indeed has yet to be registered fully: “Die Biblischen

gests three possibilities: (1) inserted freely into prayers that were recited; (2) between the readings as lyrical intermezzi; and (3) in the worship of the temple and synagogue just as the Davidic psalms are used.²⁴

While the use of psalms and hymns in the Temple remains in the realm of learned conjecture, early Christian borrowing of Jewish hymns can be affirmed with much more certainty because it is reflected by the collections of odes mentioned in the works of Origen, Ambrosius, and Philo of Karpasia.²⁵ Their lists are variable in content and length, but there are some important similarities to note. All three lists include only prayers derived from traditions in the Hebrew Bible.²⁶ There is no song found in the New Testament, no *Magnificat* or *Benedictus* from Luke that will appear in later collections of odes used in Christian liturgical practice. A second common feature is that all begin with the “great song” of Moses in Exodus 15. This was considered the Song *par excellence* which hearkens to the first response of Israel to their liberation by God from the Egyptian army at the Red Sea. Two of the lists, Origen’s and Philo’s, contain Num 21:17, the Song of Miriam’s Well, in second place, and all three contain Moses’ song of witness in Deut 32 as the third song.

The following chart makes clear that the two Songs of Moses, drawn from Exodus 15 and Deuteronomy 32, and the Prayer of Hannah in 1 Samuel 2 appear consistently as the first three odes in the earliest Greek manuscripts.²⁷ The evidence suggests that there was a Jewish practice of singing hymns and prayers, likely in various liturgical contexts relating to festivals, which was adopted in early Christian practice.²⁸ Moreover, the practice of

Oden im christlichen Altertum,” *Biblica* 30 (1949): 28–65; “Die Biblischen Oden in Jerusalem und Konstantinopel,” *Biblica* 30 (1949): 433–452; “Die biblischen Oden im Mittelalter,” *Biblica* 30 (1949): 479–500.

²⁴ Schneider, “Die Biblischen Oden,” 33–34.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 51–52.

²⁶ For an illuminating discussion of early Christian borrowing of Jewish exegetical traditions in this regard, see J. Kugel, “Is There But One Song?,” *Biblica* 63 (1982): 329–350.

²⁷ The chart follows that of Rahlfs, *Psalmi cum Odis*, 79–80, except for the Hesychglosse column (not included in Rahlfs’ chart) which is taken from Schneider, “Die Biblischen Oden,” 64.

²⁸ The singing of the Hallel, Psalms 113–118, is accorded ancient origins according to Jewish tradition. H. Ryle’s suggestion that the Prayer of Manasseh became known to the church because of the circulation of the *Didascalia* and the *Apostolic Constitutions* seems to put the cart before the horse in terms of composition and use of this prayer, particularly in light of the fact that the Prayer of Manasseh’s superscription within the *Didascalia* and ostensibly Jewish content argues for its independent circulation in Jewish circles; “Prayer of Manasseh,” *APOT* 1, 614.

composing such hymns and prayers continued well into the first centuries of the Common Era. Syrian Christianity with its close, if contested, ties to Judaism and eastern traditions of Christianity generally, reflects this practice in liturgical material longer than western Christianity. The Prayer of Manasseh was thus preserved in Syriac in a biblical manuscript, a Melchite Psalter, where it appears in an appendix to the Psalter proper, as well as numerous Horologia, liturgical books.²⁹

Codex Alexandrinus 5 th century OG (Theodotion for Daniel only)	Hesychglosse Marc. 535 Venice, 5 th century	R Verona 6 th century (Theodotion)	T Zurich 7 th century OG	55 Rome 10 th century (Theodotion)
Exod 15:1–19	Exod 15:1–19	Exod 15:1–19	Exod 15:1–19	Exod 15:1–19
Deut 32:1–43	Deut 32:1–43	Deut 32:1–43	Deut 32:1–43	Deut 32:1–43
1Sam 2:1–10	Hab 3:2–19	1Sam 2:1–10	Hab 3:2–19	1Sam 2:1–10
Isa 26:9–20	Isa 26:9–20	Jon 2:3–10	Isa 26:9–20	Hab 3:2–19
Jon 2:3–10	Jon 2:3–10	Isa 5:1–9	Jon 2:3–10	Isa 26:9–20
Hab 3:2–19	1 Sam 2:1–10	Isa 26:9–20	1 Sam 2:1–10	Jon 2:3–10
Isa 38:10–20	Luke 1:46–55	lacking	Dan 3:26–45 Prayer of Azariah	Dan 3:26–45 Prayer of Azariah
Prayer of Manasseh	Isa 38:10–20	Dan 3:52–88 Song of the Three	Luke 1:46–55	Dan 3:52–88 Song of the Three
Dan 3:26–45 Prayer of Azariah	Prayer of Manasseh	Luke 1:46–55	Isa 38:10–20	Luke 1:46–55, 68–79
Dan 3:52–88 Song of the Three	Dan 3:26–45 Prayer of Azariah	Hab 3:2–19	Prayer of Manasseh	Isa 5:1–9
Luke 1:46–55	Dan 3:52–88 Song of the Three	lacking	Dan 3:52–88 Song of the Three	Prayer of Manasseh
Luke 2:29–32	Luke 1:68–79	lacking	Luke 1:68–79	Luke 2:29–32
Luke 1:68–79	Luke 2:29–32	lacking	Luke 2:29–32	Isa 38:10–20
Gloria	Gloria	lacking	Gloria	Gloria

²⁹ For a survey of the manuscripts which indicates where the canticles are to be found in the Greek, Eastern, and Latin traditions consult J. Mearns, *The Canticles of the Christian Church Eastern and Western in Early and Medieval Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914).

C. Note on Translation

The text is a translation based on the critical text found in volume 10 of the Göttingen *Septuaginta, Psalmi cum Odis*, edited by A. Rahlfs, whose apparatus reflects the three primary Greek manuscript witnesses, the oldest of which is Codex Alexandrinus, as well as the Syriac of the *Didascalia* and the Greek of the *Apostolic Constitutions*. Textual variants are discussed in the body of the commentary.

D. Outline

The structure of the Prayer of Manasseh is as follows:

- A. Superscription/attribution and invocation of God (1–7)
 - 1. God of the patriarchs who created heaven and earth (1–5a)
 - 2. God of mercy who instituted repentance (5b–7)
- B. Confession (8–12)
 - 1. Affirmation of divine economy of repentance (8)
 - 2. Recognition of unworthiness and sinfulness (9–10)
 - 3. Expression of contrition (11)
 - 4. Confession of sin (12)
- C. Petition for forgiveness and mercy (13)
- D. Expression of trust in divine salvation (13d–14)
- E. Psalmist's vow to praise God (15a)
- F. Doxological conclusion (15b)

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Commentary

Translation

Prayer of Manasseh

1. O Lord Almighty, God of our ancestors,
of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and of their righteous offspring;
2. you who made heaven and earth with all their order;
3. who shackled the sea by your word of command,
who closed the abyss and sealed it with your terrifying and glorious name;
4. at whom all shudder, and tremble before your power,
5. for the magnificence of your glory cannot be endured,
and the wrath of your threat to sinners is intolerable;
6. yet immeasurable and unfathomable is your promised mercy,
7. for you are the Lord Most High, of great compassion, patient, and very merciful,
and relenting at human evil.

O Lord, according to your great kindness you have promised repentance and forgiveness to those who have sinned against you, and in the multitude of your mercies you have constituted repentance for sinners, for salvation.

8. Therefore you, O Lord, God of the righteous, have not constituted repentance for the righteous, for Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, who did not sin against you,

but you have constituted repentance for me, who am a sinner.

9. For the sins I have committed are more in number than the sand of the sea;

my transgressions are multiplied, O Lord, they are multiplied.

I am not worthy to look up and see the height of heaven because of the multitude of my iniquities.

10. I am weighted down with many an iron shackle, so that I cannot lift up my head, and I have no relief;

for I have provoked your wrath and have done what is evil in your sight, setting up desecrations and multiplying abominations.

11. And now I bend the knee of my heart, begging you for your kindness.

12. I have sinned, O Lord, I have sinned, and I acknowledge my transgressions.

13. I beg, beseeching you: forgive me, Lord, forgive me!
 Do not destroy me with my lawless deeds;
 Do not remember my wicked actions forever in your anger;
 Do not condemn me to the depths of the earth!
 For you, O Lord, are the God of those who repent,
 14. and in me you will manifest your goodness;
 for, unworthy as I am, you will save me according to your great mercy
 15. and I will praise you continually all the days of my life.
 For all the host of heaven sings your praise and yours is the glory forever.
 Amen.

Notes

Superscription

Prayer of Manasseh

The superscription linking the prayer to Manasseh is found in the *Didascalia Apostolorum* and in Codex Alexandrinus. Codex Turicensis adds the further clarification, “the son of Hezekiah,” to indicate the sixteenth and seventeenth kings of Judah, who successively reigned from 715 B.C.E.–641 B.C.E. according to Albright’s standard chronology. The superscription in the Latin edition of Stephanus makes reference to Manasseh’s situation of captivity in Babylonian exile rather than his lineage: *Oratio Manassae Regis Iuda cum captus teneretur in Babylone* “The Prayer of Manasseh, king of Judah when he was held captive in Babylon”. The superscription also provides what could be understood as a genre category, a *proseuchê*, or petition, but this designation belies the fact that the one who prays anticipates his own salvation at the end of the prayer and his ultimate *telos* of singing of praises to God, an act which might occasion a “thanksgiving” (*eucharisteô*) or “praise” (*aineô*).³⁰ Perhaps it is for this reason that this *proseuchê* is included with what are predominately songs of thanksgiving in later collections of canticles.

(1–2) The first two verses of the prayer invoke God as both creator and covenant-maker, “God of our ancestors”, introducing two themes that lace through the composition. The Codex Turicensis does not have παντόκρατορ “Almighty”. The Greek παντόκρατορ sometimes renders “lord of hosts” *Adonai zeba’ot* in the Hebrew Bible, sometimes, as in Job,

³⁰ On the semantic domains for special types of Greek prayer, see D. Aune, “Prayer in the Greco-Roman World,” in *Into God’s Presence: Prayer in the New Testament* (ed. R. Longenecker; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 28–29 and S. Pulleyn, *Prayer in Greek Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997), 59–63.

“*Shaddai*” or “*El Shaddai*.” In the Second Temple period the term becomes a common address to God in prayer (e.g., 1 Chr 29:18; Ezra 7:27; 2 Macc 1:25; 3 Macc 2:2, 6:2). Although it occurs as an epithet of other gods, for example, of Hermes (PGM 7:668) or as *pantokrator* of the Demiurge in gnostic speculation (Iren. 1, 11, 1), the address is much more common in Jewish and Christian texts. Codex Alexandrinus adds after Almighty, ἐπουράνιε, “heavenly one,” a vocative form which may reflect influence from the fourteenth ode of the codex.

The use of the address “God of our ancestors” literally, “God of our fathers” is very common in the Bible and in early Jewish prayer. Such identification with the God of the three patriarchs implicitly summons the memory of promise and covenantal relationship between God and Israel.³¹ Moreover, this provides a connection between the prayer and its context in Chronicles. 2 Chr 33:12 mentions explicitly that Manasseh humbled himself before the “God of his ancestors.”

The most striking element of the invocation is the assertion in relation to this phrase that the ancestors’ offspring are righteous, τοῦ δικαίου. Charles understood the phrase “of their righteous offspring” to refer only to a selective portion of the ancestors’ offspring (cf. Tob 13:9, 13). In two prayers in the *Apostolic Constitutions*, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are called “holy and blameless” ἅγιοι καὶ ἄμεπτοι (AC 7.26.1–3; cf. also AC 7.33.2, for which see elsewhere in this volume). So too in *Jub.* 23:10, Abraham is described as “perfect in all his actions with the Lord . . . all the days of his life.” Later Jewish tradition developed the understanding of the ancestors’ accrual of a bank of “merit” upon which later generations might draw, but the far more common assertion in confessional prayers is to suggest the petitioner’s status as a sinner among sinners, indeed, a descendant of sinners (Jer 14:20; Neh 9:2). Consider, for example, the plea of 11QPs^a 155: 8 “O Lord, do not condemn me according to my sins; for no one living is righteous before you.” So too, the beginning of the prayer of Bar 1:15–19 offers a comprehensive admission of sinfulness on the part of all Israel and its leaders past and present in contrast to the righteousness of God. The affirmation of God as the maker of heaven and earth becomes central in exilic and post-exilic thought to understanding the nature of Israel’s God as both Israel’s saviour (a pre-exilic notion rooted in the Exodus tradition) and the world’s creator, seen writ large in the priestly creation account in the first

³¹ For the use of the formula both within and outside biblical literature, see M. Rist, “The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: A Liturgical and Magical Formula,” *JBL* 57 (1938): 289–303.

chapter of Genesis, as well as many psalms and Isaiah 40–55. The phrase “with all their order” might be translated as in Gen 2:1, “with all their host” which is sometimes understood elsewhere in the Bible as “stars.” Cf. the prayer of Neh 9:6, in which the same phrase invoked from Gen 2:1 is embellished with “heaven of heavens.”

(3) Verse 3 reveals the parallel rhetorical structure of semitised Greek poetry in that the first clause of the verse sketches an image and the second clause further refines it, thereby extending and reinforcing the verse’s meaning. The first half of the clause alludes at once to the priestly creation tradition in which God speaks the creation into being in Gen 1–2:3, and at the same time makes reference to the mythic dimension of that account as a reflection of Canaanite and Babylonian ancient Near Eastern theogonies and cosmogonies. Compare the following excerpt from the collection of non-canonical psalms from Qumran: 4Q381 1: 1 3 “(. . .) wonders! He made the heavens and the earth with an adjuration (?), with a word from his mouth (. . .) and channels; he enclosed <their streams>(?), pools, and every whirlpool . . .”³²

The Greek “abyss” ἄβυσσος translates the Hebrew for “deep,” *tehōm*. The same word appears in Gen 1:2, 7:2, 8:2 in reference to God’s control over the watery chaos that was considered to lie both below and above the earth according to the ancient Near Eastern view of the cosmos. The Priestly creation and flood accounts of Genesis are monotheistic re-workings of ancient Near Eastern myths in which creation is the result of battles between the gods. The Hebrew *tehōm* derives from the proto-Semitic **tihām(at)* which evolved in other Semitic languages and is cognate to the Akkadian name of the Babylonian goddess Tiamat. In the Babylonian theogony the *Enuma Elish*, the final act of Marduk’s creation of the world from Tiamat’s body is to seal the primordial deep and create his temple Esagila at this *axis mundi*. The rest of the divine pantheon proclaims Marduk king. Borrowing of such mythic ideas lies behind a number of biblical passages, particularly Job 38:8–11. Whereas *tehōm* appears only twice in the Hebrew Bible with a definite article (Isa 63:13, Ps 106:9), the Greek frequently includes the definite article, thus moving away from its specifically ancient Near Eastern mythological connotations in which “Deep” is personified. The connection of the royal imagery of divine creation with the Jerusalem temple as well as the exaltation of the name (or its debasement by enemies) is reflected in Ps 74[73]:12–17; 89[88]:10–15 (cf. LXX Ps

³² Translation of F. García Martínez and E. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition II* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 755.

103:6–9).³³ Although no temple is mentioned in the verse, God as king over creation is implicit in the imagery used.

“Your terrifying and glorious name”: The supernatural power of the divine name, in certain biblical traditions even regarded as a hypostasis, is an idea of longstanding in ancient Israel. The narratives relating the revelation of the Tetragrammaton to the great prophet Moses hold a special place in the tradition (cf. Exod 3:13–15). Indeed, special attributes of Israel’s God connected with the unique name are also revealed only to Moses according to the narrative in Exod 34:6–7, a subject to be developed below; see verse 7. The personal name of the God of Israel, YHWH, was understood in the pre-exilic Deuteronomic tradition of the Bible to dwell in the sanctuary.³⁴ The biblical motif that God’s name dwells in the temple in Jerusalem appears in a number of texts (e.g., 1 Kgs 8:18–19; 2 Chr 6: 8–9, 20). Later prayers from the Graeco-Roman period reflect the idea that God’s glorious name is established in the Jerusalem temple (Jdt 9:8 and 3 Macc 2:9) which thus requires that its sanctity be preserved at all costs. The role of the powerful name in liturgical texts and ritual practices of early Judaism seems to have taken a life of its own and its use in magical practices of adjuration became common. The origin of the idea that the powerful name is responsible for subjugating and sealing the waters of chaos is obscure, but the theme persisted in early Judaism and can be traced in rabbinic midrash and the Talmud.³⁵

Within the immediate context of the expanded scriptural account of 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles that is found in the *Didascalia* and the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the idea that God’s name would be established in the temple

³³ On Jerusalem as the *axis mundi*, specifically referred to as the *tabur ha’arets* in Ezek 38:12, see the discussion of Sh. Cohen, “Temple and Synagogue,” in *The Early Roman Period* (ed. W. D. Davies and J. Sturdy; Vol. 30 *The Cambridge History of Judaism*; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 299–300. The identification of Mt. Zion explicitly as the “navel of the earth” also occurs in *Jub.* 8:19 and *1 En.* 26:1–2.

³⁴ In pre-monarchic tribal religion, the “name” of God was closely associated with the ark, an important religious symbol for the northern sanctuary of Shiloh (Deut 12:5, 11; Jer 7:12). The visually manifest “glory” of God was connected to the tent and southern priestly traditions (Lev 9: 6, 23). The two cultic traditions were brought together perhaps by David in Jerusalem to unify the polity. For a discussion of contrasting theologies of divine immanence represented by the divine glory (Heb. כְּבוֹד; Greek δόξα) as opposed to a “name” theology in the late pre-exilic and exilic periods, see T. Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth: Studies in the Shem and Kabod Theologies* (Lund: Gleerup, 1982). By the exilic period, the once distinct name and glory traditions were fused (cf. Deut 28:58, 1 Kgs 8: 11–20).

³⁵ D. Sperber, “On Sealing the Abysses,” *JSS* 11 (1966):168–74.

forever is contrasted with Manasseh's arrogant claim, "My name shall endure forever" thus pitting the human king's name against that of the divine king. The affirmation of God's powerful name by the petitioner in the Prayer of Manasseh thus serves as a sign of Manasseh's repentance and resulting changed perspective.

(4–6) φρίπτει Turicensis and the *Apostolic Constitutions* here have φρίσσει which may be preferred (see also Job 4:15; Jer 2:12; Jdt 16:10). For demons that shudder at divine power, see Jas 2:19. The terrifying might of God was associated with the mythic understanding of creation as a great battle with the natural elements. The language of fear and dread also recalls such royal imagery as appears in the royal psalms such as Ps 99:1–3 (LXX 98): "The LORD is king; let the peoples tremble. He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake. The LORD is great in Zion; he is exalted over all the peoples. Let them praise your great and awesome name. Holy is he."

Verses 5 and 6 contain seemingly hyperbolic claims about divine glory, wrath and mercy in a series of adjectives in the form of Greek alpha privatives (*a-* signifying an absence of) rare or absent in the LXX. The presence of divine glory as a physical substance that is visible is an old tradition in the Bible associated with visual imagery as opposed to the auditory and verbal dimension of Israelite religious tradition. The divine presence on Mount Sinai appears as a cloud engulfing the mountain. The *doxa* of God had such an effect that Moses was said to have shining skin upon his second descent from the mountain (Exod 34:29–30) which in turn caused people to fear Moses. The burning wrath of God was a threat to individuals, even Moses (Exod 4:14), or to nations (Exod 15:7) and indeed threatened at one point to destroy all Israel, most notably after their worship of the calf at Sinai. In Exod 32:10–12, God's wrath is mentioned three times in an exchange with Moses when the prophet must intercede on behalf of the people for divine mercy. The passage is particularly relevant in the context of the Prayer of Manasseh, because Exod 34:6–7, which describes God's merciful as well as just attributes, is recalled in verse 7.

"Yet immeasurable and unfathomable is your promised mercy": ἀμέτρητόν τε καὶ ἀνεξιχνίαστον. Some versions offer δὲ καὶ for the τε καὶ of Codex Alexandrinus, and the former seems preferable. In keeping with the claims in the previous verse, the prayer now offers a contrast to the awesome power and wrath of God in emphasising divine mercy. ἀνεξιχνίαστον: A word found in wisdom literature: Job 5:9; 9:10; 34:24; which points not only to the inscrutable ways of God but the limited capacity for human comprehension of them. Here the prayer makes reference to the idea that God has made a firm promise about merciful forgiveness of

sins in light of human repentance. The idea occurs again in verses 8, 14, and in some versions, quite explicitly in verse 7.

(7) “For you are the Lord Most High, of great compassion, patient, and very merciful, and relenting (μετανοῶν) at human evil. ^aO Lord, according to your great kindness you have promised repentance and forgiveness to those who have sinned against you, and in the multitude of your mercies you have constituted repentance for sinners, for salvation.^a”

Verse 7 is a crucial pivot in understanding Manasseh’s expectation of salvation because it reflects a covenantal understanding of the divine economy of salvation in relation to sin and repentance. A major textual variant occurs after the first half of the verse, signalled by the superscript letter “a” above. Neither Turicensis nor Alexandrinus includes the second half of verse seven (occurring between the superscripts “a” in the translation) which explicitly mentions an indubitable system of divine forgiveness for sin. The phrase appears however in the *Didascalia*, the *Apostolic Constitutions*, and the tenth century Greek minuscule 55.

The first half of verse seven would have been quite familiar to Jewish ears because the clause had already become a liturgical formula long before its inclusion in the Prayer of Manasseh. The “divine attribute formula” as it is sometimes known (referred to as the divine *middot* in Jewish tradition) is found particularly in penitential contexts, both in prayers and other kinds of texts in the biblical and extra-biblical Jewish literature (cf. Joel 2:13, Jonah 4:2, Ps 103:8, Neh 9:17, Sir 2:11, *T. Zeb.* 9:7, 1QH XI 29–30, *T. Sim.* 4:4, 2 *Bar.* 77:7, *Apoc. Ab.* 17:12, and *Gr. Apoc. Ezra* 1:10–18).³⁶ The formula continued to be used in composing Jewish prayers in the rabbinic period and onward. In the Prayer of Manasseh’s use of the divine attribute formula as a rationale for understanding sin and forgiveness, it differs from a group of post-exilic corporate confessional prayers that show the influence of the priestly sacrificial language of the Day of Atonement ritual of Lev 16 and the covenantal confession of Lev 26: 40–45.³⁷

³⁶ M. Stone, *4 Ezra* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 256.

³⁷ M. Boda has emphasised the importance of priestly language in the confessional prayers of Ezra 9, Neh 1 and 9, Dan 9, and Ps 106; see his, *Praying the Tradition: The Origin and Use of Tradition in Nehemiah 9* (BZAW 277; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1999) and further, Boda’s discussion, “Confession as Theological Expression: Ideological Origins of Penitential Prayer,” in *The Origins of Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism* (vol. 1 of *Seeking the Favor of God*; SBLEJL 21; ed. M. Boda, D. Falk, and R. Werline; Atlanta: SBL, 2006), 21–50, especially, 28–34. In a similar vein, see also D. Falk, “4Q393: A Communal Confession,” *JJS* 45 (1994): 184–207; and Falk’s “Scriptural Inspiration for Penitential Prayer in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *The Development of Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism* (vol. 2 of *Seeking*

The attribute formula describing the character of God in a series of adjectives first appears in a unique theophany to Moses as part of the renewal of the covenant after the Israelites' worship of the calf at Sinai. It begins in Exod 34:6: "The LORD passed before him, and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, patient, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness," and continues in Exod 34:7 to enumerate the divine traits of covenant loyalty and justice over generations. In the formula's reuse in later texts, particularly in penitential contexts, only the first clause normally appears.³⁸ Yet the first half of the divine attribute formula appears

the Favor of God; SBLEJL 22; ed. M. Boda, D. Falk, and R. Werline; Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 127–158. Boda and Falk both rely on the work of J. Milgrom who argued that from the perspective of Priestly theology in Lev 26, intentional sin could be transformed to the status of inadvertent sin through the act of confession combined with sacrifice; this was first articulated in his *Cult and Conscience: The Asham and Priestly Doctrine of Repentance* (SJLA 18; Leiden: Brill, 1976). Boda suggests that the confessional elements of the earliest prayers (he dates Dan 9 to the sixth century) include three parts: a. admission of culpability; b. declaration of solidarity with former generations; and c. consistent use of the Hitpa'el of *yadab*. Neither the Prayer of Manasseh, nor the narrative context which gave rise to the Prayer of Manasseh in 2 Chr 33, contains the translational equivalent of the Hitpa'el of the Hebrew יָדָה, a form of the Greek verb ἐξομολογέω. The Hebrew words מַעַל and אָשָׁם both translated by the Greek πλημμέλεια, (occasionally מַעַל is translated ἄσυσθειςίς) are also absent from Prayer of Manasseh. The inclusion of the Hitpa'el of יָדָה as a feature of the penitential prayers is problematic in the sense that only one of the prayers contains the form within the prayer itself (Neh 1:6). The other references are found in the narrative contexts around the prayers (Ezra 10:1; Neh 9:2, 3; Dan 9:4, 20) which begs the question of the relation of these prayers to their contexts.

Recent work on exilic and post-exilic confessional prayers, in part because it has focused on prayers in the Hebrew Bible and sectarian Dead Sea Scrolls, has neglected the significance of the divine attribute formula in the prayer of Neh 9:16–17 as a countervailing example to a presumed "priestly stream of repentance" shaping corporate confession, not to mention the use of the divine attribute formula in early Jewish texts other than prayers which have influenced liturgical practice, for example 4 Ezra 8. See D. Boyarin, "Penitential Liturgy in 4 Ezra," *JSJ* 3 (1972), 30–34. In Jewish liturgical tradition, Exod 34:6 is a refrain repeated in *selichot*, prayers for atonement; see I. Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History* (trans. R. Scheindlin; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1993), 177.

³⁸ For discussions of the use of this formula within the Bible, see J. Scharbert, "Formgeschichte und Exegese von Ex 34, 6f und seiner Parallelen," *Biblica* 38 (1957): 130–150; R. Dentan, "The Literary Affinities of Exodus XXXIV 6f." *VT* (1963): 34–51; and M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 335–350. For a discussion of its early interpretation, see J. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 721–727.

in the Prayer of Manasseh with some modifications from Exod 34:6. The first is that the more usual Greek translation of the Hebrew **וַיִּחַן** οἰκτίρμων is here rendered with the less common εὐσπλαγγχνος. A more significant modification occurs in the phrase, **עַל-הָרָעָה וַיִּחַן** literally, “relents concerning evil,” which appears in Greek as μετανοῶν ἐπὶ κακίαις ἀνθρώπων, ‘relents at human evil’. As it occurs in other early Jewish contexts, the phrase “repents/relents concerning wickedness/evil” is somewhat ambiguous, its precise meaning contingent on context. **רָעָה** /κακία in this phrase can mean on one hand, the punishment that God inflicts on those who have sinned (1 Chr 21:15, Jonah 4:2, Joel 2:12, 1QH^a VIII 24–25). On the other hand, it can also mean the wicked deeds of humans that would presumably be subject to such punishment (Gen 6:5, Jer 8:6, cf. also Acts 8:22). On occasion, both meanings can appear in the same verse, as they do in Jer 18:8, when God promises that if a nation turns from its evil ways, God will relent of the evil that would ensue as punishment.³⁹ The Prayer of Manasseh specifies that God is merciful and relents in the face of human evil (literally “evil of humans”) which would tend to suggest that the wickedness of humans is here emphasised, rather than the punishment inflicted by God as a result of human sin. The phrase as it appears in the Prayer of Manasseh retains this ambiguity.

The wording that appears in Jonah and Joel related to God’s change of course concerning divine punishment likely draws on the paradigmatic passage in Exodus 32 after the episode with the golden calf. In Exod 32:12–14, Moses “petitions” (using the same Greek verb that appears in Pr Man 11,13, δέομαι) God to forgive the people’s sins and God responds positively to the prophet by relenting about the intended punishment. In the Prayer of Manasseh, the phrase seems evidently to draw on Jonah 4:2 and Joel 2:12–14, both of which transform the divine attribute formula of Exod 34:6 by adding “and relents from evil” in place of the final attribute “true” in Exod 34:6 as well as omitting the clause relating to trans-generational punishment proclaiming divine retribution for sin to the third and fourth generation but covenant-faithfulness to the thousandth. Neh 9:17, the only corporate confessional prayer in the Hebrew Bible that includes reference to the divine attribute formula, adds simply that God “did not abandon them” (the wilderness generation). Within the rhetorical context of the Prayer of Manasseh in any case, the final clause “repents of evil” summons up the reciprocal actions of God and humans. Just as God relents concerning human

³⁹ Although the divine attribute formula is absent in the passage, Jer 26:3–13 also affirms the idea that God can change his mind in the face of the people’s repentance.

wickedness or God's evil intent for humans as a result of their wickedness (v. 7), so ought humans, in *imitatio Dei*, to change course from human sinfulness (v. 8). The notion of divine *metanoia*, that God might change course as a result of human behaviour is both affirmed and viewed as problematic within the Bible. Consider the apparent contradiction between Gen 6:6–7 in which God changes course in expressing regret for making humanity in the face of their wickedness. (For other instances of divine *metanoia*, cf. 1 Sam 15:11, 2 Sam 24:16.) Yet Num 23:19 expresses the thought that “God is not a human ... that he would repent” (ויחנחם in the Hebrew). The integration of more systematic philosophical thought in some sectors of Judaism during the Graeco-Roman period exacerbated this tension within scripture between anthropomorphic and anthropopathic language and a more remote understanding of the immovable and unchangeable nature of God. Philo, for example, wished to affirm philosophical concepts of God in connection with the *logos* doctrine, yet he also recognized the different attributes connected with God related to the use of the two god names *theos* and *kyrios*.⁴⁰

The second half of verse 7 is also significant because it suggests an evolved teaching and practice concerning repentance and reconciliation, one that may have differed from other halakhic practices shaped by a priestly discourse of atonement (see fn. 35 above). Moreover, its claim that repentance was divinely constituted for sinners rather than for the righteous is striking in that such a claim appears nowhere else in penitential prayers. The verse affirms a divine promise that God had given repentance and forgiveness to sinners in order for their salvation. Yet nowhere else in early Jewish literature is there such an explicit promise of forgiveness for sinners in contrast to the righteous.⁴¹ Other Second Temple literature nonetheless shares the view that God had ensured such a mechanism, though the specifics vary. *LAB* 12, 15, and 19 serve the purpose of depicting Moses as a righteous and efficacious intercessor without parallel, whose potent prayer in *LAB* 19 convinces God to grant an eternal covenant of mercy to Israel, rooted in the divine attribute formula of Exod 34:6.⁴² The virtue of repen-

⁴⁰ For a more thorough discussion of this issue, see N. Dahl and A. Segal, “Philo and the Rabbis on the Names of God,” *JSJ* 9 (1978): 5–8.

⁴¹ Cf. however the saying attributed to Jesus in the synoptic gospels: Matt 9:13; Mark 2:17; Luke 5:32.

⁴² J. Newman, “The Staff of Moses and the Mercy of God: Moses’ Final Intercession in Pseudo-Philo 19,” in *Israel in the Wilderness* (ed. K. Pomykala; TBN 10; Leiden: Brill, 2008) 133–152. See too R. Murphy, “The Eternal Covenant in Pseudo-Philo,” *JSP* 3 (1988): 43–57.

tance in relation to divine mercy is also extolled in *T. Gad* 5:7. Although the exact ritual contours of penitential practices in early Judaism have yet to be mapped, they reflect an evolving sense of the economy of divine punishment and forgiveness.⁴³ The Prayer of Manasseh should be understood as one liturgical element of larger halakhic economies of repentance and restoration involving not only divine-human interaction but interpersonal responsibilities rooted in interpretive understanding of such passages as Exod 34:6–7, Lev 19:15–19, and Lev 26:40–42.⁴⁴

(8) Verse 8 marks the beginning of the formal confession of the prayer which runs through verse 13. “God of the righteous”: As Charles rightly notes, “This is not a Biblical phrase,” although his suggestion that the “righteous” here should be contrasted with “sinners” as in Luke 15:7 may be unwarranted.⁴⁵ Yet it is true that the marked distinction between the righteous who do not sin and the sinners who are in need of repentance stands in contrast to most other theological affirmations of early Judaism in which sin is inevitable (cf. LXX Ps 129:3) and indeed, even individual sin was understood sometimes to have corporate consequences for punishment. The Deuteronomistic historian’s assessment of Manasseh himself as being to blame for the exile of the nation attests to that. For example, the beginning of the prayer of Baruch, Bar 1:15–19 contains a broad statement of confession that claims not only Israel and its leaders in the present, but its ancestors in the past are all guilty of sin. Cf. also in other prayers 1 Kgs 8:46 (and its reuse in *LAB* 19:9), Dan 9:18, 1QH^a XIII 30, 4 *Ezra* 8:35. The status of “righteous” can be understood as a category of being in the “right

⁴³ Philo, *Praem.* 163–164 articulates a penitential process which includes feeling shame, changing ways, mutual reproach, and sincere confession which is assured acceptance and mercy from God. See also D. Lambert, “Fasting as a Penitential Rite: A Biblical Phenomenon?” *HTR* 96 (2003): 477–512.

⁴⁴ A more comprehensive treatment of penitential theology and practices in early Judaism is a desideratum. J. Kugel has elaborated on the exegetical expansions of Lev 19:17–18 in *inter alia* Sir 19:13–17, CD 9:2–8, Matt 18:15; “On Hidden Hatred and Open Reproach: Early Exegesis of Leviticus 19:17,” *HTR* 80 (1987): 43–61. The Letter of James also participates in this discourse, a feature of the epistle that warrants further examination; see L. Johnson, “The Use of Leviticus 19 in the Letter of James,” *JBL* 101(1982): 391–401 and J. Milgrom, *Leviticus* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004), 226. For halakhic practices relating to repentance at Qumran, see further B. Nitzan, “Repentance in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *The Dead Sea Scrolls after 50 Years II* (ed. P. Flint and J. VanderKam; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 145–170, esp. 152–160; and L. Schiffman, *Sectarian Law in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (BJS 33; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983).

⁴⁵ Charles, “Prayer of Manasseh,” 622.

relationship” with God, in which those who have sinned have repented as prescribed by the law and restored their righteousness, but the verse explicitly claims the sinlessness of the three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

(9–10) The Syriac of the *Didascalia* includes an extra clause at the end of verse 9: “And now, O Lord, I am justly punished; and deservedly afflicted, for I am already ensnared.”

Turicensis and AC omit ὅτι at the beginning of verse 9. The petitioner’s admission of guilt is emphatic in its reiteration. “So that I cannot lift up my head”: This reading accords with Turicensis and 55: εἰς τὸ μὴ ἀνανεύσαι τὴν κεφαλὴν μου. Alexandrinus reads: εἰς τὸ μὴ ἀνανεύσαι με ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτιῶν.⁴⁶ AC omits this phrase. The translation is not straightforward. On the use of the verb ἀνανεύω to translate the Hebrew מָאן or נָוָא in the sense of wilful refusal, see Exod 22:17, Num 30:6, and especially in connection with a petitional prayer about human sin, Neh 9:17. The metaphor used in the verse that Manasseh’s sins are “greater than the sand of the sea” is the same as that used in scripture for the promised number of Abraham, Jacob, and Isaac’s descendants (Gen 22:17, 32:13, 2 Sam 17:11, 1 Kgs 4:20, Isa 10:22, Hos 1:10). Because the phrase does not occur in any other scriptural context, it is likely an intentional and ironic summoning of that promise. Manasseh has jeopardised the multiplicity of Israelite descendants through his manifold sins and wickedness. Manasseh’s emphasis that his sins are too much for him finds a seeming parallel in a similar expression in the Qumran fragment that also contains the so-called “prayer of Manasseh”: כִּי פִשְׁעֵי רַבּוֹ מִמֶּנִּי (4Q381 33–35: 4). The claim of the petitioner not to be worthy of the beneficence of God is found in some psalms; cf. Ps 22:7 (LXX 21:7). So too, the unworthy state of the petitioner is a common theme in the *Hodayot* from Qumran.

The prayer continues with another metaphor describing the burden of sin on Manasseh. The word used for burdened, κατακαμπτόμενος, is rare in scripture (cf. LXX Ps 37:7, 56:7; 4 Macc 11:10). The description of Manasseh as weighed down with iron shackles echoes the literary context of Manasseh’s story of imprisonment by the King of Assyria in Babylon (see 2 Chron 33:11). The specificity of Manasseh’s wrongdoing is finally made fairly explicit: “setting up desecrations and multiplying abominations” βδελύγματα προσοχθίσματα. In other words, it is idolatry, worship of wrong objects, a characterisation that accords with the viewpoint of both the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler. “Desecration” in the singular, the Greek βδέλυγμα, is the usual translation of the Hebrew הוֹעֵבָה,

⁴⁶ For other possible construals of this phrase, see Charles, “Prayer of Manasseh,” 623.

(cf. 2 Kgs 21:2) and refers frequently to foreign worship within the Jerusalem temple, such as the desolating sacrifice described as being established by Antiochus Epiphanes (1 Macc 1:54, 6:7). Within other theological traditions in the Hebrew Bible, abomination carries different connotations; however, given Manasseh's linkage to the two biblical historical accounts, reading the characterisation of sin here as some form of non-Yahwistic worship makes the most sense.⁴⁷

(11) "And now I bend the knee of my heart": καὶ νῦν marks a change in orientation in the prayer as the petition for divine kindness now begins. κλίνω γόνυ καρδίας Codex Turicensis and AC also include μου. The phrase provides a vivid image of intense internal humility, the supplicant orienting his will (represented by the heart) toward that of God. There are copious references to circumcision of the heart in texts from Qumran and elsewhere (e.g.; Deut 10:16; 30:6; 1QpHab 11:13; and in the prayers *Barkhi Nafshi*, 4Q434 1 i 4; 4Q504 4:11; Rom 2:29) as well as various other metaphorical references to the heart, such as tearing one's heart rather than one's garments in mourning. Indeed we see the latter expression in Joel 2:13, a text that was likely in the mind of the composer of this prayer. Yet "bending the knee of the heart" seems to be a new coinage by the author of this prayer comparable to "the eyes of the heart" in Eph 1:18. The only other attestation of a very similar phrase (using the verb κάμπτω) occurs in 1 Clement also in the context of prayer. 1 Clement 57:1 contains the phrase "bending the knees of your hearts" as a means of accepting discipline to stimulate repentance. The posture of kneeling for prayer, normally as a means of sincere and earnest entreaty, appears a number of times in the post-exilic Jewish texts (2 Chr 6:13, Ezra 9:5, Dan 6:10, 3 Macc 2:1).

(12–13) "I have sinned, O Lord, I have sinned": ἡμάρτηκα: The use of the perfect tense, rather than the aorist as in verse 9, suggests a sense of the continued result of the sin (cf. Balaam in Num 22:34; Saul in 1 Sam 15:24, 26:21; and David in 2 Sam 12:13). Just as the petitioner has emphasised the degree of his wrongdoing through repetition, his confession echoes this through duplication. This doubling of the penitent's acknowledgement of sinfulness can be compared to the penitential prayers of Aseneth in *Jos. Asen.* 21:10–21 in which Aseneth repeats her acknowledgment of sin three

⁴⁷ The wisdom discourse of Proverbs and Ben Sira, for instance, uses this word not in reference to cultic sins of idolatry, but to other kinds of human ethical lapses. In the priestly language of Leviticus, abomination is extended to include other transgressions of the law, including dietary violations. For example, Leviticus 11, which specifies acceptable and unacceptable food for the Israelites, contains eight occurrences of the word in this sense.

times; indeed, her threefold confession is repeated as a refrain throughout her prayer of repentance. ἐγὼ γινώσκω: The first person pronoun here serves as an emphatic acknowledgement on the part of the one praying reflecting an acute awareness of wrongdoing.

A third instance of “doubling” occurs in verse 13, with the emphatic petition for God to forgive the sinner. Codex Turicensis and AC begin the verse with ἀλλ’ which signals a new direction in the prayer. Whereas God is described as the “God of the righteous” in verse 8, here we learn that the addressee is also the “God of those who repent”. The three petitions suggest three different possibilities that might occur as a result of the suppliant’s sins without forthcoming forgiveness on the part of God, each of slightly less severity. Thus, the first petition contains the most immediate threat, that God might destroy the petitioner along with his sins intact. The second suggests that punishment might be deferred; the κακά here being the postponed accumulation of divine punishment for wrongdoing. This reflects the flip side of the coin from a traditional Jewish conception of accruing merit, either through the ancestors or through one’s own actions. The final petition concerns the sinner’s anxiety that divine judgment and punishment might be visited upon him even in the most remote place on earth. In Israelite tradition, the place of nether regions was usually named Sheol or the Pit שְׁחַת, the abode of the dead (cf. Isa 14:15; Jon 2: 6; Job 33: 18, 22). Here ἐν τοῖς κατωτάτοις τῆς γῆς would appear to render the Hebrew phrase תַּחְתִּיתֵי-אָרֶץ of Ps 138 (139): 15, (cf. also Isa 44:23) according to Charles.

(14–15) In verse 14 there is a shift from a first person petition to an affirmation of the sinner’s potential role for God as model penitent. Manasseh’s final plea rests on the hope that God will want to evince a sign through him about the profundity of divine mercy. The usefulness of the redeemed penitent sinner can only be potent if the penitent is named; hence the value of pseudepigraphy. The Prayer of Manasseh is similar to the confession of Psalm 51 (LXX 50) in that both are attributed to Judean kings who have committed serious sins. The superscription of Psalm 51 suggests the situation of the prophet Nathan’s reproach after David’s adultery with Bathsheba and planned murder of Uriah. King Manasseh trumps his ancestor David in terms of wickedness and the seriousness of his sin, however, thus his example is even more powerful. Given the severity of Manasseh’s sin according to the Deuteronomistic history which blamed the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile to his idolatry in sponsoring non-Yahwistic worship and his guilt for shedding the innocent blood of his sons, among others, God’s forgiveness of Manasseh and his restoration serve as an extreme example for even the worst sinners.

The shift from penitence to praise in verse 15 as a response to divine salvation from sin or danger is common in Jewish prayers, not only in the psalms but also in extra-biblical prayers of the Second Temple era (cf. LXX Ps 22:6; 26:4, 127:5; 3 Macc 2:20). The Prayer of Manasseh offers a twist on the shift from lament to praise in that Manasseh's praise will imitate that of the "host of heaven."

οὐ ἐὶ μνηεῖ παῖσα ἡ δύναμις τῶν οὐρανῶν Manasseh's affirmation that all the host of heaven sings God's praise is a reflection of an ancient Jewish interpretive tradition. Its exegetical origins lie in part in the use of the first person plural, "we" in Genesis 1:26 in reference to the divine act of creating humanity. The first person plural "problem" is solved in different ways in antiquity.⁴⁸

The Septuagint offers different renderings of the Hebrew זבא השמים. Deut 4:19; 17:3; Isa 24:21 use κόσμον τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. The Greek στρατιὰ οὐρανῶν offers a more literal translation of the military sense of the Hebrew זבא. In Ps 33:6 (32:6) and 2 Chr 18:18, δύναμις translates זבא. Significantly, the indictment of Manasseh in the Deuteronomistic History for worshipping the host of heaven (2 Kgs 21:3, 5; 2 Kgs 23:4, 5) also uses the same wording as the Prayer of Manasseh. Whereas Manasseh was condemned for wrong worship of the powers of heaven during his early days, at the conclusion of his prayer he pledges to offer appropriate worship of God *with* the heavenly array. The Qumran liturgical materials are rife with depictions of such angelic praise in prayers and hymns that are both sectarian and seemingly non-sectarian. The theme of angels praising God as a result of creation occurs in the hymn for the Sabbath day among the daily prayers from Qumran, *Words of the Luminaries* (4Q504 1–2r vii:1).⁴⁹ The "Hymn to the Creator" in the final section of 11Q Ps^a may be the earliest explicit reference to a belief in the pre-existence of angels before creation. The hymn connects the commencement of their song of praise with their

⁴⁸ The most frequently understood co-creators were variously the angels, Wisdom, the divine Logos, and the second person of the Trinity, understood to be Jesus; see J. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 51–52.

⁴⁹ Cf. also 1QM 12:1, the War Scroll, which contains a mention of the angelic host praising God's name in heaven. For a differentiated treatment of angelic praise in relation to human participation, see E. Chazon, "Human and Angelic Prayer in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls" in *Liturgical Perspectives: Prayer and Poetry in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 19–23 January, 2000* (ed. E. Chazon, R. Clements, and A. Pinnick; STDJ 48; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 35–47.

looking upon God's division of the light and darkness, that is, the first act of creation. See too the developed angelology in the book of Jubilees' account of the first day of creation which lists a hierarchy of seven ministering spirits or angels (*Jub.* 2:2). There is likewise a great deal of angelic praise in the Hekhalot literature.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ For a treatment of Hekhalot literature, see D. Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot: Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel's Vision* (TSAJ 16; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988) and more recently V. D. Arbel, *Beholders of Divine Secrets: Mysticism and Myth in Hekhalot and Merkavah Literature* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2003).

VI. The Prayer of Azariah

Introduction

Along with the tale of Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, and the Song of the Three, the Prayer of Azariah is one of four compositions commonly referred to as the “Additions to Daniel.” None of these texts is found in the Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible, but only in Greek, Syriac, and Latin versions of the book of Daniel. Like the books of Jeremiah and Esther, the book of Daniel occurs in quite different shapes in the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint. The Prayer of Azariah (3:26–45) and the Song of the Three Youths (3:57–90) interspersed by two short prose narrative pieces (3:24–25; 3:46–51) constitute a long version of Daniel 3. The two Greek versions reflect two textual traditions: the Old Greek (OG) represented in the manuscripts Codex Chisianus (ms. 88), the Syro-Hexapla (Syh), and the third-century C.E. Papyrus 967 (967); and the so-called Theodotion Daniel. There is a third witness to Dan 3:23–25 alone, the fragmentary P.Gr.Vind. 29255, a fifth-century papyrus from the Fayyum.¹ The two oldest principle witnesses to the Prayer of Azariah, the OG and Theodotion, contain far fewer textual variants than do the OG and Theodotion versions of the other additions to Daniel. It is difficult to assess the original language of the Prayer, whether a highly-semitised Greek or a Hebrew or Aramaic version from which a Greek translator worked. The transmission of the text in the case of Daniel is somewhat unusual in that the Old Greek translation was replaced by the version of Theodotion at an early date.² In any case, the Prayer as well as the other additions must date no later than the end of the second century B.C.E. when they were incorporated into the Septuagint. Aside from the principal witnesses to the text found in the Greek, Syriac, Latin, and later Ethiopic, Arabic and Armenian versions (the latter three based on Theodotion), there is also an Aramaic witness to the text found in the medieval *Chronicle of Jerahmeel* asserted by Moses Gaster to be the

¹ On the Fayyum P.Gr.Vind 29255, see J. Ziegler, *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum 16/2: Susanna, Daniel, Bel et Draco* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968), 8.

² J. Collins offers an overview of the textual witnesses to the book of Daniel, *Daniel* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 2–12, as well as specifically the Greek versions on 3–11.

Vorlage of Theodotion's version of the Additions.³ Although the text was dismissed by subsequent scholars as a retroversion from Theodotion to Aramaic, more recently Koch has argued that the *Chronicle* at points is closer to the OG than Theodotion and the Aramaic text thus represents a *Vorlage* of the Greek and Syriac translations.⁴

Understanding the girth of the Daniel tradition in early Judaism has been enhanced by the finds of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Fragments of eight Daniel manuscripts which include all twelve of the chapters from the Hebrew-Aramaic book are represented. The first eleven chapters are found among the scriptural Daniel scroll fragments. A reference to the twelfth chapter is found in a sectarian text, 4Q*Florilegium* (4Q174). Aside from the material later found in the MT Daniel, there is an abundance of Daniel literature that was unknown before the discovery of the scrolls.⁵ The relationship among these various texts and the versions of Daniel known in the canonical texts of the Septuagint and Masoretic text is subtle and complex.⁶ None of the extant Qumran texts includes any reference to the texts found in the Greek additions to Daniel, but the diverse collection nonetheless attests to the variety of Daniel traditions in circulation at least during the last two centuries before the common era. While the tale of Daniel 3 probably reflects an original Babylonian exilic setting, the Greek Additions to Daniel are more difficult to date, but may well date to the Maccabean period with its renewed threat to the well-being of the Jewish community in Palestine during the period of Seleucid expansion and the persecution of Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

³ M. Gaster, "The Unknown Aramaic Original of Theodotion's Additions to the Book of Daniel," *PSBA* 16 (1894): 280–317; 17 (1895): 75–91; reprinted in idem, *Studies in Folklore, Magic, Medieval Romance, Hebrew Apocrypha and Samaritan Archaeology* (3 vols.; 1928; reprint, New York: Ktav, 1971), 1:39–68, 3:16–21.

⁴ K. Koch, *Deuterokanonische Zusätze zum Danielbuch: Entstehung und Textgeschichte* (AOAT 38/1–2; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1987), 1.22–26; see also the discussion of Collins, *Daniel*, 199.

⁵ L. Stuckenbruck, "The Formation and Re-Formation of Daniel in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls Volume One: Scripture and the Scrolls* (ed. J. Charlesworth; Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006), 101–130. The pluriform Daniel texts at Qumran call into question attempts to reconstruct an Urtext for the MT text of Daniel, such as was attempted by Ernst Haag who identified a "Grundschrift" and subsequent layers of tradition, but on unconvincing grounds; "Die Drei Männer im Feuer," *Die Entstehung der jüdischen Martyrologie* (ed. J. W. van Henten; SPB 38; Leiden: Brill: 1989), 20–50.

⁶ See, for example, the discussion of L. Wills on 4QPrayer of Nabonidus and the OG text of Daniel 4 in *The Jew in the Court of the Foreign King: Ancient Jewish Court Legends* (HDR 26; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 87–98.

A. *The Prayer of Azariah in Context and Tradition*

Daniel 3 is a kind of narrative known as a court tale, a traditional form known throughout the ancient Near East, in Greek culture for example from the work of Herodotus and Ktesias and the internationally known tale of Ahikar.⁷ Jewish tradition also spun its own court tales from legendary material, normally in one of two varieties, the court contest and the court conflict. In the court contest, a Jew of lower status was elevated to an esteemed position by virtue of his special gifts demonstrated in competition with other non-Jews. The conflict variation of the genre recounts a situation in which the lives of Jews in the diaspora are threatened by a conflict of some sort with a foolish and reckless foreign king which comes to a resolution in the Jews' favour by the end of the story. Of the various tales collected into the book of Daniel, the court conflict of Daniel 3 is notable in that it is the sole chapter in which Daniel does not appear. The story recounted is that Nebuchadnezzar has built a six-cubit by six-cubit golden statue on the plain of Dura and demanded that all nations and tongues should worship it. Some "Chaldaeans" report that the Jews have refused to comply with what would be for them idolatrous worship. Based on the evidence from Qumran, the original king featured in an earlier version of this story may have been King Nabonidus (556–539 B.C.E.), the last Babylonian emperor.⁸ The story may have developed around a historical occasion in which King Nabonidus of Babylon tried to promote the worship of the moon god, Sin.⁹ Wills, among others, has argued for an oral origin to the original tale of Daniel 3 and rightly identifies the comic nature of its origi-

⁷ See W. Humphreys, "A Life-Style for the Diaspora: A Study of the Tales of Esther and Daniel," *JBL* 92 (1973): 211–23; J. Collins, "The Court-Tales in Daniel and the Development of Apocalyptic," *JBL* 94 (1975): 218–34 and Wills, *The Jew in the Court of the Foreign King*, especially 1–74.

⁸ According to the Aramaic *Prayer of Nabonidus* (4Q242), the king was afflicted by an ulcer in Teima and was subsequently healed by a Jewish exorcist and exhorted to write down his prayer as testimony to his healing and new-found faith in Israel's God. Daniel 4 seems to have transformed the story by locating it in Babylon and transforming the king character into the better known Nebuchadnezzar. See Émile Puech, "La Prière de Nabonide (4Q242)" in *Targumic and Cognate Studies: Essays in Honour of Martin McNamara* (ed., K. Cathcart and M. Maher; JSOTSup 230; Sheffield: University of Sheffield Press, 1996), 208–228; and J. T. Milik, "Les modèles araméens du livre d'Ésther dans la Grotte 4 de Qumrân," *RQ* 15 (1992): 321–399.

⁹ Collins, *Daniel*, 194 and see also ANET (*The Verse Account of Nabonidus*), 313.

nal plot.¹⁰ In this version, King Nebuchadnezzar, renowned as the destroyer of Jerusalem and its Temple, takes over the role as villain. Judging from the variegated complexion of the traditions found at Qumran, the story in Daniel 3 likely developed over a long period, probably told in different versions with various combinations of Daniel traditions incorporated.

The Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three would seem to have been written at different times based on internal reasons. Pr Azar 15 suggests that there was no place for sacrifice or public worship. For this reason Bennett dates it to the “dark days at the beginning of the Maccabean struggle” about 170–168 B.C.E.¹¹ The Song of the Three, on the other hand, mentions the “holy and glorious Temple” which may suggest that an active temple in Jerusalem was in existence, yet it is also possible to see the temple as an alternatively constituted one, an idea current for example at Qumran among some sectarians who viewed themselves as constituting a human temple.¹²

What purpose does the Prayer of Azariah serve in its context as an expansion of a text now preserved in Greek? There is no single answer to the question, of course, and it is dependent on which “context” is meant, whether as an expansion of Dan 3, or as part of the longer Greek book of Daniel as a whole. Considering the latter context, Collins reads Pr Azar 17 (40) and its mention of a substitute sacrifice as a link with the martyrdom of Daniel 7–12, for example, but it is not clear that the sacrifice in the prayer is meant to indicate the sacrifice of the three men or the prayer itself.¹³ We

¹⁰ In addition see H. Avalos, “The Comedic Function of the Enumerations of Officials and Instruments in Daniel 3,” *CBQ* 53 (1991): 580–588.

¹¹ Bennett, *APOT*, 629.

¹² Because B. Gärtner restricts his focus to the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament, he does not touch upon Pr Azar and Sg Three, but his comment about the community as new temple at Qumran is germane: “. . . the life of the community in perfect obedience to the Law is represented as the true sacrifice offered in the new temple. . . . Since the community has taken over the holiness and the functions of the temple it is now in point of fact the only means of maintaining the holiness of Israel and making atonement for sin.” *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament: A Comparative Study in the Temple Symbolism of the Qumran Texts and the New Testament* (SNTSMS 1; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 44. See also, D. Dimant, “4QFlorilegium and the Idea of the Community as Temple,” in *Hellenica et Judaica: Hommage à Valentin Nikiprowetzky* (ed. A. Caquot, M. Hadas-Label, J. Riaud; Paris: Peeters, 1986), 165–189; and G. Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran: 4QFlorilegium in Its Jewish Context* (JSOT 29; Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1985; repr. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2006).

¹³ Collins, *Daniel*, 203.

cannot know precisely for which community or communities the long edition of Daniel was composed. While it is impossible to read the mind of the editors or translators who were responsible for the shape of the Greek versions, we may observe two chief characteristics of the narrative as well as the character of the prayer itself. In general, the men seem to be deployed as exemplars for other Jews to emulate. Depending on whether we adopt the OG or Theodotonic reading, either Azariah or the three men are ideal models of piety in their refusal to commit idolatry by worshipping the gold image set up by Nebuchadnezzar on the plain of Dura. It may be inappropriate to see the three men as martyrs because they do not die and they seem clearly to anticipate their deliverance by a just but merciful God. They are, in any case, would-be martyrs, in the sense of witnesses to their Jewish practice, as reflected by their aversion to idolatrous worship and their response of calm resignation and faithful expectation of deliverance from their affliction.

That the men were seen as models to emulate is clear already from the testamentary speech of Mattathias in 1 Macc 2:59–60 in which he sums up the admirable behaviour of nine cases of exemplary worthies who manifest zeal for the Torah in various ways. 1 Macc 2:59, in which Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael are said to have trusted (πιστεύω) and were saved from the flame, offers a clear reference to the incident of the fiery furnace, if not the prayer and hymn. Within a prayer, 3 Macc 6:6–7 makes a clear reference to the youths and their rescue from the fiery furnace as part of another exempla list.¹⁴ Because that first century C.E. passage includes mention that God moistened the fire with dew, a detail not included in MT Daniel, 3 Macc 6 constitutes the earliest unambiguous reference to the additions. The use of the story as an example for emulation is reflected in both subsequent Jewish and Christian traditions.

The third century C.E. Dura Europos synagogue offers an intriguing possibility in one of its many frescoes. The interpretation of the figures in these paintings has been challenging because they contain not only recognizable depictions of scenes from the Bible such as Moses parting the Red Sea and the drowning of the Egyptians, Esther and Ahasuerus, but also many extra-biblical elements as well.¹⁵ The paintings may have been closely

¹⁴ For a treatment of the paradigmatic use of exempla in Graeco-Roman pagan, Jewish, and Christian literature, see A. Lumpe, “Exemplum,” in *RAC* 6 (1966): 1229–1257.

¹⁵ See the plates and discussion in C. Kraeling et al., *The Synagogue* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956), 187–194 and plates LXIX–LXXII. K. Weitzmann and H. Kessler have offered the most recent evaluation of the series, *The Frescoes of the*

linked to liturgical celebrations in the synagogue and illustrate liturgical texts.¹⁶ The point of interest here is that it has been suggested that one of the north panel frescoes, part of a large and significant one, depicts the three men of Dan 3.¹⁷ Although C. Kraeling has seen this panel as an illustration of the dry bones of Ezekiel 37, his interpretation is unconvincing primarily for two reasons. He sees all three figures, who are dressed in Persian tunic and trousers, as Ezekiel as well as understanding the two additional figures in the panel who are dressed in chiton and himation also as Ezekiel. He himself emphasises the importance of costumes in the frescoes. Elsewhere in the paintings, figures wearing Persian dress are consistently court and temple personnel and those wearing chiton and himation are prophets, including Moses.¹⁸ A second major difficulty with his interpretation is that there are no dry bones in the painting, only scattered, en fleshed arms and legs. It seems more likely that the panel draws from the Daniel traditions, especially given the connection between Dan 3 which is set on the plain of Dura, and the site of the synagogue. The fresco may illustrate the moment after the fire has been quelled and the ultimate punishment decreed by Nebuchadnezzar has been enacted: that those who utter blasphemy against Israel's god would be torn limb from limb and his house laid in ruins

Dura Synagogue and Christian Art (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1990). Their interpretation follows Kraeling's quite closely in many points in part because Kraeling and Weitzmann worked together on the frescoes in the 1940s and share the same problematic approach of linking the iconography to larger Christian manuscript illuminations and ignoring the local context of religious worship in third century Syria. Kraeling himself understood the three figures to be three depictions of Ezekiel at various stages in the Ezek 37 parable (192), but this would not explain the other figure who is dressed differently in the four panels.

¹⁶ S. Ladermann argues that the west wall of frescoes offers scenes linked to *piyyutim*, Jewish liturgical poems; "A New Look at the Second Register of the West Wall in Dura Europos," *Cahiers Archéologiques* 45 (1997): 5–18. Particularly intriguing for our argument is her suggestion that the Song of the Well (Num 21:16–20) and the Song of the Kine (1 Sam 6:12) are represented in two of the paintings. These are two of the songs that appear in rabbinic lists of eschatological songs, a list that clearly influenced the choice of canticles adopted by the Church; for which, see J. Kugel, "Is There but One Song?" *Biblica* 63 (1982): 329–350.

¹⁷ R. Wischnitzer mentions this standard interpretation which she thinks was influenced by Christian catacomb painting, but does not provide a specific citation within the brief compass of her review; "Review: The Dura Synagogue," *JQR* 39 (1949): 297–300 [298].

¹⁸ Kraeling, *Synagogue*, 72, 92, 129, 161.

(Dan 3:96/MT 3:29).¹⁹ The three men have their arms raised or outstretched with open palms seemingly in a modified *orans* position, and look up toward the outstretched hand(s) of God, which suggests their rescue. The image of praying does not derive from the prose narrative of MT Dan 3 but must derive from the Greek versions or possibly a Semitic *Vorlage*. If in fact this identification of the figures as the three youths in Dan 3 is correct, the point has not been noted by others but it suggests the possibility that Jewish worship in this synagogue may have involved the Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three and is potentially significant in terms of understanding the appropriation of the canticles by the Church.

The New Testament mentions in passing, though not by name, both Daniel and the three in the fire among the long catalogue of the faithful in Heb 11:33–34. Justin (*Apol* 1.46) mentions the supplicants specifically. The well-known painting of the three men in the flames found in the Priscilla Catacomb in Rome and dating from the first half of the third century C.E. also suggests the story's interpretation as a witness to martyrdom.²⁰ The long-term influence of the prayers in subsequent Christian tradition is reflected in Pr Azar's appropriation along with the Song of the Three in the collections of canticles appearing in Greek Bible manuscripts, a topic discussed at more length in the introduction to the Prayer of Manasseh in this volume.

From this discussion of exemplarity, we may turn to a related issue. As with the other pseudepigraphical prayers, it is well worth asking the question, what role do Azariah (Theodotion) or Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael (OG) play as pseudonymous "authors" of prayer? Is there some special import to their choice? Most scholars have found little significance in the name Azariah ("YHWH has helped"). Moore suggests the name was quite common, with at least twenty-five Azariahs mentioned in the Bible.²¹ The three play only a small role in the book of Daniel itself, but from the beginning of the Daniel stories, readers know that Azariah was one of the young Judean men selected to be trained in the "letters and language of the Chaldeans" (Dan 1:4). He was given a new name, Abednego, and along with Daniel, Hananiah, and Mishael ate vegetables and drank water rather than defile themselves by eating the food appointed by the king (Dan 1:8–16).

¹⁹ The panel also depicts a sizeable building upside down. The Greek and Aramaic have "house" in the singular which could have also been understood as the community's temple destroyed as punishment for their apostasy.

²⁰ See R. Darling Young, "Martyrdom as Exaltation," in *Late Antique Christianity* (ed. V. Burrus; Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2005), 76–79.

²¹ For the figure of twenty-five, Moore cites the work of F. Schumacher, *Daniel*, 56.

He and his companions are thus cast as everyday diaspora Jews, if specially trained as scribes and ideally pious in their behaviour.

We may infer other aspects of their behaviour that fellow Jews might emulate. The fact that these are “common” diaspora Jews is no doubt important in their portrayal. The prayer itself asserts that the community is bereft of its traditional leaders, “neither prince nor prophet nor leader” (v. 15) is present to offer the people consolation and leadership. Moreover, although not explicitly mentioned, it is clear there is no priest to offer sacrifice on their behalf. Indeed, the prayer asks that their contrite hearts be accepted as if they are a sacrifice. They thus serve as their own priestly officiants. This line of thinking may be extended by considering the role of the entire sequence of confessional intercession – divine angelic rescue – and blessing/hymn of praise as an expansion of the earlier Dan 3 narrative.

In evaluating the placement of the Prayer of Azariah within the expanded book, it is thus important to consider briefly the Song of the Three that was redacted with it. There are strong echoes of Psalm 148 found in the Song of the Three including Ps 148: 11. Moreover, like Psalm 148, the Song of the Three reflects the priestly creation account of Gen 1:1–2:4 in the order of the call to praise, in which the overall sequence reflects the created order, with the addition of human leaders of different sorts. Kings, princes, and rulers are mentioned in Ps 148:11; there no priests are mentioned.²² When one contrasts Pr Azar 15 which laments the lack of sacrificial place and personnel with the temple-priestly character of the Song of the Three in which the only human leaders mentioned specifically are priests (verse 62), it is quite striking. Most scholars have argued that the lack of mention of temple in the Prayer of Azariah and the assumed existence of the temple in the Song suggests different times or provenances for the two liturgical compositions. Such a historical-critical reading may well be correct, but it seems that another cogent reading of the additions as they are redacted is to view the Song of the Three with its mention of the temple as a *result* of the appearance of the presence of God in the angel. The three have been purified and transformed in the fire so that they are able to inhabit the temple, understood in a figurative way as a divinely restored created order, on that basis. The Song of the Three cannot be understood literally in any case because it calls on the “nights and days” and the “light and darkness” among other things, to sing praise to God.

The pattern of threat of destruction – prayer for deliverance – redemption followed by praise of God as creator and redeemer can be seen typologically

²² Brooke, “Additions to Daniel,” *Oxford Bible Commentary*, 708

as a new exodus and return. As construed in Daniel, the new threat to the existence of the Jews is no longer simply political, physical slavery, but the threat of enslavement to a foreign god. The exodus narrative is premised on the deliverance of the people so that they may serve (i.e., worship, Heb. עבד, Greek λατρεύω) God in the wilderness (Exod 7:16, 8:1 and so on). Thus the setting in the Additions is premised on the same principle, rendering proper service to the right god. Yet the situation is assessed differently because it contains a somewhat transformed Deuteronomic theological perspective, one that retains the view that bad situations for humans are understood as divinely ordained punishments for sin. God is thus justified, accorded righteousness, as part of the divine nature. This is to contrast humans who might be “reckoned righteous” according to their behaviour.

Another feature of the Pr Azar warrants comment as well. The prayer is depicted as spontaneous, as something uttered by Azariah or the three youths in the fire, yet on the other hand, it seems particularly “psalm-like” even given its formulaic blessing at the beginning which is lacking in the canonical psalms. C. W. Bennett described the character of Prayer of Azariah negatively as “mostly secondary and imitative” and “largely a cento of biblical phrases from the Old Testament.”²³ Yet it is precisely in this collocation of stereotypical phraseology from scripture that the prayer’s significance for understanding the practice of prayer may lie. We can read it as a model for the kinds of prayer that should be offered in such a situation. That is to say, “every Jew” should have so ingested the Torah that it is inscribed on the heart (Jer 31: 33–34), that is, internalised cognitively. The words that echo the Torah should arise spontaneously on the lips of the faithful, those who share in the covenant with the ancestors. Just as the action of potential martyrdom, of a steadfastness of faith in the youth’s refusal to worship the golden statue should inspire similar fortitude on the part of the narrative audience, so the prayers of the young men should be emulated by those in similar danger. The prayer is depicted as spontaneous because such a scripturalised prayer should issue from the mouths of the faithful. This was likely an ideal that not every faithful Jew could actually achieve, and indeed, the presence of shorter, less allusive prayers also appear in narrative depictions. Such long, scripturalised prayers were depicted as performative exemplars nonetheless.

²³ Bennett, “Prayer of Azariah” *APOT*, 630. M. Gilbert traces many allusions to biblical texts within the Prayer of Azariah, some of them more convincing than others, “La Prière d’Azarias (Dn 3, 26–45 Théodotion)” *NRT* 96 (1974): 561–582, especially 567–575.

B. Outline

Because commentators use different criteria for making divisions there is no unanimity about the prayer's structure, but one may discern the following divisions:

1–2 (24–25)	Narrative introduction
3–5	Address to God
3 (26)	Assignment of blessing to God
4–5 (27–28)	Affirmation of divine righteousness
6–9	Confession of sin
6–7 (29–30)	Communal admission of guilt
8–9 (31–32)	Affirmation of divine justice
10–22	Description of present situation and petitions
10 (33)	Admission of shame
11–13 (34–36)	Petition recalling covenant with ancestors
14–15 (37–38)	Lament at current status
16–18 (39–41)	Expression of contrition
19–20 (42–43)	Petition for deliverance
21–22 (44–45)	Expressed wish for divine vindication

C. Note on Translation

The following translation is based on the Old Greek version of the text with significant textual variants from Theodotion, which are few in number, and other witnesses noted below. The versification of the translation is offered both as a separate composition of twenty-two verses and according to the numbering of the Greek version in LXX Dan 3:24–45.

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Commentary

Translation

(3: 24–25) 1–2. Then Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael prayed in this manner and sang praises to the Lord, when the king ordered them to be thrown into the furnace. Thus standing up Azariah prayed in this manner and opened his mouth and giving thanks to the Lord together with his companions in the midst of the fire, the furnace having been heated exceedingly by the Chaldeans, they said:

(26) 3. Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our ancestors, and praiseworthy and glorified is your name forever,

(27) 4. For you are just in all you have done to us, and all your deeds are truthful and your paths straight, and all your judgements are truthful,

(28) 5. You have rendered judgements of truth in all that you have inflicted upon us and upon your holy city of our ancestors, Jerusalem, for you have inflicted all these things in truth and judgement on account of our sins.

(29) 6. For we sinned in all things and transgressed, so as to rebel against you, and we sinned utterly in everything.

(30) 7. We did not obey the commandments of your law nor observe [them] nor do as you commanded us so that it might go well for us.

(31) 8. And now everything you have inflicted on us, and everything you have done, you have done in truthful judgement.

(32) 9. You handed us over into the hands of our lawless enemies, most hateful rebels, and to an unjust king, the most villainous on the whole earth.

(33) 10. Now we cannot open our mouth. Shame and disgrace have come upon your servants and those who revere you.

(34) 11. Do not abandon us forever, for the sake of your name, and do not break your covenant.

(35) 12. Do not withdraw your mercy from us, on account of Abraham, your beloved one, and on account of Isaac, your servant, and Israel, your holy one,

- (36) 13. as you spoke to them, promising to multiply their seed like the stars of heaven and like the sand that is on the shore of the sea.
- (37) 14. For, Master, we have been reduced compared to all the nations, and we are lowly in the whole earth today, because of our sins,
- (38) 15. and at this time there is neither ruler nor prophet nor leader, nor whole burnt offering, nor sacrifice, nor oblation, nor incense, and no place to make an offering before you and find mercy.
- (39) 16. But may we be accepted with contrite soul and a humble spirit,
- (40) 17. As if with whole burnt offerings of rams and bulls and with myriads of fatted lambs, so may our sacrifice be before you today and make atonement before you, because no shame will devolve upon those who trust in you to come to perfection.
- (41) 18. Now we follow you with our whole heart and fear you and seek your face.
- (42) 19. Do not put us to shame, but do unto us according to your clemency and according to the abundance of your mercy.
- (43) 20. Rescue us according to your wonderful works, and give glory to your name, O Lord.
- (44) 21. May all who display evil toward your servants be put to shame and disgraced without any power, and may their strength be broken.
- (45) 22. Let them know that you are Lord, the only God, and glorious throughout the whole world.

Notes

(1–2) Theodotion’s introduction to the prayer is different from the OG and reads: “And they were walking around in the middle of the flame, singing praise to God and blessing the Lord. And Azariah stood up, and praying in this manner, he opened his mouth in the midst of the fire and said:”

Aside from the difference between the two textual traditions in the matter of who is offering the prayer, the three together or Azariah alone, the OG mentions the furnace (κάμινος), and Theodotion, the flame (φλόξ). Both versions situate the one praying in the midst of the fire. The Aramaic text from the *Chronicle of Jerahmeel* includes a “furnace of blazing fire.” The use of fiery punishment in the story of Dan 3 was likely meant to have symbolic significance, which might encompass a range of valid interpretations. Within the book of Daniel itself, fire as a narrative motif appears only in chapter 3 in connection with the Chaldean punishment of the three men and in the scene of the divine throne in Dan 7: 9–11 where the throne is surrounded by flames and is ultimately the cause of the beast’s immolation. Within the Hebrew Bible, aside from its use in making sacrificial offerings, fire is associated with divine anger and punishment, particularly

in regard to the prophetic “Day of the Lord” and eschatological judgement (cf. Isa 66:15–16, Joel 2: 3–5, Zeph 1:18, 3:8, Zec 13:9, Mal 3:2, Jdt 16:17). At the same time, fire can denote the guiding or positive presence of God, most notably of course in the fiery bush (Exod 3:2) and the pillar of fire and cloud that followed the Israelites in the wilderness but also in later traditions.

The term furnace, from the Greek κάμινος, translating the Hebrew כּוּר, is used much more rarely and with a narrower range of specific connotations. The Israelite furnace also has the sense of “smelting pot” for metals and it is used metaphorically for human suffering, often from divine punishment or discipline.²⁴ The furnace is used figuratively in reference to two events, the Israelites’ experience of slavery in Egypt (Deut 4:20, Jer 11:4, 1 Kgs 8:51) and the Babylonian exile, understood as a test for the Israelites (Isa 48:10 and even more harshly in Ezek 22:18–22). The typological conflation of the return from the exile as a new exodus and new creation was a major theme of the exilic work of Deutero-Isaiah. Indeed, Isa 43:2 speaks specifically of divine protection in the context of restoration from the horrors of exile: “And if you pass through water, I am with you; and the rivers shall not inundate you: and if you go through fire, you shall not be burned; the flame shall not consume you.”²⁵ The conflation of divine threat and divine presence may also be subtly at work in the fiery furnace experience of the three men, though now expanded to include the cultural crisis of imposed Hellenistic worship and desecration of the Temple during the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The appearance of the angel in the fire with the three men is a sign of divine presence. Such a typological understanding of the way in which God was involved in rescuing the people in the past from the crisis of foreign domination informed the expectation of Jews during the Hasmonaean crisis and gave them the expectation of ultimate salvation. In the case of the Greek additions to Daniel, such salvation is secured through

²⁴ As for more literal uses, Sodom and Gomorrrah are described as smoking like a furnace in Gen 19:28. A visual description of God’s descent in fire on Sinai uses both the terms for fire and furnace (Exod 19:18).

²⁵ Ulrich Kellermann suggests a comparison between Dan 3 and Deut 4:20, Isa 43:2, and Ps 66:12, although he does not discuss specific reliance of Daniel on the earlier texts; “Das Danielbuch und die Märtyrtheologie der Auferstehung,” *Die Entstehung der jüdischen Martyrologie* (ed. J. van Henten; SPB 38; Leiden: Brill, 1989), 54 [51–75]. A more explicit discussion of Isa 43:1–3 as the tradition-historical background for the story of Dan 3 appears in an essay by Ernst Haag in the same volume, “Die Drei Männer im Feuer,” 20–50, especially 34–36. While Haag’s suggestion that Isa 43 informs the story is convincing, his detailed reconstruction of the redaction-critical history of Dan 3 is much less so.

the offering of confessional and intercessory prayer by the faithful few who had resisted idolatry.²⁶ In later Greek Jewish literature, the connection with Isa 43:2 is made explicitly in the martyrological account of the mother and her seven sons in 4 Macc 18. The mother recalls the instruction of their father, who taught them to model themselves upon the exemplary heroes of Israel's history, including Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael in the fire (4 Macc 18:12). After mentioning Daniel in the lion's den, the mother goes on to quote Isa 43:2 as an affirmation of God's promise of deliverance and reward for the faithful righteous who endure. Another exempla list in AC 7.37.1–4 (for which see elsewhere in this volume), singles out thirty-three men and women in Israel's history who have offered effective sacrifice or prayer beginning with Abel, including the three youths in the fiery furnace, up through Mattathias and his sons during the period of the Maccabees, though curiously ending with Jael "in praises."

(3) The adjective "praiseworthy" in the second half of the clause modifies "name" in ms. 88 and Pap. 967 of the OG (αἰνετόν), but modifies the nominative "God" in Syh and Theodotion (αἰνετός). The OG more accurately reflects the form of parallelism in classical Hebrew poetry in which the second clause extends and reinforces the force of the first. Although the formula, "Blessed be God" occurs quite often within the Hebrew Bible, the second-person blessing formula, "Blessed are you, O Lord" ברוך אתה יהוה εὐλογητὸς εἰ κύριε appears rarely (1 Chr 29:10, Ps 118:12). An expanded form "Blessed are you O Lord our God, Sovereign of the Universe," becomes a standard blessing formula of rabbinic prayer.²⁷ See also AC 7.33.7 for a blessing formula at the end of a prayer. Here rather appears "God of our ancestors" (Deut 26:7, 1 Chr 12:17, 2 Chr 20:6). Tob 8:5 offers the closest parallel: "Blessed are you O God of our ancestors and blessed is your holy and glorious name forever;" (cf. also Ezra 7: 27). The blessing formula

²⁶ Mentioning *inter alia* Isa 48:10, R. Mason points as well to the thematic connection between the role of the servant of Deutero-Isaiah who vicariously atones for the people and the young men in the fire who suffer for their fidelity to God, not for their own sin; see "The Treatment of Earlier Themes in the Book of Daniel," in *Perspectives on the Hebrew Bible: Essays in Honor of Walter J. Harrelson* (ed. J. Crenshaw; Atlanta: Mercer University Press, 1988), 81–100.

²⁷ R. Kimelman, "Blessing Formulae and Divine Sovereignty in Rabbinic Liturgy," in *Liturgy in the Life of the Synagogue: Studies in the History of Jewish Prayer* (ed. R. Langer and S. Fine; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns: 2005), 1–39. For the varieties of blessing forms in rabbinic Judaism, see J. A. Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud: Forms and Patterns* (trans. R. Sarason; SJ 9; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1977; orig. published in Hebrew, Jerusalem: Hebrew University Press, 1964; 2nd edition, 1966), 70–103 and Appendix A, 288–291.

appears in the New Testament and early Greek Jewish literature however with increasing frequency (Matt 5:11; 16:17; Luke 1:42; 6:20; Tob 3:11; 8:5, 15–17; Jdt 13:17; 14:7; Pr Azar 3; Dan 3:52–55 (LXX); 1 Macc 4:30; 1 Esd 4:60).²⁸ The formula also appears in the Qumran texts (e.g., the purification rituals 4Q512 and 4Q414).²⁹

(4–5) Theodotion does not contain the phrase “to us.” The Greek for “true” in verse 4, ἀληθινός, likely reflects the Hebrew אמת. The Syriac text and the Aramaic of the *Chronicle of Jerahmeel* use the term “faithful” or “constant” which, as Collins points out, could not reflect the Greek but could have served as the translation of the Hebrew.³⁰ The ascription to God of righteousness in judgement is characteristic of many other early Jewish prayers, but not all, that include confessional elements (cf. LXX Ps 10:7, Tob 3:2, Ezra 9:15, Neh 9: 8, 33, Dan 9:7–8, Bar 2:9, 4Q504 1–2 xvi, 21).³¹

²⁸ Cf. also “Blessed be your glorious name” in Neh 9:5.

²⁹ Daniel Falk observes that many of the blessings occur in the third person and none of the seemingly sectarian prayers uses the tetragrammaton, but rather a generic Hebrew word for God, 'El. For his discussion, see, *inter alia*, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (STDJ 27; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 23–24. See also E. M. Schuller, “Some Observations on Blessings of God in Texts from Qumran,” in *Of Scribes and Scrolls*: (ed. H. Attridge, J. J. Collins, T. Tobin; College Theological Society, Lanham: Catholic University Press, 1990) and B. Nitzan, “Blessings and Curses” *EDSS* 1: 95–100 and *idem.*, *Qumran Prayer and Religious Poetry* (STDJ 12; trans. J. Chipman; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 119–171.

³⁰ Collins, *Daniel*, 200.

³¹ Neh 1:5–11 and the Prayer of Manasseh, often grouped with other early Jewish prayers of confession, do not include mention of divine righteousness. The Pr Man ascribes “great goodness” to God (v. 7), but mentions righteousness only in stating that the God of Israel is also the “God of the righteous” (v. 8). *4 Ezra* 8:20–36 offers something of an intermediate case in which God’s righteousness and goodness are to be made manifest at which time God shows mercy to those who have no store of good works (*4 Ezra* 8:36). On the characteristic acknowledgement of divine righteousness in penitential prayers, see R. Werline, *Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism: The Development of a Religious Institution* (SBLEJL 13; Atlanta: Scholars, 1998); the discussion of *Gerichtsdoxologie* in M. Boda, *Praying the Tradition* (BZAW 277; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1999), 55–65; and further, W. Morrow, “The Affirmation of Divine Righteousness in Early Penitential Prayers: A Sign of Judaism’s Entry into the Axial Age,” in *Seeking the Favor of God Volume 1: The Origins of Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism* (ed. M. Boda, D. Falk, and R. Werline; SBLEJL 21; Atlanta, 2006), 101–117. E. Chazon points to the absence of the affirmation of divine righteousness in the daily prayer of the *Words of the Luminaries* in all but the confessional prayer for Friday. Elsewhere in Qumran prayer, it is found in 1QH VIII 26 [XVI 9]; see “The *Words of the Luminaries* and Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Times,” in *Seeking the Favor of God Vol. 2*, 179.

The semantic field suggested by “just,” the Greek δίκαιος which reflects the Hebrew צַדִּיק, is connected to that of the Israelite law court, in which a defendant and an accuser were evaluated before a judge and witnesses. A human party is declared guilty or righteous after being examined according to the legal statutes and condemned or exculpated on that basis. In Israel, the legal system seems to have been conceived in terms of a covenant binding the people for which applicable laws would be the means of evaluating human “righteousness” towards each other. While human sages render judgements over human disputes, only God can render humans ultimately righteous in regard to observance of the norms of the Torah. God is expected to act in righteousness and respond to the people’s plight; lack of doing so, that is, a seeming “hiding of the face of God” (LXX Ps 12:1, 21:25, 26:9) would suggest an abandonment of the covenant and be the motivation for a faithful people’s lament hence the statement in verse 18 that the petitioners “seek your face”. Indeed, very similar language is found in the prayer of Daniel 9, in which the people’s sin is described as their “shame” and is contrasted with God’s righteousness (Dan 9:7).

(5) In verse 5, Theodotion has “the holy city” rather than “your holy city” of the OG. The theme of divine righteousness continues with a renewed affirmation of the rectitude of divine justice as the standard for condemning and punishing the people. Here, the prayer affirms not only the principle that God is righteous by nature, but also in the practise of arbitrating judgements and meting out punishments, God is just. An unjust rendering might result in an excessive or insufficient punishment for the crime committed. The principle underlying the punishment is that God had forewarned the people through the prophets that destruction might fall on Jerusalem if they do not observe their part of the covenant. The punishment of exile from the land is not explicitly mentioned in the prayer, only a reduced population in verse 14, and so may not have been part of the context of the prayer when it was presumably circulating independently. Within the larger context of Dan 3 in which the Prayer of Azariah now appears, however, the Babylonian exile is the clear literary setting, if not the historical setting of the text when the Greek version of Daniel was first compiled, perhaps in the second century B.C.E. during the time of Antiochus IV Epiphanes’ Hellenisation effort in Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is not known as the “holy city” in most of the Hebrew Bible, but only seems to acquire that moniker in the late exilic and post-exilic period if this can be gauged by its appearance in early Jewish literature (cf. Neh 11:1, 18, Isa 48:2, 52:1; Dan 9:24, Tob 13:9, 1 Macc 2:7, 2 Macc 1:12, 3:1, 9:14, 15:14, 3 Macc 6:5 and in the NT: Matt 4:5, 27:53, Rev 11:2, 21:2, 10, 22:19).

(6) Theodotion does not include “in everything.” The confession articulated in the sixth verse makes clear that Azariah, or all three companions, are offering intercession on behalf of their fellow compatriots who “sinned in everything” since the three clearly did not commit the Israelite sin of idolatry by worshiping Nebuchadnezzar’s gold statue. The language of rebellion from the verb ἀφίσταμαι can have the sense of physically turning away, but frequently is deployed by the Greek translator for the Hebrew מִרְד. When used in reference to God, it signifies apostasy, particularly in the Deuteronomistic literature (cf. Deut 7:4, Deut 13:11, 14; Josh 22: 15, 19, 23, 29) which is also reflected in the other long prayer in Daniel, Dan 9: 8–9. Cf. as well the confessions in Dan 9:5, 15, Ezra 9:6, and Neh 9:26.

(7) Theodotion does not include the phrase “of your law.” Verse 7 restates the admission of guilt on the part of the people and extends its expression somewhat. Whereas other prayers include only a tripartite confession using three verbs, reflecting the Hebrew חָטָא, עָוָה, רָשַׁע (cf. 1 Kgs 8:47; Ps 106:6), Pr Azar 6 expands the common formulation to include four verbs, adding “to rebel.”³² Not only do they confess disobedience in not observing the commandments, but they recognise that the ultimate purpose of the divinely ordained commandments according to a Deuteronomic perspective was so that the people could live long in the land (e.g., Deut 4:40, 5:16). Within the context of this prayer and its narrative context in Dan 3, doing well is no longer understood as tied to life in the land but to salvation from persecution by foreigners.

(8) The verse in the OG includes καὶ νῦν; Theodotion contains the conjunction νῦν alone. A shift in the prayer is indicated by the expression, καὶ νῦν (reflecting the Hebrew וְעַתָּה; cf. Num 14:17, 1 Kgs 3:7, Ezra 9:10, Neh 9:32, LXX Ps 38:7, Dan 9:15). Verse 8 reiterates the view that the community has received a just judgement and punishment of the people by God. This theodicy reflects what is often termed a Deuteronomic perspective on sin and punishment. Dire straits in the present are understood to be a punishment for disobedience. Yet in one important sense, the perspective of Pr Azar departs from this “Deuteronomic” perspective: the ancestors are not considered sinful here. Only the present generation is blamed for its sin. In verse 9, Theodotion does not include “our” to modify lawless enemies. The Greek underlying “rebels” is ἀποστατῶν (cf. Num 14:9, Josh 22:16, 19, 2 Macc 5:8, 3 Macc 7:3), a translation from a derived form of the Hebrew verb מִרְד. (See verse 6 above). Moore rightly points to this as a probable

³² Werline, *Penitential Prayer*, 169.

Hebraism.³³ The use of the term “apostate” in the modern sense does not develop until the period of the early church when theological belief systems were constructed. Whether or not one might understand the term as a veiled reference to renegade Jews as described in 1 Macc 1:11–15, 41–43 as suggested by Moore depends in part on the postulated date of the prayer. As the concluding verse to the confessional element proper, verse 9 articulates the nature of the punishment. Exile is not mentioned, nor destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, but rather the Jewish community’s subjugation under foreign authorities, those without knowledge of the Torah. The theme of Jewish submission to foreign domination especially through wicked kings whether within Judea or in the diaspora was common in early Jewish literature, not only in the “court literature” mentioned in the introduction but in all genres. Condemnation of foreign kings is found in other Greek Jewish prayers (2 Macc 2: 2–3, 6: 4–5). On present humiliation, cf. also Dan 9:12, Neh 9:36–37. The special claim that this king is the most villainous on the whole earth seems to be unique to this prayer. Collins suggests that the singular referent might be to Antiochus IV Epiphanes who is given the strong epithet “sinful root” in 1 Macc 1:10.³⁴

(10) Although the OG signals a transition in the prayer in verse 8 employing καὶ νῦν, Theodotion does not signal the shift until verse 10. The inability of the sinners to open their mouths is of course not to be understood literally given that they are in the middle of uttering a prayer. Rather, the idea behind the expression is that shame (αἰσχύνη) and disgrace (ὄνειδος) result in such cultural stigma that they dare not speak. In the face of their own wrongdoing, they are incapable of providing exculpatory testimony for themselves. Recognition of one’s own sin in the face of the righteousness of God is reflected in the prophet Isaiah’s confession that he was a “man of unclean lips” who lives among a people of “unclean lips” (cf. Isa 6:5). In order to be able to deliver the divine message, Isaiah’s mouth must be purified with hot coals. The language of shame and reproach also appears in Jer 24:9, Bar 2:4, 3:4, Dan 9:7–8; cf. also Ezek 16:62–63. In a wisdom context, see Sir 15: 4–5 and elsewhere in Hellenised Jewish literature, see Ase-neth’s anxiety brought on by her defilement from eating the sacrifices of idols that she hardly dares to open her mouth (*Jos. Asen.* 11:16–18, and in her prayer, 12:5–6). For the reverse depiction of a self-declared righteous individual who is able to open his mouth, see Job 33: 2–5.

³³ Moore, *Daniel, Esther, and Jeremiah, The Additions*, 57.

³⁴ Collins, *Daniel*, 200.

The expression in Pr Azar 10 reflects the same issues relating to divine judgement, as well as the threat of shame and defilement. The expressions of shame and reproach also appear in the discourse of the book of Judith which was written at roughly the same time.³⁵ Judith proclaims herself free of shame in that Holofernes did not have sexual intercourse with her (Jdt 13:16). Within the book of Judith, the themes of threatened sexual defilement and defilement of the temple's holy of holies are intertwined and described using the same shame-honour, purity-defilement language polarities. The language of the Prayer of Azariah offers a certain similarity in its expressed wish to avoid shame and defilement but at the same time a strong contrast in its depiction of prayer as an adequate substitute for sacrifice (see verses 15–17 below). The shame is experienced by God's "servants," that is the Jews, and "those who revere you." The latter phrase, in Greek, τοῖς σεβόμενοις σε, appears also in the Song of the Three in v. 68. Whereas in the New Testament, the participle is used to refer to "god-fearers," non-Jews who worshipped the God of Israel (cf. Acts 13:43, 17:17), it is doubtful that sense is meant here.

(11) The verse contains the first two of three petitions in the prayer. The first is a request not to be abandoned by God. The request may be implicitly understood to relate to deuteronomic covenantal promises that God made to Israel as reflected in Deut 4:31. In the context of Deut 4 in which Moses is representing the law to the people, the exile and diaspora are forecast. Deut 4:31 affirms that because God is merciful, God will not abandon the people, but be faithful to the ancestral covenant which promises security in the land if the people observe the Torah. This promise is evoked as part of a blessing (1 Kgs 8:57) following Solomon's prayer of dedication of the temple. The request for God not to abandon them is rooted in the common basis: for the sake of the divine name. This almost hypostatic understanding of the divine name appears in the psalms, and also in prophetic literature. The divine name's sake appears in the prayer of Jer 14:17, 21, and especially Ezek 20:9, 14, 22, 44, in which Israel is considered so corrupt that the only possibility for salvation comes from the desire to manifest divine holiness to the nations by returning Israel from their diaspora in exile.

(12) Verse twelve contains the third petition to God as well as an additional rationale for the request. The verse is in some sense reciprocal with

³⁵ The cultural dimensions of honour and shame as reigning societal values in Graeco-Roman antiquity have been mapped in part by J. Neyrey, *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew* (Lexington: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998). See also D. Gilmore, ed., *Honor and Shame and the Unity of the Mediterranean* (Washington, D.C.: American Anthropological Association, 1987).

verse six. Using different forms of the same verb (ἀφίσταμαι), the petition requests that God not withdraw divine mercy from the people even though they have withdrawn from God through sin. In verse 11, the appeal is made for the sake of the divine name; here it is rooted in the divine promise to the ancestors. The request not to remove divine mercy relates specifically to the concept of divine judgement. In certain strands of Israelite and early Jewish theological expression linked to the Deuteronomic tradition, divine judgement was premised on the divine characteristics of justice and mercy. Through divine forbearance of human sin and mercy, God might decide not to punish immediately, but defer the appointed time of punishment, permitting repentance and restoration. Intercession by righteous individuals could be effective during that time. Once punishment had been meted out according to the standards of divine justice, divine mercy might serve to mitigate the punishment, particularly in the case of human confession and penitence. At a certain point, God could foreswear any possibility of intercession (cf. Jer 15:1, 5–9). A fuller expression of the idea of God as divine judge is found in 4 *Ezra* 7:33–34 in which God is enthroned on the judgement seat.³⁶

Early Jewish literature contains diverse perspectives on the nature of human sin and punishment as evidenced by the variety of confessional prayer texts.³⁷ In contrast to the Pr Man, the three ancestors are not described as being free from sin, nor, on the other hand, are the “ancestors” (a more

³⁶ See the comments of M. Stone, *4 Ezra* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 220–221.

³⁷ Among the large corpus of prayer texts found at Qumran for example, Bilhah Nitzan has pointed to an important distinction between the prayers that seem to have been authored by the Qumran sectarians, which do not contain direct petitions for forgiveness of sin, and non-sectarian prayers which include such confessional elements (4Q504 4:7; 1–2 ii 11; 4Q393 1–2 ii 4–5; 11QPs^a 19:13–16); *Qumran Prayer and Religious Poetry* (STDJ 12; trans J. Chipman; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 333–43. Daniel Falk has also discussed this issue and concluded that the absence of petitions for forgiveness reflects the sect’s own self-understanding as a group that has already repented and are thus assured of their status as the blessed of God; “Psalms and Prayers,” in *Justification and Variegated Nomism Volume I The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism* (ed., D. A. Carson, P. T. O’Brien, and M. A. Seifrid; WUNT 2.140; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck/Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 7–56, especially 29–34. See too his examination of the use of priestly atonement language in sectarian prayers at Qumran, “Scriptural Inspiration for Penitential Prayer in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Seeking the Favor of God Vol. 2*, 127–158. See also R. Arnold, *The Social Role of Liturgy in the Religion of the Qumran Community* (STDJ 60; Leiden: Brill, 2006).

comprehensive term suggesting multiple generations of Israelites) of the current worshippers described as sinful and in need of having their sin removed through the prayers of the current generation. The book of Judith calls into question the Deuteronomistic perspective in which current dire situations are necessarily understood as punishment for sin. In that second century B.C.E. narrative which is roughly contemporaneous with the Prayer of Azariah, the heroine exhorts her fellow Judeans to praise God who had not withdrawn mercy from them, but instead had defeated their Gentile enemies through the mediation of a human agent (Jdt 13:14). The naming of the patriarchs as Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, instead of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, occurs elsewhere in scripture only in cultic contexts (Exod 32:12–13, 1Kgs 18:36–37, 1 Chr 29:18–19, 2 Chr 30:6). The OG has underscored the connection to Exod 32:12–13, part of Moses' intercession after the idolatrous worship of the calf, by duplicating an exact expression from Exod 32:13, πρὸς αὐτοὺς λέγων πολυπληθῦναι, in verse (36) as opposed to the more spare Theodotion.

For Abraham as the beloved of God (ἡγαπημένος or with some formal variation), see Isa 41:8, 2 Chr 20:7, *Jub.* 19:9, 30:20, CD 3 2, 4Q252 col. 2,8; Philo, *Abr.* 89; 4 *Ezra* 3:14; *Apoc. Ab.* 9:6, 10:5, James 2:23 (φίλος θεοῦ), 1 *Clem* 10:1, 17:2; *Tg. Neof.* on Gen 18:17.³⁸ “For the sake of Isaac, your servant”. Jacob is normally referred to as God's servant. Cf. also Deut 9:27 within Moses' prayer of intercession, in which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are all called servants. In the many lists of the three patriarchs, Jacob is rarely called “Israel” and nowhere else called “the Holy One.” The people Israel as a whole is described as holy in the Bible (e.g., Exod 19:6; Deut 7:6), but not the individual patriarch. Elsewhere in scripture, holiness is a quality that characterises God, and by transference, also angels who were called “Holy Ones” (cf. Dan 8:13; 1QS 11 8, *inter alia multa*). There is insufficient evidence to posit any connection to the tradition of Jacob's angelic status evident in the *Prayer of Joseph* and other early Jewish literature although that may be what lies behind “Israel the Holy One.” Verses 11–12 form a set of parallel expressions, the first a petition made on the basis of

³⁸ Gilbert points to its use in Muslim tradition as well. Hebron, the tomb site of the great patriarch, is called in Arabic, “El Khalil,” that is, “the friend”; “La Prière d’Azarias,” 570. The epithet is found in the Qur’an 4.125. On the frequent use of this epithet for Abraham, see Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 258, who also notes that Pseudo-Philo curiously uses the term only for Moses. This may reflect the perspective of Pseudo-Philo about Moses' unique intercessory role; see J. Newman, “The Staff of Moses and the Mercy of God: Moses' Final Intercession in Pseudo-Philo 19,” in *Israel in the Wilderness* (ed. K. Pomykala; TBN 11; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 133–152.

the divine name, the second petition reiterating and extending the sense of the first one. God's "name" and covenant are bound up with the promise to the ancestors. Indeed, the use of the name "Israel" is likely significant. The renaming of Jacob as Israel after his struggle with an angel/God was considered a transformative event by many in early Judaism.³⁹ The ultimate purpose in the prayer is the glorification of the name of God (v. 22) which is closely bound to the well-being of the renamed Israel, both as individuals and as a corporate entity through their covenantal relationship as descendants of Jacob.

(13) Theodotion contains an alternate and briefer reading, "to whom you spoke." The OG uses the verb *πολυπληθύνω* for the more commonly used *πληθύνω* of Theodotion. In the latter case, emphasis is indicated either by a sequence of participle plus finite verb form (Gen 22:17) which reflects the Hebrew infinitive absolute plus finite verb, or with the adverb *σφόδρα* (Gen 17:2). The use of stars and sand imagery in relation to the promise of numerous offspring to Abraham (Gen 22:17) is affirmed in reiterations of the promise to Isaac and Jacob. As noted in the commentary on the previous verse in relation to the naming of the patriarchs, the translator of the OG seems clearly to have relied on Exod 32:13, a part of the intercessory prayer uttered by Moses. Whereas in many other texts, the ancestors were promised not only multiple descendants but eternal possession of the land (e.g., Lev 26:42, Deut 1:8–10; Sir 44:21, 4Q388a 1 ii 2–6, Bar 2:34), here, by contrast, the promise to the ancestors is connected only with descendants. In Daniel's purported context of the Babylonian exile, the promise of land might be expected. The prayer of Dan 9, for example, calls upon God to restore the favoured status of Jerusalem (Dan 9:16–19). Pr Azar thus offers a different perspective from the prayer in Dan 9 and perhaps intentionally so. Neither does the prayer express a longing and expectation for a return to the land, as does the long prayer of Bar 1:15–3:8. Whereas Pr Azar and its narrative context may not express "confidence in the ultimate benevolence of the king" as suggested by Collins, the prayer does offer a view of the exilic situation as one that need not necessarily be overcome through reverse migration to the land nor, for that matter, through independent self-governance.⁴⁰

³⁹ C. T. R. Hayward, *Interpretations of the Name Israel in Ancient Judaism & Some Early Christian Writings: From Victorious Athlete to Heavenly Champion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

⁴⁰ Collins, *Daniel*, 51. For a discussion of the view of exile implicit in the prayer of Baruch, see M. Floyd, "Penitential Prayer in the Second Temple Period from the Perspective of Baruch," in *Seeking the Favor of God Vol. 2*, 68–69.

(14–15) The Syriac and Aramaic include “now” after “for.” The use of the word δεσπότης is rare in the Greek translation of the books comprising the Hebrew Bible (Gen 15:2, 8; Jos 5:14, Jer 1:6, 4:10, 15:11, Jon 4:3) where it appears as one of the divine names in the sequence Adonai YHWH. The vocative address δέσποτα appears more frequently in early Jewish literature from the Graeco-Roman period and notably in prayers. Indeed, a comparison of the MT Job 5:8 with LXX Job 5:8 reflects both the increased emphasis on prayer in the Hellenistic period and the use of δεσπότης. In the book of Judith, the title is used to make a deliberate contrast between the false Master Holofernes, (Jdt 5:20, 24, 7:11, 11:10) and the Jews’ rightful Master, the God of Israel (Jdt 9:12). The same contrast between foreign and rightful master appears in the prayers of 3 Maccabees (3 Macc 2:2, 6:5, 10); cf. also in prayers (Ep Jer 1:6, Tob 8:17, 2 Macc 15:22, 1 Esd 4:60, Wis 11:26, Sir 23:1, 36:1). Consider especially its sixfold use in the long prayer of Daniel 9 (Dan 3:37, 9:8, 15, 16, 17 x2, 19). The word suggests the absolute control of a master over a slave, which would in fact not only underscore their pitifully low status, but also the possibility for a potent God to restore them.

“We have been reduced.” The verb in Greek is μικρύνω (lit. ‘make small’). The reduced status of the Jews runs contrary to the Jeremianic oracle that Israel should build and plant and multiply in exile (Jer 36:6, MT 29:6). The diminishment of the population accords also with the covenant curses found in Deut 4:27, 28:62, Lev 26:22, Bar 2:13. Such status returns them to the diminished life as sojourners that they experienced before settling in the land (1Chr 16:19). Using similar language, Bar 2:29–34 predicts such a diminishment, but also predicts their ultimate restoration. The fact that their lowly status is depicted as a result of their sins sounds another note of the Deuteronomistic theology that influences this prayer.

(15) Verse 15 does not include “king” (βασιλεύς) among the missing community leaders, although in the presumed setting of Babylonian exile, the absence of the Davidic monarch should certainly have been felt (cf. the list of Neh 9:32). Bar 1:16, written at roughly the same time and using the similar fictive exilic setting, mentions kings, rulers, priests, prophets, and people. Moore points out that the absence of a prophet would not have been the case during the exile when Jeremiah and Ezekiel were seemingly active, but the leadership roles mentioned likely reflect the later Graeco-Roman period. The Greek ἄρχων, “ruler” translates several terms for leader in the Hebrew Bible, including שׂר (Gen 12:15), נְשִׂיא (Gen 34:2), and מִשְׁל (Gen 45:8). The omission of priest among the leadership roles mentioned is also striking, especially so given the discussion of sacrifice in this and the subsequent verse. The verse mentions four kinds of sacrifice: ὄλο-

καύτωσις “whole burnt offering” for Hebrew עלה; θυσία “sacrifice” for Hebrew זבח; προσφορά “oblation” for Hebrew מנחה; and θυμίαμα “incense” for Hebrew קטרת.⁴¹ Although the core of the book of Deuteronomy likely refers to the northern cult site of Shiloh or Bethel in requiring centralised sacrifice in one location (see esp. Deut 12), from the perspective of the Judean monarchy the centralised place would have been Jerusalem. So too, in the post-exilic period, sacrificial offerings were restored at the Temple site. The absence of a legitimate altar could thus relate either to the situation of the exiles in diaspora or the Jews during the period of its desecration by foreign worship in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.

(16) Verse 16 echoes the language of the penitential psalm, LXX Ps 50:19. For the language of Ps 50:19 in another prayer, see 3 Macc 2:20. Cf. also the comparison of prayer and the incense offering in LXX Ps 140:2. 11Q5 18 6–11 (11Q Psa^a), Syriac Psalm 154:8–13 shares similar language as well: “The one who gives glory to the Most High is accepted like one who brings an offering, like one who offers rams and calves, like one who makes the altar greasy with many holocausts, like the sweet fragrance from the hand of just ones” (vv.9b-12a).⁴² Although Ps 50:18 suggests that God takes no pleasure in whole burnt offerings, in Pr Azar there is no repudiation of the sacrificial system. The expressed desire that the supplicants’ humble gestures and indeed, the intercessory confessional prayer itself, should be accepted as if they were sacrifices, does not suggest abrogation of the temple but either a temporary substitute or alternative when access to the temple is not available. Similar language concerning a humbled heart is also used in the *Words of the Luminaries* (4Q504 1–2 vi 4–8), yet the tone is markedly different in that prayer. It contains the claim that the supplicants’ iniquity has already been expiated rather than the tremulous wish that the sin should be so expunged.⁴³ Whereas in verses 5–14, the first person plural voice seems to suggest the whole of the people Israel, in verse 16, the first person plural seems to refer to a part of the whole people. The Prayer of Azariah depicts the willingness of the three men to offer their lives for their Jewish practise as itself a kind of prayerful, sacrificial martyrdom on behalf of the whole people. Even if not completed by death, their internal disposi-

⁴¹ For a discussion of the sacrificial system, see J. Milgrom, *Studies in Cultic Theology and Terminology* (SJLA 36; Leiden: Brill, 1983) and more recently his three-volume commentary on Leviticus in the Anchor Bible series.

⁴² Translation of E. Tigchelaar and F. García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition Vol. 2 4Q274–11Q31* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 1173.

⁴³ E. Chazon, “The *Words of the Luminaries* and Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Times,” in *Seeking the Favor of God Vol. 2*, 181–182.

tion permits the sacrifice of martyrdom to be efficacious, similar to the efficacy of Abraham's offering of Isaac in the view of Philo (*De Abr* 177).⁴⁴ Both prayers express an interior disposition of humility as does the Chronicler's version of Solomon's prayer in 2 Chr 7:14.

(17) Verse 17 is the most problematic verse of the prayer from a textual standpoint.

The OG provides the following readings for the last half of the verse:

καὶ ἐξιλάσσαι ὄπισθὲν σου

ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν αἰσχύνη τοῖς πεποιθόσιν ἐπὶ σοί,

καὶ τελειώσαι ὄπισθὲν σου (so Ms 88 and SyH; 967 omits ὄπισθὲν σου)

Theodotion offers the following:

καὶ ἐκτελέσαι ὄπισθὲν σου,

ὅτι οὐκ ἔσται αἰσχύνη τοῖς πεποιθόσιν ἐπὶ σοί

Dittography or some other scribal error appears to have taken place in the OG, perhaps involving a duplicative writing of ὄπισθὲν σου at the end of the verse, though the exact process is unclear. Was one tradition reliant on the other or were both or one working from a Semitic original? The signs are ambiguous. Theodotion uses the aorist active infinitive of the verb ἐκτελέω in the middle of the verse and the OG the aorist active infinitive of the verb τελειόω at the end of the verse with the same phrase ὄπισθὲν σου following (missing in Pap. 967). Bennett suggests that Theodotion's phrase ἐκτελέσαι ὄπισθὲν σου, a difficult phrase which does not lend itself to easy translation, renders the Hebrew מלא אחר־י literally (Num 14:24, 32:11, Deut 1:36, Jos 14:8, 14).⁴⁵ Bennett's suggestion is itself problematic however, because the Hebrew expression is nowhere else rendered this way in the Greek. Bennett further suggests that the OG which he translates "to complete after you," was originally a marginal correction to the extant ἐξιλάσσαι subsequently placed at the end of the verse, but there is no support for his suggestion. Perhaps more likely is that Theodotion, using the OG, tried to make sense of the OG's phrase καὶ ἐξιλάσσαι ὄπισθὲν σου and introduced a new error in the process. In his translation, Bennett opts for the ordering of phrases in Theodotion omitting the OG phrase καὶ ἐξιλάσσαι ὄπισθὲν σου and translates verse 17 "like as in the burnt offerings of rams and bullocks, and like as in ten thousands of fat lambs; so let our sacrifice be in thy sight this day, and *grant* that we may wholly *go* after thee, for they shall not be ashamed that put their trust in thee." He italicises the words

⁴⁴ See the discussion of Collins, *Daniel*, 201.

⁴⁵ Bennett, "The Prayer of Azariah," 634.

that he has provided which are not contained in the Greek. Several commentators have followed him in this or similar translations.⁴⁶ Collins offers a more cogent suggestion that the OG ἐξιλάσαι ὀπισθέν σου may represent a translation of the Hebrew כפר בעד though he opts ultimately for Koch's argument that the verb is a corrupted attempt to render the Hebrew רצון "favour" which is used for the acceptance of sacrifices (e.g., Lev 1:3).⁴⁷ Collins was influenced also by the Aramaic version in which לרעוא מן קדמך brings the wording closer to sacrificial terminology than Bennett's proposal. As Collins points out, Aramaic רעוא corresponds to Hebrew רצון "favour," which is used for the acceptance of sacrifice (e.g., Lev 1:3).⁴⁸ The Collins and Koch textual solution has in its favour the fact that it retains the priestly and sacrificial tone of the verse, yet one point further can be said in support of Collins's initial suggestion. Given the high degree of appropriation of scriptural language in the prayer, it is worth noting that the infinitive ἐξιλάσαι appears in only two other places, Lev 9:7 and Num 17:11, both passages in which Moses is giving Aaron instruction to make atonement for the people through sacrifice. Such a resonance would reinforce the interpretation offered here that the three men themselves implicitly adopt the role of priests making atoning sacrifices on behalf of the people.

While it is impossible to make complete sense of the Greek in Pr Azar 16, more emphasis might be placed on the sacrificial semantic field of the verb τελειόω that appears at the end of the OG. The notion of perfection or completion, whether in nominal, verbal, or adjectival forms, is used in the Septuagint in priestly contexts. In particular, the infinitival form of this verb appears in Exod 29:29, 33 in which it refers to the ordination of the Aaronide priest, which in Hebrew is rendered למלא את ידם. The perfection of human life through sacrificial offering is a theme that is picked up in at least one later text, 4 Macc 7:9–15, which may reflect an interpretive reading of Dan 3. The passage offers parallels to the situation of substitutionary sacrifice that is portrayed in the Prayer of Azariah. In the larger context of 4 Macc 5:1–7:23, the old priest Eleazar is tortured and finally burned to death by Antiochus's henchmen for his refusal to transgress Jewish law by eating defiling food (4 Macc 5:3). Eleazar, likened to his priestly ancestor

⁴⁶ Gilbert, "La Prière d'Azarias," 573; Moore, *Additions*, 59. For a similar translation in German, see A. Bludau, *Die Alexandrinische Übersetzung des Buches Daniel und ihr Verhältnis zum masoretischen Text* (BS 2; Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1897), 160.

⁴⁷ Collins, *Daniel*, 202. For Koch's discussion, see *Deuterokanonische Zusätze zum Danielbuch II*, 55–59.

⁴⁸ Collins, *Daniel*, 202.

Aaron (4 Macc 7: 11–12), is said to have strengthened the people’s commitment to the law through his glorious endurance (4 Macc 7:9). In 4 Macc 7:15, Eleazar is said to have been perfected (ἐτελειώσεν) by the seal of a martyr’s death. Further, 4 Macc 7:18 goes on to extol his virtue as modeling a “whole heart,” again similar wording to that found in Pr Azar 18. The author of 4 Maccabees surely knew of Daniel, because the three in the fire are cited as an example to emulate by the mother of the seven martyred sons (4 Macc 16:21). Thus read in the context of a personal sacrificial offering and given the sense of ultimacy implicit in the word, the extant reading in the OG in which καὶ τελειώσαι appears at the end of the verse as a culmination of the thought is preferable to the placement in the middle of the verse as in Theodotion.

(18–19) A transition in the prayer is signalled in verse eighteen by the phrase “And now,” as do verse 8 (31) of the OG and verse 10 (33) of the OG and Theodotion earlier in the prayer. Brooke notes a chiasmic structure in verses 10–22.⁴⁹ Both verse 10 and verse 18 begin with “and now” followed by a one-verse assessment of the current situation of the prayers, and then a three-verse petition (11–13, 19–21). The theme of shame is central to both petitions. Whereas the supplicants begin in a situation of shame (10), by following God faithfully, they can expunge their shame (17). The petition in verses 19–21 includes the request not to be put to shame (19), but instead asks God to put to shame and disgrace those who do harm to God’s servants (21). Because the Jews do not have a place to offer whole burnt offerings (ὀλοκαύτωσις), they now offer whole hearts (ὅλη καρδία) as a sufficient sacrifice to God as part of their worship. The language of following God with whole hearts is Deuteronomic and echoes wording of the Shema’ (Deut 6:5). The Septuagint does not always render the Deuteronomic phrase “whole heart” with the adjective ὅλος, but also with πᾶς (e.g., 2 Kgs 23: 3). So too, the sectarians at Qumran sought to follow God with “whole hearts” and the phrase appears in the opening lines of the *Serekh ha-Yahad*, the Rule of the Community, which signals that obedience to God by observance of the sect’s halakhot would ensure blessing.⁵⁰ In the Prayer

⁴⁹ Brooke, “Additions to Daniel,” 707.

⁵⁰ The *Hodayot* also contain similar language (1QH^a VI 26; VII 10 as does 4Q504 1–2 II 13). The book of Jubilees that seems to have been quite influential among Qumran sectarians also contains language and a prayer that uses wording from Psalm 50 LXX and the Shema’ (*Jub.* 1:15–21). The Qumran Community Rule is preserved in multiple copies, one copy that is almost complete from Cave 1 and ten incomplete copies from Cave 4; see S. Metso, *The Development of the Qumran Community Rule* (STDJ 21; Leiden: Brill, 1997).

of Azariah, a more conventional notion of Torah was more likely assumed. The significance of the phrase “seeking your face” suggests a return to God whose face is hidden intentionally from the people because of their sin.⁵¹

(20) Whereas in some Deuteronomic literature, God’s name is said to dwell in the sanctuary, God’s name can also be made glorious through the witness of God’s faithful servants who attest to it because Israel itself is a people called by God’s name (cf. Jer 14:9, Bar 2:15, 26, Sir 36:17). God’s “wonderful works” (θαυμάσια) are understood to comprise God’s various perceived interventions in Israel’s history, beginning with the constitutive liberation from the Egyptians and continuing with the expectation that Israel’s faithfulness could inspire more such marvels.

(21) This verse reflects the principle operative in much early Jewish literature that the crime corresponds in kind to divine punishment that is meted out in measure for measure fashion. This principle is embraced and developed further in rabbinic theology so that the means by which one sins becomes the means by which one is punished.⁵²

(22) Verse 22 offers two slightly different formulations of the monotheistic principle. The OG has μόνος Κύριος ὁ Θεός, “only the Lord is God,” and Theodotion reads Κύριος θεὸς μόνος, “The Lord is the only God.” The final verse of the prayer provides its entire *telos*, that the gentiles and perhaps also wayward Jews during the Hasmonean period should recognise the abiding principle of Israel’s monotheism: that there is only one God, the God of Israel. Thus this God who works miracles for Israel is deserving of glorification. In any challenge to Jewish observance from the Persian period onward, beginning with the clear expression of monotheism in Deutero-Isaiah, the affirmation is repeated in various contexts. For similar wording in prayers about divine uniqueness, see 1 Kgs 8:30, 8:43, 2 Kgs 19:19, Neh 9:6, Est 4:17, Sir 36:17, Bar 2:15, and Jdt 9:14.

⁵¹ S. Balentine, *The Hidden God: The Hiding of the Face of God in the Old Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983).

⁵² S. Lieberman, “On Sins and Their Punishments,” in his *Texts and Studies* (New York: Ktav, 1974), 29–56.

VII. The Prayer of Jacob

Introduction

Among the many incantations, spells, charms, and assorted recipes found in the Preisendanz edition of Greek magical papyri is Papyrus XXIIIb, on which is written, *inter alia*, the interesting *Prayer of Jacob*.¹ The papyrus was acquired in Cairo by W. Schubart in 1926 and is now to be found listed as catalogue number 13895 of the collection of the Staatliche Museen in Berlin. Measuring twenty-seven by thirty-eight centimeters, the papyrus is written in a “Schönschrift” according to the editor, similar to *Pap gr. Berol.* 43a. The papyrus contains two requests for a dream oracle, ll. 27–31; 32–35, as well as the *Prayer of Jacob* which comprises ll. 1–26 at the beginning of the papyrus.

The composition is distinctive because it is marked as a prayer (προσευχή) which suggests a clear genre. Within the collection of PGM, there are five additional texts in which the term prayer εὐχή occurs as the title of the composition, two hexametrical hymns and three formulae in prose.² Although the collection of which it is a part dates from the fourth century C.E., its cosmological and angelological perspectives make it consonant with earlier Jewish prayers and exegetical traditions. The prayer’s frequent use of the *voces mysticae*, or so-called “mystical” words, might suggest a date anywhere beginning from the first century C.E. onward when the use of the terms became widespread. These mysterious opaque words are rare in Greek tablets of the classical and Hellenistic periods, but became much more common in the Roman period.³ Morton Smith locates the prayer in

¹ K. Preisendanz and A. Henrichs, *Papyri Graecae Magicae: die griechischen Zauberpapyri* (2 vols.; 2nd ed.; Stuttgart: Teubner, 1973–74). The edition of PGM 22b is found in Volume 2, 148–149.

² This number is according to the count of Fritz Graf. He identifies a tripartite structure of these five prayers as conforming to the general structure of a Greek prayer, with an invocation, a narrative middle part, and a final section that contains the wish addressed to the divinity. “Prayer in Magic and Religious Ritual,” in *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion* (ed. C. Faraone and D. Obbink; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 189.

³ By the third century C.E., “they are everywhere in rampant profusion,” according to W. Brashear, “The Greek Magical Papyri: An Introduction and Survey: Annotated Bibliography (1928–1994),” in *ANRW II* 18.5:3380–3684 (3430).

the first century because it has no elements requiring a later date. Moreover, he argues that the fact that “Sabaoth” was still considered a secret name for Egyptian Jews suggests an early date because by the second century it was used frequently on amulets.⁴ In any case, a more precise dating for the prayer’s composition eludes us.

In terms of the afterlife of this prayer, there are no traces of its subsequent use nor indubitable references to the prayer in later Jewish or Christian literature. There are however several later prayers of Jacob, two of which seem to have circulated independently, one from a ninth century collection of midrash, another from an Ethiopic collection without a clear indication of date. A third prayer of Jacob is a Hebrew version found in the *Ladder of Jacob*. The first two mentioned do not resemble the text from PGM XXIIb beyond the pseudepigraphical title.⁵ The third prayer of Jacob is found in part of a collection of prayers in an eleventh century codex from the Cairo Genizah. The prayer of Jacob from the Cairo Genizah and PGM XXIIb share a similar combination of Jewish and pagan elements and ideas so that the two prayers might be considered “rather remote relatives.”⁶ The prayer from the Cairo Genizah appears to be a version of the composition in the first century *Ladder of Jacob* (*Lad. Jac.* 2:6–22). The fact that a prayer imbedded in a longer narrative appears in modified version as part

⁴ M. Smith, “The Jewish Elements in the Magical Papyri,” in *Studies in the Cult of Yahweh Volume Two: New Testament, Early Christianity, and Magic* (ed. S. J. D. Cohen; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 250.

⁵ One prayer of Jacob recorded in *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer* is understood by the *darshan* to precipitate the visit from the wrestling angel in Genesis 32. The text reads: “Sovereign of the Universe! Hast Thou not spoken thus unto me, “Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee”? (Gen 31:3) And behold, Esau the evil one, has now come to slay me; but I fear him and he does not fear Thee. Hence (the sages) say: “Do not fear an executive officer or a ruler, but (fear) a man who has no fear of Heaven. (Esau) stood by the way like a bear bereaved by man, to slay mother and child?” (ed. and trans. G. Friedlander; New York: Hermon, 1965; first edition: London, 1916). The second prayer noted by Charlesworth is an Ethiopic magical text entitled “the Language of Jacob” Ləššāna Ya’əqob in D. Lifchitz, *Textes éthiopiens magico-religieux* (Travaux et mémoires de l’Institut d’Ethnologie 38, Paris: Université de Paris, 1940), 241 in which the angel Gabriel reveals to Jacob while he was dwelling in “Syria” all the names of God: “By this prayer, Jacob was saved from the hand of his brother Esau. Likewise save me. . . .”

⁶ Such is the assessment of R. Leicht, “*Qedushah* and Prayer to Helios: A New Hebrew Version of an Apocryphal Prayer of Jacob,” *JSQ* 6 (1999): 167. The Hebrew version of the “Prayer of Jacob” was first published in the second volume of the *Magische Texte aus der Kairoer Geniza* (II, Nr. 22; ed. P. Schäfer and Sh. Shaked; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 27–78.

of a collection of independent prayers points to an artificial divide often made by scholars between “narrative prayers” and “liturgical prayers” especially if the latter are thought to preclude forms of worship, whether public or private, communal or individual, other than a fixed liturgical cycle for daily or festival use.⁷ The Prayer of Manasseh found elsewhere in this volume reflects the same dual context, both in a narrative framework in the *Didascalia* in an explicitly didactic context, and also in collections of odes used liturgically for communal public, and perhaps private, worship. The prayer found in the *Ladder of Jacob* and its later Cairo Genizah cousin contain similarities to the *Prayer of Jacob* of PGM XXIIb at a number of points which will be addressed in the commentary.

A. Prayer and “Magic”

How is the *Prayer of Jacob* to be understood in relation to the ancient category of “magic,” a form of religious practise that has suffered much misunderstanding and negative connotations? There is certainly a continuum between the so-called “magic” of the papyri compositions and other prayers in Graeco-Roman and Jewish-Christian antiquity.⁸ In the broadest terms, all seek to communicate with a range of powerful, if immaterial, spiritual forces to make change in human lives in the present or immediate future. Yet there are a variety of means for doing so using a wide range of ritual practices and discursive means, including both verbal language and visual language. Marcel Simon observed that Jewish magic in particular is characterised by three features: “a great respect for Hebrew phrases which were obviously not understood, but which seemed to the Jews to have magical power; second, a sense of the power of the divine name, an idea certainly

⁷ See for example, D. Falk, who has isolated formal features of prayers which he thinks explicitly suggest liturgical use; *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (STDJ 27; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 16–17. Falk builds on the insights of E. Chazon’s work, “4QDibHam: Liturgy or Literature?” *Revue de Qumran* 15 (1992): 447–55. The discovery of the alternate “prayer of Jacob” found in the genizah of a synagogue argues for its public use.

⁸ H. D. Betz makes this point well in his introduction to the translated collection of the Preisendanz volumes, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation including the Demotic Spells: vol. 1: Texts* (ed. Hans Dieter Betz; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986). See too the relevant remarks by J. Gager in the review of the Betz volume in *JR* 67 (1987): 80–86. Arthur Darby Nock had recognised this over a half century before; for a collection of Nock’s writings published after his death in 1963, see his *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972).

not original with Judaism; third, an overwhelming regard for angels and demons, which went over into a clear and elaborate angelolatry.”⁹ The *Prayer of Jacob* contains the first two elements: arcane and mysterious “Hebraic” words and a sense of the power of the divine name and its epithets, but we can observe two differences that distinguish the *Prayer of Jacob* both from other kinds of Jewish magic as Simon describes it and from other magical specimens in the PGM. The first relates to the addressee of the prayer. Whether or not Jews worshiped angels elsewhere, the *Prayer of Jacob* along with its formal designation as a prayer, a *euche*, addresses the God of Israel, rather than other intermediary angelic figures or Graeco-Roman gods.¹⁰ Graf states that the Greek magical prayers were also accompanied by sacrifices, and therein lies a distinction not only with the *Prayer of Jacob* but with other early Jewish prayers as well, in which no sacrifice is concurrently or subsequently offered.¹¹ A second distinction thus relates to an expectation connected with Greek magical prayers. The *Prayer of Jacob* was to have been recited by the one praying, but with no culminating sacrifice mentioned as part of the ritual either by the one offering the prayer or the *magos* who would have officiated.

The importance of including the *Prayer of Jacob* in this volume is to affirm a recognisably popular prayer practice with magical elements alongside other more institutionalised and public forms of prayer, such as are reflected in the Prayer of Manasseh or the Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers. Our understanding of contemporary religious practise in antiquity is distorted because of limited sources available to modern scholars to reconstruct a picture of religion in antiquity, not to mention the compartmentalisation of so many sources into artificial categories such as “magical texts” and “pseudepigrapha” not to mention “Bible.” The majority of ancient tex-

⁹ Simon, *Verus Israel*, 407 cited in E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols II*, 161.

¹⁰ According to E. R. Goodenough, the worship of angels might be considered to support Aristides’ statement that the religious activity of the Jews “was directed to angels rather than to God,” as well as for the statement of the Kerygma Petri that Jewish cultic practises were directed to “angels and archangels, to the months and the moon.” Aristides, *Apol.*, xiv, 4; Kerygma cited in Clem. Alex. *Strom.* VI, v, 41; cited in Goodenough’s *Jewish Symbols II*, 161.

¹¹ Indeed, occasional mentions that a prayer is offered at the time of the evening sacrifice, such as in Jdt 9:1, Ezra 9:4–5, Dan 9:21, or as in Ps 140:2 (LXX), “May my prayer be set forth before you as incense and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice” suggest that prayer was understood as either a substitution for or complement to sacrifice, but sacrifice was not made in order to actualise the prayer in some way as a specific part of the ritual performance.

tual sources available to modern scholars found in scripture and extra-biblical literature were shaped by the intellectual and cultural elite just as the archaeological remains of the official state cults overshadow other private, folk, or more covert religious practises that did not leave such big cultural footprints. Thus much pertinent information about religious culture in antiquity is forever effaced for us, but the prevalence of magic as a form of private individual religion throughout the Mediterranean allows us a window into more popular forms of religious practise.

Like other collections of magical recipes, PGM XXIIb was likely originally the property of a professional ritual expert, perhaps a priest associated with a temple or an itinerant “magician,” who would have chosen from his collection to suit the needs and desires of his various clients.¹² There is no agreement on the exact purveyor of this particular spellbook, but while the *magos* who may have owned and wielded the collection of spells and incantations may have been a socially marginal figure, he or she nonetheless represented an elite expertise not available to the illiterate or minimally literate clients who purchased the service. Thus the professional oral mediation of the spells should be borne in mind as well as the popular use of the prayer. The ritual context for offering this prayer is elusive other than the final instruction to repeat the prayer seven times while facing north and east. That noted, the exact means of delivery no doubt was different for different circumstances and varied clients. Was the prayer offered on behalf of a client in the same way in which other spells and adjurations and so on were performed by a specialist? If so, was the person Jewish, or of some other ethnicity, or should we understand the prayer to have been in the collection for use on behalf of Jewish clients? The prayer itself indicates that the person offering the prayer should be “from the nation of Israel” (ἐκ τοῦ γένους Ἰσραήλ) which would argue in favor of its use for Jewish clients. As Betz suggests, the magicians using the spells may have been associated with temples of Egyptian and Greek deities, but he is rightly cautious about making definitive claims in this regard. Although Betz is guilty of overstatement when he describes the syncretism of the PGM as in effect amounting to a new religion, “displaying unified religious attitudes and beliefs,” his obser-

¹² David Frankfurter argues that within Roman Egypt, the “magician” (Greek *magos*) was essentially the priest (*bry-tp*) in part owing to the requirement of ritual expertise and scribal literacy incumbent upon this figure. On the problematic ideal type of magician in classical scholarship on magic, see Frankfurter, “Ritual Expertise in Roman Egypt and the Problem of the Category of ‘Magician’,” in *Envisioning Magic: A Princeton Seminar and Symposium* (ed. P. Schäfer and H. G. Kippenberg; *NumenSup* 75; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 115–135.

vation about the character of religion in antiquity is helpful: “Whether the gods are old or new, whether they come from Egyptian, Greek, Jewish, or Christian traditions, religion is regarded as nothing but the awareness of a reaction against our dependency on the unfathomable scramble of energies coming out of the universe.”¹³ The *Prayer of Jacob* also represents such a syncretism both in terms of formal elements and ideas it contains from the broader religious context of Egypt, Greece, and Babylon. The appearance of formulaic phrases of adjuration, “I call upon you” and “I adjure you,” and the mention of Helios are just a few indications that the prayer draws on a long tradition of Greek magical practise.

Another factor mitigating the likelihood that the *magos* in possession of the collection was Jewish is the fact that the Jewish God was thought to be a very powerful one by non-Jews, judging from the appearance of his name in a large number of Greek magical papyri. His name outnumbers that of any other god in the papyri by a hefty margin.¹⁴ While the Greek magical papyri in general reflect a syncretism, they were strongly influenced by Jewish religion.

The distinction between religion and magic dates from Greek antiquity in the fifth-fourth centuries B.C.E. during the course of the Sophist enlightenment in Athens when certain magical activities were understood as a threat to the *polis* and civic religion.¹⁵ As an originally foreign (Persian) import, the special practices of magicians were conceived as hostile to Greek tradition. In more recent times, the denigrating view of magic was reinscribed in the work of Sir James Frazer, who characterised magic as a kind of manipulation of the deity in order to solve a range of common human problems including the acquisition of love, wealth, health, fame, control over other persons, while understanding religion as simply a meek submission to these powers. This false dichotomy has been abandoned in current scholarship on magic, although no consensus remains on its definition. Indeed, magic may best be understood as an “outsider” word for practises and beliefs

¹³ Betz, *Greek Magical Papyri*, xlvi-xlvii.

¹⁴ According to Morton Smith, the ratio was three to one. Smith also quotes Origen in his recognition that magical rites throughout the Mediterranean world invoked demons through . . . “the god of Abraham and the god of Isaac and the god of Jacob,” but . . . so do almost all those who practice spells and magic rites, for this sort of title for God is found very often in the books of the magi.” [C. *Cels* IV.33] *Jesus the Magician* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1978), 73.

¹⁵ F. Graf, “Excluding the Charming: The Development of the Greek Concept of Magic,” in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (ed. M. Meyer and P. Mirecki; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 30.

deemed unacceptable to the one who uses the term.¹⁶ Because of its common coinage, particularly as part of the name for a collection of Greek ritual texts, the term is employed here though advisedly.

B. *Pseudepigraphy and the Prayer of Jacob*

In what sense can the prayer be understood as the prayer “of Jacob”? That is to say, what was the role of the pseudepigraphical attribution? A first observation is that this is the chief way in which the prayer can be thought to be “scripturalised.” The text draws on ideas from scripture in its understanding of the relation of God to the patriarchs as well as an understanding of God as king enthroned on Mt. Sinai, yet in contrast to other prayers treated in this volume, the *Prayer of Jacob* does not rely heavily on scriptural wording in its formulations.

There are at least two ways in which we may think of this prayer as “Jacob’s” in light of the Jacob tradition in scripture and in early Jewish tradition. Already in the books that would become the Hebrew Bible, Jacob is often understood as a cipher for the people of Israel as a whole (Deut 32:9, Jer 10:25, 30:7, Isa 10:21, 17:4, Ps 44:5). While during the pre-exilic history of Israel, a reference to Jacob or Israel could be understood as synonymous with the northern kingdom of Israel (Hos 12:5; Amos 7:2, 5), in the post-exilic and Second Temple periods both names Jacob and Israel were used quite often in parallel clauses in Hebrew poetry as references to the people. A set of examples comes from Second Isaiah (Isa 41:14, 43:1, 22–28, 44:21–22, 48:21, 49:5–6, 59:20) and the parallel Jacob/Israel is also frequent in the Psalms. References to Jacob as a reference to the nation as a whole are also found in the Dead Sea Scrolls (e.g., 4Q175 1:12, 17). Indeed, the Qumran community’s self-identification with Jacob was on more than one level because the group understood itself to have an angelic status.

The understanding of Jacob as representative of the people derives from both Jacob’s name change by the angel/God in Gen 32:28/Gen 35:10 and also Jacob’s status as the father of twelve sons who were the eponymous ancestors of the twelve tribes of Israel. Even within the Jacob narrative cycle (Gen 25:19–35: 29), Jacob is never understood entirely independently as an

¹⁶ On the problematic term “magic” and reflections on possible alternative scholarly constructions, see J. Z. Smith, “Trading Places,” in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, 13–27.

individual. His birth narrative and struggle in the womb with Esau in Genesis 25 thus proleptically anticipates the Israelites' later struggle with the Edomites. So too, his name change at the end of the cycle reflects his symbolic stature in the later Israelite and Jewish tradition. The *Prayer of Jacob* might accordingly be understood as a prayer of Israel without consideration for who is offering it from among the Jewish people. If the pseudepigraphon is understood in that way, then the reference to the one who prays as being "from the stock of Israel" (1.19) (ἐκ τοῦ γένους Ἰσραήλ) would lend itself to being read simply as a Jewish person.

Related to this conception of the "*Prayer of Jacob*" as a prayer of any Jew is the notion also attested in the prayer that the person offering it seems to have been transformed into an angelic being, an "earthly angel," (ἄγγελον ἐπίγειον), moreover, one who is immortal as a gift from God (ἀθάνατον γενόμενον). The context for understanding Jacob as an angelic figure derives from late post-exilic interpretive traditions related to Genesis 28 and 32 that can be seen in a range of Jewish texts as well as Philo.¹⁷ A somewhat lengthier exposition on this interpretive nexus is found in an Appendix on the *Prayer of Joseph* in this volume. In the scriptural account in Genesis, Jacob is always bumping into angels. In the interpretive traditions relating to Jacob including the *Prayer of Jacob* and the *Prayer of Joseph*, Jacob himself becomes one. The promise of angelic transformation thus augured rich returns not only for the one offering the prayer but perhaps also handsome professional fees for the *magos* mediating the divine powers.

C. Note on Translation

The translation is based on the edition of Preisendanz which offers the only publication of the Greek text. Preisendanz provided some reconstructions which appear in brackets in the translation. Instances of questionable reconstructions or textual difficulty receive comment in the notes below. The lineation of the papyrus does not follow syntactical shifts in the prayer. We have thus provided our own verse numbers, for the sake of convenience following those of Charlesworth's translation in *OTP*, although Charlesworth omitted the *voces mysticae*. The *voces* in fact comprise a significant

¹⁷ On the angelomorphic understanding of Jacob/Israel as an angel in late Second Temple Jewish literature, see especially K. Sullivan, *Wrestling with Angels: A Study of the Relationship between Angels and Humans in Ancient Jewish Literature and the New Testament* (AGJU 55; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 98–103.

amount of text so the omission changes the character of the prayer markedly. The translation also includes the five-line markers of the edition of Preisendanz indicated in parentheses appearing in the margin and as two slashes within the translated text (//). Individual lines from Preisendanz are marked by a single slash (/).

D. Bibliography

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Commentary

Translation

- (1) 1. Prayer of Jacob:/ “O Father of the patriarchs, Father of All,
[Father] of the [cosmic] powers,
2. [Creator of all] ..., / Creator of angels and archangels, the Creator
of the sa[ving] names./
3. I summon you.
4. Father of all powers,
Father of the entire cosmos,
- (5) and of all // creation both inhabited and uninhabited, to whom the
[cherubim] are subjected,
5. The One [who] favoured Abraam by [giving the] kingdom [to him]
...:
6. Hear me,
O God of the powers,
7. O [God] of angels [and] archangels, O King] .../
LELEACH ... AROACH TOU ... ACHABOL... O ... YRAM TOU
.... BOACH KA .../
TH ...RA ... CHACH MARIROK ... YRAM... ITHTH ... SESOIK. //
- (10) 8. the one enthroned upon holy Mount Sinai ... I .. BO .. ATHEM /
The one enthroned upon the sea; ...
EA ... BL ... D.... K ...E... THES .. PARACHTHE ...,
the one enthroned upon the serpentine gods;
the [god enthroned] u[pon / the s]un, IAO
the one enthroned upon [...] TA...O.. I ...CH
the one enthroned upon the ... THE .. / ...MA .. SI, ABRIEL LOUEL
[...]M ..
.. the] resting chamber of the ch[erubim] ...]CHIREOZ I ..
// ..
- (15) 9. / to the ages of ages, O God, .
ABAOTH....ABRATHIAOTH , [SA]BA[OTH, A]DONAI, ASTRA
... E/
K]AI BRILEONAI [A]DONAI/ CHA .. AOTH,

O Lord of All

10. I call upon you

11. who give power o[ver the De]ep

[to those] above, and to those below, and to those under the earth;

12. hear the one who has [this] prayer,

13. O Lord God of the Hebrews, EPAGAEL ALAMN, of whom is [the] eternal power, ELOEL SOUEL.

14. Maintain the one who possesses this prayer, who is from
(20) the stock of Israel and from those

/ who have been favoured by you, O God of gods,

15. who has the secret name, SABAOOTH ... I ...CH, God of gods,
amen, amen.

16. who produces the snow, over the stars, beyond the ages, [and]
who constantly traverses [the cosmos], and who causes the fixed and
movable stars to pursue all things by your creative activity.

17. Fill me with wisdom.

Empower me, Master;

18. Fill my heart with good, Master,

as an earthly angel,

(25) as one who has become/immortal, as one who has received this
gift from you, Amen, amen”

Say the [Prayer of] Jacob seven times facing north and east.

General Comment

The contents of the prayer are rhythmically repetitive in form. The body of the prayer is structured in four parts of unequal length. The first part (verses 1–5) contains four invocations; the second part (verses 6–11) consists of three petitions, *voces mysticae* and an additional invocation; the third part (verses 12–13) is an injunction; the fourth part (verses 14–18a) includes four petitions and an invocation; and the final part of the composition (18b) contains instructions for performing the rite. The structure of the *Prayer of Jacob* (according to our verses rather than papyrus lines) is as follows:

A. Superscription/attribution and invocation of God (1–2)

Summons of God (3)

Additional invocation (4–5)

B. Petition to hear (6)

Alternation of additional invocations and *voces mysticae* (7–9)

- Summons of God (10)
- Additional invocation (11)
- C. Petition to hear (12)
 - Invocation and *vores mysticae* (13)
- D. Petition (14a)
 - Additional invocation (14b–16)
 - Three petitions and closing formula (17–18a)
- E. Instructions for recitation (18b)

Notes

(1) The pseudepigraphical heading of the composition immediately orients its audience to the Jewish tradition to which it should be related: a prayer of the patriarch Jacob. As described above, the girth of the interpretative tradition related to Jacob shapes the reception of the prayer and the expectation of the one offering the prayer.

The prayer begins with two sets of addresses to God, a set of three invocations to God as “Father of x,” and a set of three to God as “Creator of x.” The two invocations include both particular elements linked to Israel’s history and cosmic or universal elements. The first series suggests a progression from a more local reference to God as Father of the patriarchs, seemingly Israel’s historical ancestors, to a more global and comprehensive Father of all, in addressing God as the Father of the ethereal cosmic powers. There is a shift from the use of the vocative in the first address to “Father” to the two subsequent addresses to “Father” which occur in the nominative case.¹⁸ The idea of God as father of the patriarchs, which stood in some tension in the Hebrew Bible to the theological perspective of God as the father of the dynastic Davidic monarch (e.g., Ps 2:7), is distinctive to Israel. Implicit within the epithet is an affirmation of YHWH’s unique covenant relationship to the nation, appearing in the scriptural tradition first as a promise to Abraham (Gen 12:2–3) and then culminating in the covenant with the Israelite people at Sinai. The prayer only implicitly hints at the full scope of the covenantal history through the use of “Father” though the divine promise to Abraam will also make an appearance.

“Father of the patriarchs”: The more common address in the LXX and in prayer is “God of our ancestors/fathers” (ὁ θεὸς τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν)

¹⁸ On this grammatical feature, known as the *nominativus pro vocativo*, see N. Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 3: *Syntax*, (Edinburgh: Clark, 1963), 34–35.

or “God of our fathers” with the mention of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, although the ancestors are also referred to as patriarchs (cf. 4 Macc 7:19, 16:25; Heb 7:4, Acts 7:8). The invocation of God as Father is rare in the Hebrew scriptures, though it becomes increasingly used in the exilic and postexilic period. It is common in both the New Testament and rabbinic literature.¹⁹ The pseudepigraphal Jacob is thus presumably one of the patriarchs mentioned, although cf. Jacob’s prayer of Gen 32:9 which invokes the “God of my father Abraham and the God of my father Isaac.” πατήρ ὅλων The address to God as “father of all” is not found in the LXX, although in the two prayers in 3 Maccabees, 3 Macc 2:3 and 6:9, one of God’s epithets is “governor of all” and “protector of all.” So too, the invocation to God in a prayer by the priests in 2 Macc 14:35 begins, “Lord of all.” The prayer at the end of *Poimandres* begins with ἅγιος ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατήρ τῶν ὅλων (*Corp. Herm.* 1, 31.1).²⁰ Cf. also “the Master of all” (ὁ πάντων δεσπότης) in Wis 6:7 and 8:3. The prayer in 3 Macc 2:21 includes the epithet “Forefather” (προπάτωρ) but the term does not reflect the concern for ancestry as in the invocation in the *Prayer of Jacob*. A particular summons of “father of all” is not common although cf. Rom 4:16, Eph 4:6 which mention “father of all,” πάντων, rather than providing an ancestral sense.

(2) “Creator of the angels and archangels”: Although no angels are here named, the division of the angelic hosts into two groups reflects a hierarchy of heavenly beings presupposing a somewhat developed angelology.²¹ According to Dan 7:10 which is part of a throne vision of God with his celestial court, there was a cast of thousands of angels. Compare also the prayer of Baruch, 2 *Bar.* 48:10 in which “innumerable hosts” are said to stand before God. Other Jewish literature more explicitly delineates the hierarchy of angels, such as *Jub.* 2:2, which as a part of recounting God’s creation describes the two great kinds of angels, angels of presence and angels of sanctification, as well as lesser kinds of angels with particular ministries

¹⁹ See the discussion of E. Schuller, “The Psalm of 4Q372 1 Within the Context of Second Temple Prayer,” *CBQ* 54 (1992): 75–79.

²⁰ Cf. the note of A. D. Nock and A.-J. Festugière, *Hermès Trismégiste Poimandrès Corpus Hermeticum* tome I: *Traité I–XII* (Paris: Société d’édition ‘Les Belles Lettres’, second edition, 1960), 18.

²¹ The literature on various aspects of angelology in early Judaism and Christianity has burgeoned in recent years. The era of angels in modern scholarship was ushered in by P. Schäfer’s seminal book, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen: Untersuchungen zur rabbinischen Engelvorstellung* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1975). Much relevant bibliography is included in K. Sullivan, *Wrestling with Angels*.

related to the activities of the cosmos. The archangels mentioned in the *Prayer of Jacob* elsewhere in Jewish literature refer to a group usually of four or seven angels who are set above the others. Some sources provide names for those at the top of the hierarchy.²² The magical papyri are rife with angels.

(3) The call, “I summon you,” by the one who offers the prayer which uses the verb *καλέω* is a phrase at home in other Greek adjurations, but it is at odds with customary scriptural expressions in which it is God who summons humans (Exod 19:20, Isa 48: 12, Jer 32: 29, Jer 42:17) rather than *vice versa*. In scripture, the one who calls, whether that be God or a human being, has power or some kind of leadership role over the ones called. In the psalms, humans “call upon” God using either the verb *ἐπικαλέω* (Pss 13:4, 17:4, 52:5, and cf. Isa 55:6) or *κράζω* (Pss 16:6, 55:16, 141:1). Only one Hebrew verb (קָרָא) underlies the two Greek verbs commonly used to translate “call” or “cry.” It is also notable that in one case in the Hebrew where God accuses Jacob of not calling out to him (Isa 43: 22), the Greek switches the subject, so that God says “I did not call you, Jacob” (οὐ νῦν ἐκάλεσά σε Ιακωβ).

(4) The renewed address to “Father of all powers” in verse 4 is a summary of the first set of invocations to God, which reinforces the initial address, attributing to Israel’s God in no uncertain terms a universal, cosmic omnipotence. The “powers” designates in particular angelic and supernatural beings, both good and bad. This is the second of three references to the “powers” in the prayer (cf. vv. 1, 7) with a subsequent echo in the petitioner’s request to be empowered in v. 17. “Father of the powers of the cosmos”: The concept of cosmic “powers” is construed in a different way from that found in the Hebrew Bible, but in a similar way to that found in other, predominantly Greek, Jewish literature (e.g., Philo, *Conf.* 171, *Mut.* 59; 2 *En.* 20:1, 1 *En.* 41:9, 61:10, *T. Levi* 3:8, *T. Sol.* 8:2, 18:2, 20:15) and elsewhere in the Greek magical papyri e.g., *PGM* 1.215; 3.35; 4.1193, 1275, 1599, 2198–99) and other pagan literature, as well as the New Testament, especially Ephesians in which the “principalities and powers” are viewed

²² Cf. for example 1 *En.* 71:8–13 which mentions the four archangels: Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Phanuel and ten million and a hundred thousand (!) angels. On the development of angelologies in early Judaism with particular reference to the origins of the names of the angels, see S. Olyan, *A Thousand Thousands Served Him: Exegesis and the Naming of Angels in Ancient Judaism* (TSAJ 36; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1993) and M. Mach, *Entwicklungsstadien des jüdischen Engelglaubens in vor-rabbinischer Zeit* (TSAJ 34; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1992).

negatively.²³ The reference to a creation that is both inhabited and uninhabited is a commonly held view in Greek antiquity that the world was divided into different regions. Some zones were simply not capable of sustaining life either because of extreme heat or cold, were uninhabitable (another sense of the Greek *δοίκητος*) and thus were uninhabited.²⁴

If indeed Preisendanz's reconstruction of "cherubim" is correct on the basis of one letter, the initial *chi*, the characterisation of the cherubim here is somewhat unusual. The idea that the cherubim are subjected to God seems to be an interpretive development already within scripture. The cherubim figure in some of the oldest Israelite literature. God placed cherubim at the entrance to Eden to guard it, according to the J creation narrative (Gen 3:24), but they are connected most closely with the iconography of the ark, a cult object depicted as holding the tablets of the law (Exod 25:18–19) which was stored in the Jerusalem temple.²⁵ Cherubim are depicted variously in the Bible just as they appear in variant forms in the iconography of the ancient Near East, particularly Assyria, but with one common feature: they all have wings. Images of cherubim were said to have been woven into the curtains of the wilderness tabernacle (Exod 36:8, 35). Winged cherubim also decorated the walls of the Temple. The ark was understood as the cherubim throne of God in the Temple of Jerusalem, undergirding a theology of divine and human kingship in ancient Israel (1 Kgs 6:26–28; 1 Kgs 8:6–7). According to Ezekiel 10, God's cherubim throne was understood to relocate physically to Babylon after the temple in Jerusalem was desecrated and destroyed with an eventual return of the divine glory envisioned in the future when the Temple would be restored (Ezekiel 41, 43). Since the cherubim literally play a supporting role for the throne during the exit of the divine king in Ezekiel, the origins of their being "subject" to God may lie here. In Second Temple literature, the notion of the cherubim's supporting role for the throne is frequent (see the prayer in the *Lad. Jac.* 2:7; *T. Ab.* 10:1; *1 En.* 14:12).

(5) The mention of Abraham brings to two the number of patriarchs mentioned by name in the prayer. Isaac is omitted but this is not too surprising given his lesser role as "middle man" in the Genesis narratives and in interpretive traditions generally. The Greek verb *χαρίζομαι* does not ap-

²³ C. Arnold, "Principalities and Powers" *ABD* 5:467. Indeed, Ephesus itself had a reputation for magic as reflected by the account of Paul's burning of magical books in Acts 19:19.

²⁴ On this idea, see the discussion of Aristotle, *Meteorologica* 2.5 (362b1–9).

²⁵ M. Haran, *Temples and Temple Service in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978).

pear in the Septuagint in connection with God's blessing to Abraham, indeed the verb occurs only in Est 8:7, Sir 12:3, as well as a number of occurrences in 2–4 Maccabees. The idea that God gave Abraham a kingdom is nowhere stated in scripture. One might expect to see David mentioned in this connection. Israel's longest dynastic kingship is located within the tribe of Judah, not generically through Abraham. The promise given to Abraham in Genesis never exceeds the promise of land, multiple descendants, and a blessed name. The phrase may be an eschatological statement referring to a fulfilled promise to Abraham's descendants, however, because in Gen 15:18 God promises territory that stretches from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates, which was effectively an idealised mapping of the Davidic-Solomonic empire (cf. 2 Sam 8:3, 1 Kgs 4:21, 8:65).

Verses 1–5 form a chiasm of sorts. The verses begin and end with references to Israel's particular traditions, an implicit reference to the covenant with the fathers and the promise to Abraam of a kingdom. In the center of the chiastic structure is the first person summons to God. On either side of the summons are affirmations of God as creator of all, of the angelic hosts and the entire cosmos.

(6–7) Verse 6 initiates the first petition after the invocation of God, the first of two imperatives included in this prayer for God to hear the supplicant. Implicit in the request to hear is perhaps the understandable desire on the part of the one praying for God to attend to or to respond to the prayer. In other words, the implicit meaning of “hear” in this case would be “do not ignore.” The verb is a common one in all Greek petitional prayers.

“LELEACH ...” Verse 7 includes the first series of mysterious words and vocables.²⁶ The precise nature and role of these so-called *vores magicae* continue to be debated.²⁷ Their appearance and ritual use is rooted in the

²⁶ For a lengthy glossary of *vores magicae* which the compiler describes as “modest” and readily admits is incomplete, see W. Brashear, “The Greek Magical Papyri,” ANRW II 18.5:3576–3603.

²⁷ H. S. Versnel offers a very good discussion of the phenomenon with copious bibliographical information in the notes; “The Poetics of the Magical Charm: An Essay in the Power of Words,” in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World* (ed. P. Mirecki and M. Meyer; RGRW 141; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 93–158. For some other recent treatments, see F. Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World*, 218–222; D. Frankfurter, “The Magic of Writing and the Writing of Magic: The Power of the Word in Egyptian and Greek Traditions,” *Helios* 21 (1994): 189–221; J. Gager, *Curse Tablets*, 5–12; R. Kotansky in *Magika Hiera*, 110–112; and P. van der Horst, “The Great Magical Papyrus of Paris (PGM IV) and the Bible,” in *Jews and Christians in Their Graeco-Roman Context: Selected Essays on Early Judaism, Samaritanism, Hellenism, and Christianity* (WUNT 196; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 2006), 269–79.

ancient belief in the inherent power of words.²⁸ In the practice of magic in the Graeco-Roman world, foreign words in particular were thought to possess a special potency. A question remains whether or not they contain any semantic meaning that constitutes communication. Fritz Graf understands the *voces* as derived from foreign languages, predominantly Near Eastern ones, and by using these foreign god names, the magician is displaying secret knowledge that allows special communication with the deities addressed. Graf claims their function is clear, to “serve as the credentials, an ample display of knowledge,” of the practitioner, the magician.²⁹ Versnel, on the other hand, suggests that they are non-referential nonsense: “The only thing they refer to is themselves.” Gideon Bohak has recently cautioned against a trend to see the many unintelligible words in the *voces* as reflecting an underlying Hebrew.³⁰ A much more appreciative treatment of the *voces* and their role in Graeco-Roman antiquity is offered by Patricia Cox Miller, who understands such wording as a means of speaking to the gods in the gods’ own language, “alphabetic nonsense – rhythmic, incantatory, persuasive.”³¹

From antiquity, the use of foreign or foreign-sounding words has been suspect and “hocus pocus” is a living lexical legacy of that suspicion in the English-speaking world. Long ago, Porphyry criticised the third-fourth century Neoplatonist Iamblichus in his practise of *theurgia*, calling it “magic” (γοήτεια) in part for its uses of such *onomata barbara*: “What, after all is the sense of these meaningless words, and why are the foreign ones preferred to our own?”³² Whatever the case, it is clear there are different types

²⁸ A classic biblical example of the power of words once uttered appears in the story of Jacob’s theft of his brother Esau’s blessing in Genesis 27. Once Isaac has pronounced the blessing of the first-born over Jacob, he cannot retract its effects, and Esau only receives a grim “blessing” for the future (Gen 27:39–40).

²⁹ Graf, *Magic*, 219. So too, John Gager understands the *voces mysticae* as an evolved development of the six Greek terms comprising the *ephesia grammata*, which were first attested in the fourth century B.C.E.; *Curse Tablets*, 5. S. Tambiah, “The Magical Power of Words,” *Man* 3 (1968): 175–208.

³⁰ G. Bohak, “Hebrew, Hebrew Everywhere? Notes on the Interpretation of *Voces Magicae*,” in *Prayer, Magic, and the Stars in the Ancient and Late Antique World* (ed. S. Noegel, J. Walker, and B. Wheeler; University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), 69–82.

³¹ P. Cox Miller, “In Praise of Nonsense,” in *Classical Mediterranean Spirituality: Egyptian, Greek, Roman* (ed. A. H. Armstrong; London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), 481–505 [495].

³² Porphyry, in his letter to Anebo, ed. by A. R. Sodano, *Lettera ad Anebo* (Naples: l’Arte Tipografica 1958) 22, cited in Versnel, “The Poetics of the Magical Charm,” 109.

of speech within the *voces magicae* in our prayer. Some of the vocables are unintelligible, although they may represent an abbreviation of some sort; Hebrew words ending in the theophoric element *-el* as well as the nominal feminine plural ending *-oth*. It seems likely that the words were meant to be understood by some beings, but in the case of the *Prayer of Jacob*, there are no angels or demons being addressed, only the God of Israel whose mother tongue is Hebrew. It is impossible to decipher them all.

(8–9) Verses 8–9 contain a series of six participial phrases all beginning with the present middle participle, ὁ καθήμενος. Other Greek papyri include a similar formulation. So for example, *PGM* 35.1–42 invokes fourteen different heavenly beings who are enthroned/sit in a variety of places, and they are all conjured by the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The *Prayer of Jacob*, by contrast, is seemingly monotheistic and only Israel's God is described as being enthroned. In the Septuagint, the phrase ὁ καθήμενος ἐπὶ τῶν χερουβιν occurs five times (2 Kgs 19:15//Isa 37:16, Ps 79:2 (80), Ps 98:1 (99), LXX Dan 3:55, Ode 8:54) to describe the God of Israel's enthronement on his cherubim seat in the Jerusalem temple. God is also described as enthroned in Sir 1:8 and Bar 3:3 although the temple is not explicitly mentioned in those contexts.

The idea of God's enthronement on "holy Mount Sinai" is worth noting because divine kingship in the Hebrew Bible is most straightforwardly associated with Mount Zion in Jerusalem as part of the royal Davidic covenant theology (cf. LXX Ps 47:2, 9, Ps 73: 2, 12, Ps 100:1–2). Yet there are also interconnections between the two mountain traditions which served to mesh the two covenant traditions.³³ Moreover, a notable passage in Ezekiel the Tragedian's *Exagoge* 68–82 describes Moses' dream vision of God on his throne at Sinai and Moses' own ascension to the throne and coronation.³⁴ The *Prayer of Jacob* connects Abraham with royal imagery rather than Moses as does the *Exagoge*, but both reflect considerable development and elaboration of the idea of the holy mountain found in the Septuagint.

"The one enthroned upon the sea": The end of the line is missing but the imagery of the extant portion is recognizable. The idea that God is enthroned upon the sea hearkens back to ancient Near Eastern influence on

³³ For a discussion of the interwoven connection between the two mountain traditions from a literary and theological perspective, see J. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985).

³⁴ R. Robertson, *OTP* II, 803–819 and see especially the discussion of P. van der Horst, "Moses' Throne Vision in Ezechiel the Dramatist," *JJS* 34 (1983): 21–29 and H. Jacobson, *The Exagoge of Ezekiel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 89–97.

Israelite religion. In the Babylonian creation epic, the *Enuma Elish*, the storm god Marduk defeats the sea god Tiamat, thus creating stability in the cosmos. As the culmination of the epic, Marduk is enthroned over Tiamat in his city. The Ugaritic Baal epic also recounts a similar theogony in which Baal defeats the sea god Yamm.³⁵ Such divine warrior-king imagery also pervades the Hebrew Bible, particularly in poetic-mythic accounts of YHWH's victory over Israel's opponents, the premier example being Exodus 15, the Song of the Sea.

Enthronement on the "serpentine gods" likely refers to the seraphim, creatures associated in the Hebrew Bible with the divine throne of God in the temple.³⁶ The theophanic vision of Isa 6:2–6 depicts them as winged serpentine creatures (cf. Isa 14:29; 30:6). Isaiah has partially assimilated them to the role of members of the divine council. Early Jewish literature of the Graeco-Roman period witnesses a marked increase in terms for angels, including the Hebrew *'elim* or "gods" particularly among the Dead Sea Scrolls.³⁷ The prayer thus may draw upon that use of the term for gods. Seraphim and cherubim are considered separate classes of angels in early Jewish literature, although the context here does not unequivocally point to this sense.

The fourth participial phrase is longer than the others. Preisendanz has reconstructed ὁ θεὸς as the initial part of the line and translated the phrase, "[Gott, der sitzt auf] dem Helios Iao" with Helios as a proper noun, naming the deity. This seems a more plausible reconstruction than that of R. Merkelbach, who suggests [ἐπὶ τοῦ]/[β]άτου Ἰάω "auf dem Dornstrauch (sitzest) Jahwe," understanding this to be the burning bush from which God spoke to Moses.³⁸ The Greek can be translated with one of two senses: "upon Helios-Iao" as a compound god-name or as "upon the sun, Iao". The ambiguity raises the question of the degree of the prayer's syncretistic theology. The solar cult certainly figures in treatments of early Israelite and post-exilic religion, but usually in a negative way. Ezek 8:16

³⁵ F. M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973).

³⁶ Goodenough translates the phrase as "upon the serpent-formed gods" though without clear explanation as to the origins of such an image, *Jewish Symbols* vol. 2, 203.

³⁷ M. Mach, "Angels," *EDSS* 1:24–27.

³⁸ R. Merkelbach does not provide any discussion of how he derives [β]άτου from the questionable letters on the papyrus but merely offers an alternate reading, "Gebat Jakobs," *Abrasax: Ausgewählte Papyri Religiösen und Magischen Inhalts Band 4: Exorzismen und Jüdisch/Christlich Beeinflusste Texte* (Papyrologica Coloniensia 17.4 Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1996), 106–107.

depicts sun worship by priests within the Temple as an idolatrous abomination; cf. also 2 Kgs 23: 5, 11 which describe part of King Josiah's cultic reforms and centralisation of worship in Jerusalem.³⁹ Such polemic suggests the attraction of some Israelite worshippers to the solar cult. One means by which elements of the tradition counteracted such threats was to assert unambiguously that Israel's God was the creator of the sun and stars (Gen 1:16, Ps 103:19, 148:3). Another means was to usurp the role of Helios by using solar epithets for Israel's God. Thus God is called a "sun and shield" in the Hebrew of Ps 84:11, though the LXX of 83:11 reflects a significantly different *Vorlage*. Mal 3:21 refers to God as the "sun of righteousness" which also reflects an appropriation of solar epithets. Yet for all this, nowhere in scripture is God said to be enthroned over Helios or the sun. The idea may reflect an appropriation of Helios that this prayer shares with many other texts of the PGM.⁴⁰ Moreover, the image of the chariot of Helios that appears in Palestinianian synagogue mosaics even well into the period of late Antiquity suggests that this iconography was found to be compatible with Jewish motifs derived from pre-Hellenistic Israelite religion.⁴¹

The bi-syllabic transcription of Israel's personal name for God, YHWH, "Iao" (Ἰαώ) was commonly used in the Greek magical papyri as well as on amulets, lamellae, and curse tablets and often followed by Sabaoth or Adonai.⁴² It rarely appears by itself as the only Jewish element in a passage.⁴³ Already in the fifth century B.C.E. Aramaic papyri from Elephantine provide evidence of a shortened form of the divine name written "yhw" and vocalised as "Yaho." The Dead Sea Scrolls provide ample evidence both

³⁹ M. Smith, "The Near Eastern Background of Solar Language for Yahweh," *JBL* 109 (1990) 29–39.

⁴⁰ See too M. Smith, "Helios in Palestine" in *New Testament, Early Christianity, and Magic* (vol. 2 of *Studies in the Cult of Yahweh*; RGRW 130; ed. Sh. Cohen; Leiden: Brill, 1996); orig. pub. in *Harry M. Orlinsky Volume (Erlsr 16)*; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1982), 199–214.

⁴¹ On the use of Helios within the context of imperial solar theology of the third and fourth centuries, see L. Levine, "Contextualizing Jewish Art: On the Synagogues at Hammat Tiberius and Sepphoris," in *Jewish Culture and Society Under the Christian Roman Empire* (ed. R. Kalmin and S. Schwartz; Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 91–132. The same volume also contains the relevant article by M. Goodman, "The Jewish Image of God in Late Antiquity," 133–148. Cf. also the analysis of the zodiac with Helios at its center in the synagogues of Hammat Tiberias, Beth Alpha, Na'aran, Ussefiyeh, and Sepphoris by Y. England who understands Helios as witness to various oaths and contracts made in the sanctuaries, "Mosaics as Midrash," *RRJ* 6 (2003): 189–214.

⁴² D. Aune, "Iao" *RAC* 17 (1996): 1–12.

⁴³ M. Smith, "Jewish Elements in the Magical Papyri," *Cult of Yahweh*, 246–249.

from special scribal practices relating to the tetragrammaton and severe penalties for misuse in uttering the divine name that the Qumran community had a heightened reverence for the divine name and its power.⁴⁴ The vast majority of Qumran texts are written in Hebrew or Aramaic, but in one of the small number of Greek texts found at Qumran, (4Q120 20, 4) a papyrus scroll from the second or first centuries BCE, the Tetragrammaton in Lev 4:27 is rendered semi-phonetically as *Iao*, not replaced by *Kurios* as was the usual practice in later Greek biblical manuscripts.⁴⁵ The collection of midrash in *Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer*, although dating from the ninth century as a compilation, contains many older traditions, including a relevant passage which points to the association of YHWH and Helios on into the rabbinic period: “The sun has three letters of (God’s) Name written upon his heart, and the angels lead him; . . .”⁴⁶

Whereas YHWH is often described within scripture as “enthroned upon the cherubim” (e.g., 1 Sam 4:4, 2 Sam 6:2, 2 Kgs 19:15, PGM 12.255), here that epithet seems to be missing, with rather κοιτῶν or “resting place” of the cherubim. Preisendanz here translated “Schlafgemach (der) Cherubin.” The image is not altogether clear because it appears only here and is preceded and followed by textual lacunae.

“To the ages of ages, O God”: The enthronement of God upon the sea, seraphim, Helios-Iao, and so on is to be an eternal kingship. The use of this exact phrase in affirming the eternity of divine reign is not found in the Septuagint, though it does appear repeatedly in the liturgical acclamations connected to throne visions in the Book of Revelation with its strong Judaic imagery (cf. Rev 4:9–10, 5:13, 7:12, 11:15). “ABAOOTH”: Whereas the *onomata barbara* in previous verses constitute either putative names of angels or other undecipherable words of power, line 15 includes recognizable Hebrew epithets for Israel’s God. *Abaoth* may well reflect a haplographic mistake for Sabaoth, with the scribe writing only one *sigma* when two were called for at the end of θεός and the beginning of Ἀβαώθ. Sabaoth is the common Hebrew epithet for Israel’s God, meaning literally, “of hosts” which is understood in verse 15 of the prayer to be a secret name. “ABRA-THIAOTH” may reflect a variation of the Hebrew *’arba*, “four” suggesting the tetragrammaton.⁴⁷ It may also reflect a deformation of Sabaoth, which indeed follows this word. The deployment of these epithets for God in the

⁴⁴ E. Tov, “Scribal Practices,” *EDSS* 2: 828–830.

⁴⁵ Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated*, 472.

⁴⁶ This excerpt from *Pirqe R. El.* 6 [Friedlander translation] is noted by R. Kraemer, *When Joseph Met Aseneth*, 181 n. 26.

⁴⁷ Brashear, “The Greek Magical Papyri,” 3577.

prayer reverberates with the invocation of “Creator of the sa[ving] names” in verse 2 and God’s “powers” (δυνάμεων) in verse 4.

(10–12) After the second invocation and the request for God to hear is an invocation to the one who gives “power over the Deep.” Preisendanz reconstructed χάσματος “chasm,” translating “*Tiefe*” in the German. The reading is by no means definite given the corrupt state of the text at that point. The customary word in Hebrew would be *tehōm* which is normally translated in the Septuagint by ἄβυσσος, though cf. Luke 16:26. The word has mythic connotations and is normally juxtaposed with the sea in poetic lines (Job 38:16, 30, Prov 8:27–28) with heaven being the opposite cosmic point. God is understood to have battled “the Deep” at creation and intermittently afterward, thus maintaining divine power over the cosmic forces.⁴⁸ In verse 11, the petitioner recognises God as one who delegates such power to creatures (not specifically designated), who inhabit three levels of the cosmos, the heavens, the earth, and those below the earth, and implicitly requests power as well through the prayer. Charlesworth notes that EPAGAEL, which includes the Hebrew theophoric element “’El” occurs only here in the Greek Magical Papyri.⁴⁹ The *voce* ALAMAN is a likely corruption of the Hebrew ‘*Olam* or its plural form, ‘*Olamim*. The combined terms ‘*El* ‘*Olam* or “God of Eternity” provides another epithet of Israel’s God with an ancient Canaanite pedigree associated originally with the worship of the god ‘*El* at the cult site of Beersheba (Gen 21:33).

(13) The address to “Lord God of the Hebrews” does not appear in Jewish prayers, but does appear in the address of Moses to the Egyptian Pharaoh in the Exodus account (Exod 3:18, 5:3, 7:16, 9:1, 9:13, 10:3) to identify the personal God of the Israelites YHWH as a deity of a particular people or ethnos that was not at that time known in Egypt. It is thus an outsider’s term for the people of Israel. This designation of God as used in the exodus story was a favourite among magicians.⁵⁰ The term is thus fittingly

⁴⁸ For the Canaanite origins of this idea, see F. M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973). For an interpretation of how this concept has been understood from a moral and theological perspective in the Hebrew Bible and Jewish theology, see J. Levenson, *Creation and the Persistence of Evil* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988).

⁴⁹ Charlesworth, *OTP II*, 722.

⁵⁰ See in particular, P. van der Horst, “The God Who Drowned the King of Egypt: A Short Note on an Exorcistic Formula,” in *The Wisdom of Egypt: Jewish, Early Christian, and Gnostic Essays in Honour of Gerard P. Luttikhuisen* (ed. A. Hilhorst and G. van Kooten; AJC 59; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 135–142.

used in Egypt, the presumed provenance of the prayer, but somewhat unusual within the context of the prayer in that in the next verse, the one who offers the prayer describes himself as a member of the people of Israel.

(14) The request that God “maintain the one who possesses this prayer,” in verse 14 points to the gracious election of Israel with the use of the Greek participle from the verb χαρίζομαι, to give graciously. The notion of the peoplehood of Israel is more commonly expressed in Greek as ὁ λαὸς Ἰσραήλ but τό γένος Ἰσραήλ is found in *T. Levi* 5:6 and *Pss. Sol.* 7:8. In its use of the phrase, the *Prayer of Jacob* is closer to Philo who never refers to “Israel” as a *laos* or *ethnos* but always as a *genos*, a term not meaning just race, but class.⁵¹ In the order of creation, the *genos* precedes others that are derived from it. Philo uses it specifically of Israel to express their special status and proximity to God, a central stock from which others derive. Indeed, the use of the term within the context of the prayer suggests it is by virtue of the petitioner’s inherited genealogical status that he is permitted the possibility of angelic transformation.

The characterisation of God as one with power over meteorological phenomena is consonant with the depiction of God in *1* and *2 Enoch* although the exact sense of the verse is elusive. PGM 35.9–14 contains similar epithets of enthronement as are found in verse 8 of this prayer but includes a reference to one who “sits over the snow.” The notion that there are both fixed and mobile stars, or planets, reflects a Greek cosmology rather than an ancient Israelite one.

(17–18) The prayer closes with three petitions: for wisdom, for empowerment, and for the petitioner’s heart to be filled with good. There then follow three clauses that echo the first three petitions. The request for God to fill the petitioner with wisdom and for a heart filled with good, or perhaps good things (the genitive plural ἀγαθῶν), recalls the request of Solomon after his dream at Gibeon in *1 Kgs* 3:9 when Solomon asks for a “listening heart” (καρδιά ἀκούειν) in order to govern the people justly. God grants him rather, a “discerning and wise heart” (καρδιά φρονίμη καὶ σοφή) according to *1 Kgs* 3:13. *2 Chr* 1:7–13 offers an abridged version of the Kings account, but in it Solomon does ask explicitly for wisdom and knowledge (σοφία καὶ σύνεσις) which are granted to him. Yet the ultimate purpose of the petitions is never made explicit. Solomon wanted wisdom for

⁵¹ See further the remarks of E. Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo’s Thought* (BJS 290, SPM 2; Scholars Press, 1996), 56–58 and specifically: “The notion that a γένος is imperishable and perfect is connected to the idea that God first creates the genus as an original or archetype of the particular or the species.” (57)

the purposes of good governance as a king. If we read each petition as linked with one of the clauses, understanding the $\omega\varsigma$ in a causal or consecutive sense, then the results can be related to the petitions, the need for wisdom related to the status of being a “terrestrial angel” ($\omega\varsigma$ ἄγγελον ἐπ[ί]γειον); the need for power issuing from and akin to the divine source of powers related to the petitioner’s immortality and angelic status; and the desire for a good heart in relation to the divine gift of this angelic, immortal stature.

The address to God as “Master” or “Lord” (δέσποτα) occurs with more frequency in early Jewish literature than in biblical literature and serves as a substitute translation for the tetragrammaton in many cases. For its use in prayers, see Gen 15:2, Jon 4:3, Jdt 9:12, 2 Macc 6:14, Sir 23:1, 36:1, Dan 9:8, 15, 16, 17, 19, Tob 8:17, 1 Esd 4:60. “Master” is also a common address in the Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers and other prayers in the *Apostolic Constitutions* (e.g., AC 7.37.1, 7.38.1, 8.5.1, 8.9.8); for which see elsewhere within this volume.

“As one who has become immortal”: Goodenough assumed that the reciter of the prayer becomes angelic and immortal as a result of saying the prayer: “Through knowing it and using it, the devotee has become an angel upon earth, an immortal, and has received the final “gift,” which would seem to be the supreme mystical gift, participation in divinity.”⁵² Goodenough’s phrase “participation in divinity” begs the question of what that experience would mean exactly in the context of this prayer and cannot be answered on the basis of this prayer alone but rather within the context of angelic transformation within the Jewish and Graeco-Roman traditions.

The idea that humans might become immortal or retrieve their original immortality is expressed in some Hellenised Jewish literature. Wis 2:23–24 interprets Gen 1:26–27 that humans are created in the divine image to mean that humans were initially created eternal, or immortal (cf. 4 Macc 17: 12). This theme in Wisdom of Solomon provides another link to the Solomonic tradition, not to mention Egypt where the book was likely composed. From the perspective of Wisdom of Solomon, righteous behaviour can bestow on humans immortal souls (Wis 5:7). The possibility for an immortal soul was affirmed as well by Philo (*QG* 3.11; *Prob.* 7.46; *Congr.* 18.97) but the predominant Jewish view in antiquity affirmed the resurrection of the dead in terms of a physical bodily resurrection.⁵³

⁵² Goodenough, “Charms in Judaism,” 203.

⁵³ For the argument that the resurrection of the dead was an Israelite notion rather than a Persian or Hellenistic development, see J. Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel: the Ultimate Victory of the God of Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).

In addition to immortality, the one praying claims to be an “earthly angel” (ὡς ἄγγελον ἐπίγειον). This is an unusual designation and because of its uniqueness, it begs the question of how the phrase might be understood. How are we to understand “angel” in this context and how should we understand “earthly”? This depiction of an earthly angel stands in contrast to the common understanding that the “natural” abode of angels was in heaven. Does this refer to a kind of angel whose tasks require its presence on earth (the two angels at Sodom in Gen 19:1) or does it refer to a particular kind of transformed human who remains on earth? A related possibility is that an angel upon earth refers to one who will later be transported to heaven, such as Enoch is understood to be transformed into the angel Metatron (3 *Enoch* 15).⁵⁴ Angels are usually understood to inhabit the heavens in early Judaism, adjacent to God and singing divine praises among various other activities.⁵⁵ When they are on earth, they are primarily understood to be serving as divine messengers.⁵⁶ Further discussion of the role of angels with an amplified treatment of Jacob as an angel is included in an Appendix on the Prayer of Joseph.

The inclusion of the Hebrew word “*Amen*” both in verses 15 and 25 reflects a traditional Jewish liturgical element. “*Amen*,” from the Hebrew root אמן meaning to be firm or reliable, usually indicates a closure of some kind thus its occurrence in the middle of the prayer before a participial phrase is rather unusual and may thus represent lack of knowledge of common liturgical practices. The double form, ‘*Amen, amen*’ appears rarely in the Hebrew Bible, concluding three of the five major divisions of prayers within the book of Psalms (Pss 41:4, 72:19, 89:52). Its more frequent appearance in prayers and liturgical texts from Qumran signals a transition to a much more frequent use in early Judaism as well as early Christianity.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ See M. Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God* (London: SPCK, 1992).

⁵⁵ This is of course not true for those considered fallen angels, an understanding rooted in part in a reading of the Gen 6:1–5 narrative combined with an attempt to provide an answer to the origins of evil.

⁵⁶ See K. Sullivan, *Wrestling with Angels*.

⁵⁷ The double “*Amen*” occurs fourteen times in the extant liturgical fragments from Qumran; D. Olson, “Daily and Festival Prayers at Qumran,” in *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls Volume Two: The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Qumran Community* (ed. J. Charlesworth; Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006), 313.

The final line of the prayer contains instructions to recite the prayer seven times. The number seven was of course of symbolic importance.⁵⁸ The final line is governed by aorist middle participles which agree with the aorist imperatives. This would indicate that at the moment God fills the petitioner with wisdom, empowerment, and good, he or she becomes an angel and receives these as God's gift. Some ambiguity remains as to when the transformation was thought to occur, whether it is during the process of repetition that the reciter is transformed into an immortal angel or if the one offering the prayer must wait until the seventh round of repetition and thus the ritual is entirely complete. The directions of north and east suggested by the rubric are understood by Reimund Leicht to be a "clear hint that it was conceived of as an invocation of Helios-*Yao-Yaoil* at night," but this is a problematic claim because our prayer is addressed not to Helios-*Yao*, but to the God of Israel who is enthroned above Helios-*Yao*.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ A. Y. Collins, "Numerical Symbolism in Jewish and Early Christian Apocalyptic Literature," *ANRW* II.21.2:1221–87

⁵⁹ R. Leicht, "Qedushah and Prayer to Helios," *JSQ* 6 (1999): 167.

VIII. Appendix: The Prayer of Joseph

Introduction

The early Jewish narrative entitled the *Prayer of Joseph* is known to us only through fragmentary quotations in two of Origen's works, his *Commentary on John* dating to the early third century and the *Philocalia*, as well as a fragment found in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 6:1. The appearance of the excerpts in Origen's commentary provides a clear point for dating the text. The composition must likely have been in circulation for a good period for Origen to have recognised it by title. Origen refers to the composition generically as an apocryphon in use by "the Hebrews" (τῶν παρ' Ἑβραίοις φερομένων ἀποκρύφων τὴν ἐπιγραφομένην).¹ According to the ancient *Stichometry* of Nicephorus, the text originally contained 1100 lines. The extant portions totaling only nine Greek sentences or 164 words thus reflect a small fraction of the original composition. The reason for the text's attribution to Joseph and the rest of its contents are thus obscured from the modern reader. Origen's commentary on John was commissioned by Ambrose, a wealthy patrician from Alexandria. The cultural and geographical context in which it was written helps to explain the linguistic and theological similarities between the text and Egyptian, Greek, and Coptic Jewish and Christian texts.²

The designation of the text as the *Prayer of Joseph* is somewhat puzzling because it indicates a genre that is not reflected by the preserved text in Origen. Certainly prayers within narratives are a very frequent feature of ancient Jewish works, but we have no other such narrative that is referred to by the title a "Prayer of X." Indeed, the composition may have made up a part of the greater Joseph literature such as is represented by the long Hellenistic Jewish work *Joseph and Aseneth* which itself contains motifs of angelic transformation akin to the *Prayer of Joseph* and the *Prayer of*

¹ A. Resch mentions but ultimately dismisses the idea that Origen's use of the term "Hebrews" rather than Jews suggests that the text may have been in circulation among a Jewish-Christian sect such as the Nazarenes or the Ebionites; *Agrapha*, 297.

² See the excellent treatment by J. Z. Smith, "Prayer of Joseph," *OTP II*, 699–714. On this point in particular, see 700. His commentary in *OTP* is reliant on his earlier essay, "The Prayer of Joseph," in *Map is Not Territory* (Leiden: Brill, 1978; repr. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 24–66.

Jacob.³ Nonetheless, the excerpts in Origen represent an address by Jacob to a second party, perhaps to be understood as a testamentary speech to his son Joseph. Like the great majority of Jewish pseudepigraphical texts, it was preserved within a Christian context, thus providing an example of which Jewish interpretive traditions related to Jacob were of particular interest to early Christian commentators. In the extant excerpts, the *Prayer of Joseph* is quoted by Origen in order to bolster his view that John the Baptist was an angelic power that appeared on earth as a man. We include the excerpts from the *Prayer of Joseph* as an appendix in the commentary because the text is not formally a prayer, yet it sheds light on the *Prayer of Jacob* found in the commentary proper.

In the *Prayer of Joseph* passages, Jacob is the speaker, although it is not clear to whom he is speaking. He first introduces himself as both Jacob and Israel, and explains his own origins as an angel with two different names. Jacob-Israel then describes his conflict with the angel Uriel on his return from Syrian Mesopotamia (the LXX translation of Paddan-Aram). The passage thus makes clear reference to Gen 32:22–32 in which Jacob wrestles with a man, later identified as a divine or angelic figure.⁴ The fragments also make reference to information from the “tablets of heaven” about Jacob-Israel’s angelomorphic service on earth.

Although the passage refers to events and characters known from Genesis in its versions and extra-biblical traditions, some of the Greek terms are unique. As Jonathan Z. Smith has noted, these short excerpts contain three rare terms, one of which is a *hapax legomenon*.⁵ The *hapax* is ἀρχιχιλίαρχος, the “chief captain”, apparently a military term which refers to the top hierarchical office among angels. The word used for “pre-created”, προεκτίσθησαν, is a prefixed form of the more frequently appearing κτίζω. The word is used to emphasise the idea that Jacob existed before the creation of the world and its order. The Greek term is found in later Chris-

³ M.R. James seems to have been the first to draw a connection between the *Prayer of Joseph* and the manuscripts he calls the *Book or History of Asenath* in Armenian and a Greek manuscript called *Confession and Prayer of Asenath*. He notes as well that the unique title of the *Prayer of Joseph* belies its genre; *The Lost Apocrypha of the Old Testament* (London: SPCK, 1920), 25.

⁴ The strife between Uriel and Israel-Jacob in the prayer is an early piece of Jewish tradition about angelic jealousy toward humanity, and Israel in particular, that takes a developed form in later midrash. See P. Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen* (SJ 8; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1975), especially 164–92.

⁵ J. Z. Smith, “Prayer of Joseph,” *OTP II*, 700.

tian literature to refer to the status of Christ as pre-existent, yet the idea resonates with rabbinic traditions that posit the preexistence of certain items before creation, variously among them the Torah, the temple, the heavenly throne, repentance, and wisdom.⁶ A third phrase, the “inextinguishable name” ὄνομα ἄσβεστον is likewise rare.⁷

In the excerpts, Jacob is given no fewer than eight different titles, all suggesting various aspects associating him closely with God. He is called Israel, an angel of God, a ruling spirit, a man seeing God, the firstborn of all living, the archangel of the power of the Lord, the chief captain among the sons of God, and the first servant before the face of God. Smith observes that many of Jacob-Israel’s titles are also used by Philo to describe the Logos, by rabbinic literature to describe the angel Michael, by Jewish mystical literature for Metatron, and by Jewish Christianity for Jesus. Smith may inaccurately characterise the contours of early Judaism in locating the community generating such a text within the “hellenistic mystical Judaism as described by Erwin Goodenough.”⁸ The prayer, for instance, also reflects certain continuities with the angelological conceptions about Israel found in the Qumran sectarian literature.⁹

⁶ For its use in Christian sources, see Didymus of Alexandria, *Trin.* 3:4 (PG, vol. 39, col. 832) and Gelasius Cyzicus, *Historia concilii nicaeni* 2:16 (PG, vol. 85, col. 1257). For a review of some of the items thought to predate the creation of the world in Jewish tradition, see Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 44–66.

⁷ According to Smith, the phrase occurs later only in a homily by Esaias, *Oratio* 4:9 on Gen 28:13–15 in which God promises to Jacob that his name will be eternal.

⁸ Smith, “Prayer of Joseph,” 31. Goodenough’s conception of a Hellenistic mystical Judaism is today generally understood as a mischaracterization and has been replaced by new perspectives as scholars puzzle over how to describe the diverse phenomena of Jewish thought and observance in its various enculturated forms.

⁹ Although he offers no consideration of the *Prayer of Jacob* in his book, K. Sullivan provides a sound overview of the role of angels in various Qumran texts as well as the related secondary literature on Qumran angelology, which continues to be produced apace, *Wrestling with Angels*, 145–178. C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis offers a wide-ranging, if sometimes over-reaching, treatment of texts seeking to substantiate an argument for “angelomorphism” in the sect; *All the Glory of Adam: Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (STDJ 42; Leiden: Brill, 2002).

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Commentary

Translation

Fragment A

Prayer of Joseph

“I who speak to you, Jacob and Israel, am an angel of God and a ruling spirit; Abraham and Isaac were created before all other works; I, Jacob, who am called Jacob by humans, my name is Israel, I am called Israel by God, a man who sees God, because I am the firstborn of all living, whom God gives life.

[Origen at this point inserts a connecting phrase, “And he adds: ..” before continuing with another excerpt from the Prayer.]

When I was coming from Syrian Mesopotamia, the angel of God Uriel left me and said that he had descended upon the earth having tabernacled among humans and that I had been called by the name Jacob; He was jealous of me, fought against me and wrestled with me, pretending that his name, and the name that is before every angel was to be above mine. I told him his name and his rank among the sons of God. Are you not Uriel, the eighth after me? And I, I am Israel, the archangel of the power of the Lord and the commander of all the chiefs of the hosts among the sons of God; am I not Israel, the first servant who is before the face of God and am I not invoked by God by his inextinguishable name?

Fragment B from Origen’s *Philocalia*

For I have read in the tablets of heaven all that shall befall you and your sons.

Fragment C

[Origen writes:] Jacob was greater than man, he who supplanted his brother and who declared in the same book from which we quoted, “I read in the tablets of heaven that he was a chief captain of the power of the Lord and had, from of old, the name of Israel; something which he recognises while doing service in the body, being reminded of it by the archangel Uriel.”

*The Prayer of Joseph and the Prayer of Jacob**General Comment and Notes*

Disentangling the entire web of interpretive traditions that developed around the figure of Jacob in early Judaism is a task that would take us beyond the parameters of the commentary. Moreover, it has been done capably elsewhere.¹⁰ It is nonetheless helpful to pluck a few strands from the tradition in order to answer the implicit questions raised by the *Prayer of Jacob* and also evident in part in the *Prayer of Joseph*: how is it that a person of “Hebrew stock,” to use a distinctive phrase from the prayer, might think transformation into an immortal and “earthly angel” ἄγγελος ἐπίγειος was possible? What would the transformation into such an angelic figure mean in terms of the person’s status and tasks? The answers stem from an understanding about Jacob derived primarily from the interpretive tradition but also reflecting the influence of Graeco-Roman ideas relating to immortality.

Bracketing for the moment the notion of human angelification, the answer to the first question is rooted in one aspect of the tradition: that in early Judaism each Jew considered himself (and perhaps herself) a part of Israel, the corporate whole. The scriptural story from Gen 32 about Jacob who wrestles with an angelic figure and is renamed Israel is thus the story of each individual Israelite; the corporate and the individual senses of Jacob-Israel are intertwined. This is reflected for instance in the many references to the singular “Jacob” often paired with “Israel” found in the Psalms and prophetic literature that make reference to the singular Jacob/Israel as the nation (e.g. Ps 105:10, 23, Isa 43:1, 22, Jer 2:4, Ezek 28:25). But the development of the tradition relating to the transformative effect of the name change on the very nature of the patriarch Jacob is not found in the book of Genesis itself, but in extra-biblical interpretation of it.

Given the Egyptian Alexandrian context in which both the *Prayer of Joseph* and the *Prayer of Jacob* likely originated, it is appropriate to turn to Philo for an interpretive tradition that illuminates the corporate character of Israel as one potentially possessed of unique, angelic characteristics. One

¹⁰ For the broader scope of Jacob traditions, see J. Kugel, *The Ladder of Jacob: Ancient Interpretations of the Biblical Story of Jacob and His Children* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); and in his *Traditions of the Bible*, 352–401; for the traditions related to the significance of Jacob’s name change, see particularly C. T. R. Hayward, *Interpretations of the Name Israel in Ancient Judaism and some Early Christian Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) in which see 194–219 for the *Prayer of Joseph*; and again see also K. Sullivan, *Wrestling with Angels*.

of the epithets used for Jacob in the *Prayer of Joseph* excerpts is “a man seeing God.” Philo is not the only one to take up the idea, but it is in Philo’s writings that are found by far the most frequent references to Israel as “the one who sees God,” ὁ ὄρῶν τὸν θεόν, or simply “the one who sees”, which together appear forty-nine times throughout his corpus.¹¹ Although Philo nowhere makes the connection explicit in his work, the phrase seems to be rooted in Gen 32:31, in which the name Israel is understood quasi-etymologically stemming from the place name Peniel, where Jacob had seen the face of God in his angelic adversary.¹² While the meaning of the term varies in relation to the particular audience Philo had in mind or the genre of the piece in which the term appears, there are certain consistencies to his usage that make it relevant to our discussion of angelification and the prayers of Joseph and Jacob. According to Philo, the name change that occurs in Genesis 32 coincided with a change in discernment, from one who hears, to one who sees God (*Migr.* 36–9). The transformation moreover augured a change in Jacob-Israel’s standing in becoming a boundary figure, as somehow on the cusp between earth and heaven. This in fact gives Israel something of a prophetic-inspirational character according to Philo, who draws also on the common nomenclature for prophets as “seers” in the Bible.¹³ By extension, Israel, that is the Jewish people, may be thought in certain circles to have this angelic, prophetic character.

Such a corporate status connected with the figure of Jacob can be seen in other early Jewish texts. The book of Jubilees, which held a scriptural status among the community at Qumran, likewise posited a special role for Israel-Jacob. As part of its interpretive construction that posits a full-blown hierarchy of angels present and praising God at the first Sabbath, Jubilees draws on Exod 4:22 in which God calls Israel his “first-born son,” to describe the special status of Jacob, an elect status that is even built into the

¹¹ Smith, *OTP II*, 703. Hayward devotes an entire chapter to Philo’s use of this term in *Interpretations of the Name Israel*, 156–193. See also the nuanced discussion of E. Birnbaum on this topic, *The Place of Judaism in Philo’s Thought: Israel, Jews, Proselytes* (BJS 290; SPM 2; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996) 70–77.

¹² Even the name Peniel itself has etymological significance in ancient Near Eastern terms. Koehler-Baumgartner suggests the name Peniel/Penuel reflects an archaic plural construct (gen. and acc.), for abs. **pānū* (R. Meyer *Gramm.* §45, 3a; THAT 2:433) in addition to the theophoric element, ‘*El*, The archaic form resembling *pānū-ili* “face of God”, cf. Akkadian personal names like *Pān-Marduk-lūmur*, “may I see the face of Marduk.” The class of angels called “angels of the face” are thus ultimately derived from this notion of those close to or seeing the divine visage.

¹³ Hayward, *Interpretations of the Name Israel*, 167–168.

process of creation. Using the first-person voice of God, *Jub.* 2:20 describes the creation of an elect people: “And I have chosen the seed of Jacob from among all that I have seen. And I have recorded him as my firstborn son, and have sanctified him for myself forever and ever.” The LXX of Exod 4:22 speaks of Israel as God’s πρωτότοκος, “first-born son.” This word is not found elsewhere in scripture, but Philo uses the term to refer both to the *Logos* (*Conf.* 63, 146; *Somn.* I. 215) and to Israel as a first-born (*Post.* 63; *Fug.* 208), or to Israel in the character of the *Logos* (*Agr.* 51).¹⁴ This idea of Jacob being “the firstborn” is also mentioned in the *Prayer of Joseph* in which Jacob is πρωτόγονος παντὸς ζώου ζωοποιουμένου, the “firstborn of all living.” More evidence for the notion of angelification is found in *Joseph and Aseneth* in which Joseph (*Jos. Asen.* 14:9), Aseneth after her conversion to Judaism (*Jos. Asen.* 18:9, 18:11), and most explicitly Jacob (*Jos. Asen.* 22:3–7) are all variously described in angelic terms.¹⁵

In reflecting on various facets of Jewish identity in the Graeco-Roman era, John Collins offers a concise evaluation of the status of the Jewish individual suggested by the *Prayer of Joseph* that is worth quoting in its entirety:

What then does the *Prayer of Joseph* say about Jewish identity? While any conclusion is tentative, it would appear that the true Israelite is an embodiment or representative of the angelic Israel, whose true rank and destiny are in heavenly glory. That is not to say that every Israelite is a preexistent angel, but that he participates in Jacob in the way that the righteous man participates in wisdom when she “tabernacles among men” (*Sirach* 24:8–12).¹⁶

We might thus think of the *Prayer of Jacob* as a means by which members of the Jewish people, those of “Hebrew stock,” were conceived to enact the angelic status that was rightfully theirs as members of an elect nation.

Having found corroboration in other early Jewish texts for ideas that link Jacob to a corporate understanding of Israel as well as hints of the unique or exalted status of the people, the expectation for ritual angelification found in the *Prayer of Jacob* becomes more comprehensible and cogent. Yet the idea expressed in the *Prayer of Jacob* that the one who prays

¹⁴ See Hayward, *Interpretations of the Name Israel*, 200.

¹⁵ G. Brooke, “Men and Women as Angels in Joseph and Aseneth,” *JSP* 14 (2005): 167–168 [159–177].

¹⁶ J. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 240.

might become an earthly angel who is immortal warrants further clarification. This particular kind of immortality, which is bestowed without passage through the portals of death, ought to be distinguished from post-mortem immortality such as that envisioned in Christianity, and certainly should thus also be distinguished from physical resurrection of the dead.¹⁷ The question of whether the immortality pertained to the soul alone or both body and soul together cannot be answered on the laconic basis of the *Prayer of Jacob*. As for the terrestrial aspect of the petitioner's angelic status in the *Pr. Jac.*, at least two possibilities are conceivable: a human who is angelically transformed on earth and remains on earth, or a transformed human whose mission is to be earthly for a period of time only perhaps later to ascend to the heavenly sphere. Given the "natural" habitation of angels close to the divine throne, the latter is probably the right conception. One channel for the earthly/heavenly travel of angels is illuminated by Jacob's vision of the ladder in Gen 28 and related interpretations, including *Tg. Ps.-J.* to Gen 28:12 in which Jacob's image is engraved in heaven on the throne of God.¹⁸ The *Pr. Jos.* presents a scene of angelic rivalry linked to Gen 28 as well, Uriel's jealousy at Jacob's uniquely favoured status perhaps anticipating this final ascension as "archangel" of God.

In sum, there was a great amount of speculation about angels in early Judaism, so it is important to underscore the fact that beliefs about the nature of angels and their functions were also wide-ranging and not uniform. So,

¹⁷ Two texts that link (pre-mortal) immortality to righteous behavior are Wis 5:15–16 (although the fact of death remains somewhat ambiguous, cf. Wis 3:2–3) and *Pss. Sol.* 13: 8–11:

In secret the righteous are disciplined lest the sinner gloat over the righteous.

For he will admonish the righteous as a beloved son

and his discipline is for a firstborn.

For the Lord will spare his devout,

and he will wipe away their mistakes with discipline

for the life of the righteous (goes on) forever,

but sinners shall be taken away to destruction, and no memory of them will ever be found.

Translation of J. Charlesworth, *OTP II*, 663. The passage from *Pss. Sol.* shares with the *Pr. Jos.* the depiction of a righteous firstborn. The petition of *Pr. Jac.*¹⁸ requests a heart filled with good, which presumably has a moral connotation, as a part of the supplicant's newly immortal status.

¹⁸ On the connection of this tradition with the depiction of the incarnation in the Gospel of John, see C. Rowland, "John 1:51: Jewish Apocalyptic and Targumic Tradition," *NTS* 30 (1984): 498–507 and J. Kugel, *In Potiphar's House: The Interpretive Life of Biblical Texts* (2nd ed.; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994).

too, the evidence for angelomorphic transformation of humans does not present a consistent picture and associates a range of figures with such transformation from Adam to Enoch to Melchizedek.¹⁹ Traditions in the *Prayer of Jacob* and the *Prayer of Joseph* help to illuminate one corner of the angelic world and Jacob, the angel, is not the least of them.

¹⁹ C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence* (AGJU 42; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 152–183.

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