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Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship

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Studies in the Bible and Antiquity is dedicated to promoting a better understanding of the Bible and of religion in the ancient world, bringing the best LDS scholarship and thought to a general Latter-day Saint readership. Questions may be directed to the editors at sba@byu.edu.

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Introduction

This issue of *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity* marks five years of publication, which we at the Maxwell Institute are celebrating as a modest milepost of success. This success belongs foremost to our authors. It took us three years to assemble our first issue (2009), and we recognize the faith those first authors showed in entrusting a new publication with their research. But in committing thereafter to an annual publication, we wondered if we could maintain on a yearly basis the high standard set by that first issue. We believe that we have, for which we again thank our talented and willing contributors.

But many others have generously labored on behalf of *Studies*. We thank especially our advisory board members, who have contributed articles, advice, and peer review. Securing quality peer review is a major challenge for every academic journal, so we thank too the many additional peer reviewers who have assisted our authors and improved our journal. And giving due credit to our own, we thank all the editors, interns, and other academic and administrative staff at the Maxwell Institute who assist in producing and distributing *Studies*. Their collegiality has proven inexhaustible and their professionalism is exemplary.

This fifth issue of *Studies* is a milepost, but also a turning point, since it will be the last under the editorship of its founder, Professor Brian Hauglid. It exists because of his initiative and has flourished under his leadership. His service to the Maxwell Institute will continue in his new appointment as director of the Laura F. Willes Center for Book of Mormon Studies. With that Brian will also assume (in 2014) the editorship of the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, which assignment will not permit his continued editorship of *Studies*. We invite you

to check our website or follow us on Facebook and Twitter for further announcements on the editorships of both these publications.

Since this issue is both a milepost and a turning point, that may permit us a little retrospection. So this is how *Studies* started—

On the initiative of Brian Hauglid, discussions began in May 2004 concerning the future of the *FARMS Occasional Papers* series. He regarded this series as very important among institute publications because of both its flexible topicality and uncompromising academic orientation. Admittedly, this orientation might mean that few but scholars read it. But this commitment to "scholars writing for scholars" permitted *Occasional Papers* to publish a wide-ranging selection of specialized work on religion in antiquity. Between 2000 and 2007 it published three monographs and two collections of studies on diverse subjects.

In October 2006, as the latest volume of *Occasional Papers* was readied for press, Brian Hauglid, Larry Morris, and Carl Griffin proposed that *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity: A Maxwell Institute Occasional Publication* should be its next iteration. As the title indicated, its focus was to become, first of all, the study of the Bible—the first institute series with such a focus—though without unduly restricting *Occasional Papers*' broader interest in religious antiquity. This proposal was accepted by the institute's executive director, Professor Andrew Skinner. Brian Hauglid was appointed editor and Larry Morris associate editor (replaced by Carl Griffin in 2008). In the three years intervening between proposal and publication, the institute made one significant change to the original prospectus. *Studies* would become a third institute journal and be published to the same readership as its sibling periodicals—in other words, to both specialist and nonspecialist readers.

Publishing a journal that serves both of these readerships *equally well* is perhaps not possible, but we have more than 30 years of institutional experience in navigating the challenges that a diverse readership presents. And we would not have it any other way. The Maxwell Institute regards it as part of its mission, as a BYU research unit, to publish religious scholarship for the broader university community,

both students and faculty. The core readership of *Studies* is therefore comprised of interested and motivated nonspecialists, or what Jane Heath has called "the scholarly public." In our case, we would say particularly the scholarly Mormon public.

But while *Studies* is not strictly a disciplinary journal, its articles will continue to meet the high standards of the various academic disciplines they represent. Most will continue to be quite technical in character. It is inevitable, then, that not all articles will be equally suited to all readers.

Yet as we discuss how best to evolve, we are considering every possible way by which we can better reach and serve all readers, on BYU's campus and beyond. As we look to the future, our foremost goal is to maintain the quality of our scholarship while increasing the journal's accessibility, utility, and appeal to the scholarly public. Our efforts in these latter respects will be seen next year in both a print redesign and improved digital distribution.

This issue is led by a report on the excavation of the village of Huqoq in eastern Lower Galilee. Author Matthew Grey (with project supervisor Jodi Magness) explains the significance of the Huqoq Excavation Project and discusses in particular the excavation of the synagogue and the discovery of its striking floor mosaics. One mosaic fragment depicts the Israelite hero Samson setting fire to Philistine fields by means of torches tied to the tails of panicked foxes (see Judges 15:1–5). Grey then explores the apparent role that Samson assumed in this region as a messianic figure.

Many readers will know that the titles Christ and Messiah are English forms of the Greek and Hebrew words meaning "anointed." But as titles for Jesus these words point to worlds of meaning beyond the act of physical anointing. Author Julie Smith examines the symbolism of anointing in antiquity and both the immediate and broader contexts of Jesus's anointing in the Gospels. Smith's particular focus is the account given in Mark of his anointing at Bethany by a woman who is not named, but whose act Jesus declared would "be spoken of for a memorial of her" "wherever this gospel shall be preached" (Mark 14:9). As Smith suggests, "Her anonymity may be a necessary

counterpart to her high praise," allowing her to become "paradigmatic of a woman completely devoted to Christ and exercising the gift of understanding." Deeper examination of this account and its context "will also permit us to see how this story explains what it means to be the Anointed One."

The New Testament is suffused with citations and allusions drawn from the Hebrew Bible. This phenomenon of "scripture citing scripture" has been much studied, but author Kimberly Berkey contributes fresh insight into the Lucan use of Isaiah in her examination of a literary allusion to Isaiah 6:1–8 in Luke 1:5–25. By its nature, literary allusion can be difficult to establish. But Berkey makes a compelling case here through a careful examination and rhetorical analysis of correspondences between these two biblical texts, especially relating to "their temple setting, dynamic interaction with the altar, and [the] theme of silence."

We are pleased to see Matthew Bowen continue his important work on proskynesis (religious prostration or worship) in antiquity, which he began in a study on proskynesis in the Book of Mormon. Now he focuses his attention on its broader ancient Near Eastern and biblical contexts, which he then employs in a careful examination of rhetorical and literal proskynesis before Jesus in the New Testament. The extensive use, says Bowen, of both the language and imagery of proskynesis, particularly in Matthew, Luke, and John the Revelator, is a witness of how "a few special disciples, with great faith and insight, recognized divinity in the 'man of sorrows' (Isaiah 53:3) during his earthly ministry."

Our issue concludes with a study by David Larsen of evidence found in the Dead Sea Scrolls for "a belief in liturgical communion with angelic beings and human access to the divine council in the celestial temple of God." While these temple themes have been generally recognized by previous scholars, Larsen's research explores the specific patterns of ascent, instruction, and commission of which these texts speak, their potential relationship to Qumran ritual, and the deeper roots of these themes in the Hebrew Bible.

We are as proud of this fifth issue as we were of the first. We encourage you to share it with other readers like yourself. All issues are available in digital format (free of charge) at http://maxwellinstitute.byu.edu. We also invite you to send reader comments and author submissions to sba@byu.edu.

Carl Griffin, PhD
Associate Editor
Studies in the Bible and Antiquity

Finding Samson in Byzantine Galilee: The 2011–2012 Archaeological Excavations at Huqoq

Matthew J. Grey with Jodi Magness

The study of ancient history and culture in Lower Galilee, the area west of the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River, has been greatly enriched in recent decades by an increasing amount of archaeological research. From the 1970s to the early 2000s, archaeologists have investigated the remains of Galilee's two major cities (Sepphoris and Tiberias) and many well-known villages (such as Capernaum, Cana, and Magdala),[1] producing unprecedented insight into sociopolitical dynamics, daily life, and religious institutions during the time of Jesus and the early rabbis (i.e., the Roman-Byzantine period). These excavations have also prompted scholarly discussion on a number of important issues, including the chronology of monumental synagogue buildings,[2] the development

1. For discussions of these and related excavations, see Douglas R. Edwards and C. Thomas McCollough, eds., *Archaeology and the Galilee: Texts and Contexts in the Greco-Roman and Byzantine Periods* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997); Eric M. Meyers, ed., *Galilee through the Centuries: Confluence of Cultures* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999); Jonathan L. Reed, *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus: A Re-examination of the Evidence* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000); Mordechai Aviam, ed., *Jews, Pagans, and Christians in the Galilee: 25 Years of Archaeological Excavations and Surveys: Hellenistic to Byzantine Periods* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2004).

2. See the debate between Jodi Magness, Eric Meyers, and James Strange in *Judaism in Late Antiquity*, vol. 4, pt. 3, ed. Alan J. Avery-Peck and Jacob Neusner (Leiden:

of Jewish religious art,[3] the dating of local pottery types,[4] and the extent of rabbinic influence within the Jewish community.[5] In short, research on ancient Galilee is experiencing an exciting era of discovery that is significantly refining our understanding of early Judaism and Christianity.

As a part of this research, scholars have begun to study some of Galilee's lesser-known sites in an effort to provide a more rounded view of the region and bring new evidence to bear on the ongoing debates.[6] One such site is Huqoq, a small Jewish village located near the northwest shore of the lake, about 12.5 km north of Tiberias. Ancient literature indicates that Huqoq was occupied during the biblical and postbiblical periods, and scattered remains at the site indicate that portions of its ancient dwellings and synagogue lie beneath the surface. The site is also currently uninhabited, making it an ideal location for new archaeological excavations.

These considerations led to the organization of the Huqoq Excavation Project (HEP)—a consortium of universities directed by Jodi Magness of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill—which began excavating the site in 2011.[7] Although this project is

Brill, 2001), 1–63, 71–91; cf. David Milson, *Art and Architecture of the Synagogue in Late Antique Palestine: In the Shadow of the Church* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 1–83.

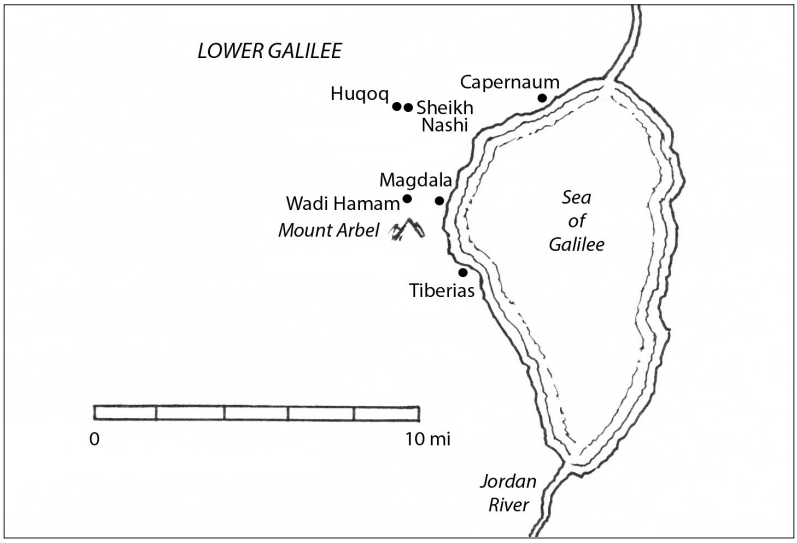
3. See Steven Fine, *Art and Judaism in the Greco-Roman World: Toward a New Jewish Archaeology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); and Lee I. Levine, *Visual Judaism in Late Antiquity: Historical Contexts of Jewish Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

4. For example, see the studies and different positions reflected in David Adan-Bayewitz, *Common Pottery in Roman Galilee: A Study of Local Trade* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1993), and Jodi Magness, "The Pottery from the Village of Capernaum and the Chronology of Galilean Synagogues," *Tel Aviv* 39/2 (2012): 110–22.

5. See Martin Goodman, *State and Society in Roman Galilee A.D. 132–212*, 2nd ed. (London: Mitchell, 2000), and Lee I. Levine, *The Rabbinic Class of Roman Palestine in Late Antiquity* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1989).

6. For example, Uzi Leibner's survey of the settlements throughout eastern Lower Galilee includes valuable discussion of the villages, trade networks, and demographics of the region; Uzi Leibner, *Settlement and History in Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine Galilee: An Archaeological Survey of the Eastern Galilee* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009).

7. Jodi Magness is joined as codirector of the HEP by Shua Kisilevitz of the Israel Antiquities Authority. Senior staff members include Chad Spigel (area supervisor over the ancient village), Matthew Grey (area supervisor over the ancient synagogue), Brian



Map of Lower Galilee (region west of the lake) where Huqoq is located.

only in its third year, it has already made valuable contributions to our understanding of Jewish village life, art, and religious worship in ancient Galilee. This article will highlight some of these contributions by summarizing past and current research related to Huqoq and considering some of the ways in which this research adds to ongoing historical discussions. It will first survey the literary sources that sketch the village's history, the explorations of the site prior to formal excavations, and the first two seasons of excavations conducted by the HEP (2011–2012). It will then describe the most exciting discovery at the site to date—a rare mosaic depicting a story of Samson from the biblical book of Judges—and summarize some of the current research on the mosaic's historical significance, thus showing how the Huqoq excavations are enhancing our understanding of Galilee's ancient history, culture, and socioreligious dynamics.

Coussens (assistant area supervisor over the modern village), and research specialists in ancient pottery, glass, botanical remains, animal bones, and mosaics. Universities that participated in the HEP consortium in 2011 were the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Wofford College, and the University of Toronto. They were joined in 2012 by Brigham Young University, Trinity University (TX), and the University of Oklahoma (without Wofford College).

Huqoq in Literary Sources—A Brief Sketch of the Village's History

Long before archaeological excavations began at Huqoq, scholars were aware of ancient literary references to the site that provide information about its history and its relationship to the surrounding region. These references indicate that Huqoq was a small agricultural village just northwest of the Sea of Galilee that was occupied in the biblical, postbiblical, medieval, and modern periods. The earliest mention of the site is in Joshua 19:34, which lists "Hukkok" (חוקקה) as a village apportioned to the tribe of Naphtali after the Israelite conquest of Canaan.[8] This passage identifies the village as marking a boundary of Naphtali's tribal lands.[9] Although it provides no further information about the village's size, population, or activities, it suggests that Huqoq was occupied in the late Iron Age (ca. 1000–586 BCE, when material for the Deuteronomistic history was taking shape), if not already in the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1550–1200 BCE, when Joshua is said to have allotted the tribal lands). An additional reference to "Hukok (חוקק) with its pasture lands" exists in 1 Chronicles 6:75, but this text locates the village much farther west in the tribal lands of Asher and likely represents an orthographic mistake made by the Chronicler.[10]

8. The Septuagint gives the name as Ιακανα (LXX Joshua 19:34), either providing a highly unusual transliteration of חוקקה or listing a different village entirely. The identification of the biblical "Hukkok" with the Arab village of 'Yaquq is well documented in Nurit Lissovsky and Nadav Na'aman, "A New Look on the Boundary System of the Twelve Tribes," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 35 (2003): 291–332 (esp. 293–97).

9. Joshua's claim that Huqoq marked the western boundary of Naphtali has caused confusion among some scholars since Huqoq is located farther east than would be expected for this border. However, Lissovsky and Na'aman view this as evidence that the boundaries between ancient Israelite tribes likely contained large gaps that are not obvious in the biblical text; see Lissovsky and Na'aman, "New Look," 293–97.

10. The list of Asher's Levitical cities in 1 Chronicles 6 includes Huqoq (חוקק [MT 6:60]; Ακακ [LXX 6:75]), but this may reflect an orthographic mistake made by the Chronicler since the same list in Joshua 21:31 has "Helkath (חלקת/Χελκατ) and with its pasture lands" instead of Huqoq. See H. G. M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 76; Sara Japhet, *I and II Chronicles* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 145; Lissovsky and Na'aman, "New Look," 294. All biblical quotations in this article are from the New Revised Standard Version.

Unfortunately, there are no references to Huqoq in late Second Temple period sources,[11] but archaeological surveys indicate that the village was occupied by Jews and engaged in agricultural activities during the Late Hellenistic and Early Roman periods (see below), making it contemporary with Jesus and his earliest followers. Although Huqoq is not named in the New Testament, its close proximity to the lake places Huqoq within walking distance of some of the most prominent locations in the Gospels (including Capernaum and Magdala),[12] thus raising the possibility that Jesus had some interaction with the village during his Galilean ministry. Furthermore, some scholars have suggested that Huqoq was located along a prominent road system in the first century and may therefore have been easily accessible to trade and travel at that time.[13] These considerations strengthen the possibility that Jesus visited Huqoq as he "went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom" (Matthew 4:23).

11. According to some secondary scholarship, the site was called *Hucuca* (a transliteration of its Hebrew name in Joshua 19:34) during the Early Roman period, but the ancient support for this claim is not clear; see, for example, Walid Khalidi, ed., *All That Remains: The Palestinian Villages Occupied and Depopulated by Israel in 1948* (Washington, DC: Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1992), 546. Emmanuel Damati, "Kefar Ekho-Huqoq: The Unknown Fortress of Josephus Flavius," *Cathedra* 39 (1986): 37–43 [Hebrew], suggested that Huqoq was Josephus's "missing" fortress of Capharecco (Καφαρεκχω) from the late first century CE (Josephus, *Jewish War* 2.573; cf. *Life* 37), but this identification has been rejected by most scholars; see Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 153.

12. Within view of the Sea of Galilee, Huqoq is located 3.2 miles to the west of Capernaum (the hometown of Peter and base for Jesus's Galilean ministry) and 2.8 miles to the north of Magdala (the hometown of Mary Magdalene).

13. Nurit Lissovsky, "Hukkok, Yaquq and Habakkuk's Tomb: Changes over Time and Space," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 140/2 (2008): 103–18 (esp. 106–7), suggests that ancient pavement and stone steps associated with the nearby "Tomb of Habakkuk" might date from the Roman period but acknowledges that such a road does not appear in Yoram Tsafrir, Leah Di Segni, and Judith Green, *Tabula Imperii Romani Iudaea-Palestina: Eretz Israel in the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Periods; Map and Gazetteer* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1994), map 4. For an attempt to trace the routes Jesus traveled along the Sea of Galilee, see Bargil Pixner, *Paths of the Messiah and Sites of the Early Church from Galilee to Jerusalem* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2010), 53–76.

The Jewish demographics of Huqoq during the Roman period are attested in rabbinic literature, in particular the Palestinian Talmud, which mentions "Hiqoq" (חיקוק) in several accounts from the late second to mid-fourth century.[14] These references provide the name of one rabbinic sage from the village ("R. Hizkiyah of Huqoq")[15] and mention the agricultural activities of other villagers, such as "Yohanan from Hiqoq," who brought a saddle bag full of bread pieces to R. Hiyya in nearby Tiberias.[16] Another passage describes a visit of R. Simeon b. Lakish to the village during which he saw locals gathering seeds from wild mustard plants.[17] These stories and the individuals associated with them point to an active Jewish presence at Huqoq in late antiquity and show that Jews at that time identified the village with the biblical site of "Hukkok," a claim similarly made in contemporary Christian literature that transliterates its name as Ειχωχ (Eusebius) and *Icoc* (Jerome).[18]

The next references to Huqoq are found in Jewish pilgrimage accounts from the Middle Ages. By then, the Jewish inhabitants of the village had apparently abandoned the site. It was subsequently resettled by a small Muslim population that called the village ʻYaquq, an Arabic variation of the earlier Hebrew name. It is not yet clear exactly when the village was abandoned by its Jewish inhabitants, resettled by Muslims, or renamed, but these developments are assumed in the reports of Jewish pilgrims traveling by the site to visit the nearby "Tomb of Habakkuk" in the thirteenth through seventeenth centuries. These accounts use both the Hebrew and Arabic names of the village, describe its proximity to the tomb and a natural spring, and

14. Lissovsky and Naʻaman, "New Look," 294–95; Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 153–54.

15. *y. Sanhedrin* 3:10, 21d.

16. *y. Pesahim* 1:4, 27c.

17. *y. Shevi'it* 9:1, 38c. This story shows that mustard seed was classified by the rabbis as a wild plant (and not a cultivated vegetable) for halakhic purposes; see Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 153–54.

18. Lissovsky and Naʻaman, "New Look," 295; Lissovsky, "Hukkok," 105; Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 153.

mention its Muslim demographics.[19] Government administrative and taxation documents from the Ottoman and British Mandate periods indicate that ʻYaquq continued as a small Muslim agricultural village until Israel's War of Independence in 1948, when it was once more abandoned, never to be reinhabited.[20]

This literary survey provides a rough sketch of the occupational history of Huqoq, attesting to an agricultural community in the village during the biblical (possibly Late Bronze and/or Iron Age), postbiblical (Roman-Byzantine), medieval, and pre-1948 modern periods. Such a skeletal history suggests that Huqoq was inhabited during all major periods of the Jewish and Muslim presence in Galilee, but it tells us little about its specific architectural features, economic status, socioreligious dynamics, or the daily life of its inhabitants. Fortunately, modern archaeological research has been able to fill in many of these gaps and flesh out our understanding of the site's religious and historical developments.

Archaeological Research at Huqoq—Exploration and Surveys

Archaeological research at Huqoq has been conducted in various ways since the European exploration of Palestine in the late nineteenth century. This research—beginning with general surveys of the site and now continuing with formal excavations—confirms the historical insights gleaned from literary sources and greatly expands our understanding of the village's socioreligious setting. The earliest recorded explorations of Huqoq by Western scholars

19. Itzhak Ben-Zvi, "The Jewish Settlement at Hukkok-Yaqûq," *Bulletin of the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society* 6 (1939): 30–33 [Hebrew]; Lissovsky, "Hukkok," 103–18.

20. Documents show that in the late sixteenth century ʻYaquq had a population of close to 400 and paid taxes on wheat, barley, olives, goats, beehives, and a grape or olive press. According to surveys and government records from 1875 to 1945, its population fluctuated between 150 to 200 villagers, possessed between twenty and thirty stone dwellings, and farmed lands allotted for cereals and orchards. A kibbutz was established 2 km to the southeast in 1943. In May 1948, Israeli Palmach forces marched from Tiberias to Safed, resulting in the abandonment or evacuation of many villages along the way (including ʻYaquq); see Khalidi, *All That Remains*, 546–57.

included a visit in 1875 by Victor Guérin (a professor at the French School of Athens) and a survey of the region conducted by C. R. Conder and H. H. Kitchener on behalf of the Palestine Exploration Fund in the 1870s and 1880s. These explorers noted the dwellings and small Muslim population of the village, considered connections between its name and the biblical "Hukkok," and observed traces of the ancient village still visible on the surface, including ashlars and columns scattered around the site and cist tombs and caves at its periphery.[21]

Following the evacuation of 'Yaquq in 1948, its modern dwellings stood abandoned for nearly two decades, during which time a more formal survey of the ancient remains was conducted by Bezalel Ravani, the Israeli Inspector of Antiquities for the Tiberias region in 1956–57. Around the main settlement, Ravani collected pottery sherds from the surface that attest to activity at the site from the Early Bronze, Iron, Persian, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, and Medieval periods. Unfortunately, Ravani did not provide details of the sherds collected in his survey, leaving the relative quantities unknown.[22] He did, however, conduct limited excavations in tombs and burial caves to the north of the site that were discovered (and partially damaged) during the construction of a nearby water system. Four burial caves each contained a central pit, a small ledge encircling the pit, and *loculi* niches hewn into the walls. Finds in the caves included three crude ossuaries likely dating to 70–135 CE.[23] Early Roman pottery, glass, and lamps, traces

21. See Victor Guérin, *Description géographique, historique et archéologique de la Palestine: Galilée* (Paris: L'imprimerie nationale, 1880), 354–59; Claude R. Conder and H. H. Kitchener, *The Survey of Western Palestine: Memoirs of the Topography, Orography, Hydrography, and Archaeology: Volume 1: Galilee* (London: Palestine Exploration Fund, 1881), 364–65, 420.

22. Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 151.

23. These ossuaries were made of limestone, were roughly dressed, showed heavy chisel marks, and had vaulted lids; see Mordechai Aviam and Danny Syon, "Jewish Ossilegium in Galilee," in *What Athens Has to Do with Jerusalem: Essays on Classical, Jewish, and Early Christian Art and Archaeology in Honor of Gideon Foerster*, ed. Leonard V. Rutgers (Leuven: Peeters, 2002): 168, 177–78; L. Y. Rahmani, *A Catalogue of Jewish Ossuaries in the Collections of the State of Israel* (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 1994), 116 (no. 158/plate 22).

of wood coffins, and a coin minted under Trajan (98–117 CE) indicate that the tombs were in use during the first and early second centuries.[24]

In 1968, the Israeli army bulldozed the pre-1948 dwellings, leaving the center of the site covered with modern rubble mixed with ancient remains. Since that time, numerous Israeli scholars have conducted additional surveys of Huqoq's ancient features: Yigal Tepper and Yuval Shahar explored a hiding complex, a *miqveh*, and agricultural installations (possibly connected with mustard production) that seem to date to the Roman or Byzantine periods;[25] Zvi Ilan reported architectural fragments and a lintel carved with a menorah clustered in the center of the site, suggesting the presence of a monumental synagogue;[26] and, most recently, Uzi Leibner collected over two hundred potsherds from the surface, which he recorded and dated to the Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine periods.[27] Leibner also noted the presence of agricultural installations

24. B. Ravani and P. P. Kahane, "Rock-Cut Tombs at Huqoq," *'Atiqot* 3 (1961): 121–47.

25. Yigal Tepper and Yuval Shahar, "Subterranean Hiding Complexes in the Galilee," in *The Hiding Complexes in the Judean Shephelah*, ed. Amos Kloner and Yigal Tepper (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1987), 279–326 (esp. 311–13) [Hebrew]; Y. Tepper, G. Dar'in, and Y. Tepper, *The Naḥal 'Amud District: Chapters on the Settlement Process* (Tel Aviv: 2000), 25, 84–85 [Hebrew]; Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 151.

26. Zvi Ilan, *Ancient Synagogues in Israel* (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Defence, 1991), 122 [Hebrew]; Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 152. Unfortunately, the lintel fragment carved with a menorah has disappeared from the site, and its location is presently unknown.

27. Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 154–55, reported the dates and relative percentages of his pottery sample as follows: Hellenistic (only two jars), Early Roman (19%), Late Roman (43%), and Byzantine (roughly 25%). Based on this survey, Leibner concluded that the Jewish settlement at Huqoq began sometime in the Late Hellenistic period, continued to grow in the Early Roman period, flourished to its greatest extent in the Late Roman period, and gradually declined throughout the Byzantine period. Leibner claimed that these findings support his position that Lower Galilee experienced a general decline in population by the fifth century CE, a position challenged by others; see Jodi Magness, "Did Galilee Decline in the Fifth Century? The Synagogue at Chorazin Reconsidered," in *Religion, Ethnicity, and Identity in Ancient Galilee*, ed. Jürgen Zangenberg, Harold W. Attridge, and Dale B. Martin (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 259–74; and "Did Galilee Experience a Settlement Crisis in the Mid-Fourth Century?" in *Jewish Identities in Late Antiquity, Studies in Memory of Menahem Stern*, ed. Lee I. Levine and Daniel R. Schwartz (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 296–313.

(wine and oil presses), architectural fragments, burial caves, and quarried cist tombs scattered around the site and its periphery.[28]

Related research included surveys of nearby Sheikh Nashi, a hill located 400 m to the east of Huqoq that possessed natural defenses, the remains of a Hellenistic fortification at its summit, and numerous agricultural and water installations. These two settlements clearly had an important relationship throughout antiquity, but the precise nature of that relationship is still uncertain; they both had access to ʻEin Huqoq (the natural spring at the northern base of the site), shared use of surrounding agricultural lands, and were occupied contemporaneously.[29] Some scholars have suggested that Sheikh Nashi (with its natural and artificial defenses) was a military camp supported by Huqoq (with its easier access to the spring) as a civilian settlement,[30] but this intriguing possibility has not yet been verified.

In summary, archaeological explorations and surveys have confirmed and clarified the outline of Huqoq's history found in the literary sources: It appears from the material remains that the site was occupied in the biblical period and expanded in the Late Hellenistic period (possibly in connection with a military camp at Sheikh Nashi) and that significant growth occurred during the Roman-Byzantine period as attested by pottery, agricultural installations, tombs, and architectural fragments belonging to a monumental synagogue. Huqoq then seems to have declined in the early Islamic period, was resettled as the Muslim village of ʻYaquq by the Middle Ages, and was abandoned for the last time in 1948; since that time it has remained uninhabited.

28. Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 151.

29. Lissovsky, "Hukkok," 105; Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 155–58.

30. This suggestion was first made by Albrecht Alt in 1931 following his visit to the site; see Albrecht Alt, "Das Institut in den Jahren 1929 und 1930," *Palästinajahrbuch* 27 (1931): 5–50, esp. 40n2; cf. Tepper, Darʻin, and Tepper, *Naḥal ʻAmud District*, 25, 45.

Archaeological Research at Huqoq—The Huqoq Excavation Project

Huqoq's occupational history, the scattering of ancient remains on its surface, its current accessibility, and the fact that it was previously unexcavated made it an ideal location for systematic archaeological research into ancient Galilean village life. These observations led Jodi Magness (UNC-Chapel Hill)—later joined by Shua Kisilevitz (Israel Antiquities Authority)—to organize the Huqoq Excavation Project (HEP) in 2010 and direct the first two seasons of formal excavation in 2011 and 2012. The initial goals of the HEP were threefold: (1) locate and excavate the village's ancient synagogue in hopes of clarifying current debates on the dating of monumental synagogue buildings in the region; (2) excavate a portion of the ancient Jewish village to establish a context for the synagogue and to refine the local pottery chronology; and (3) preserve the history of the pre-1948 village of 'Yaquq by excavating a portion of it and by interviewing the descendants of the village's last inhabitants. The HEP is now only into its third year of research, but these goals are already being met and exceeded in numerous ways. Because this article focuses on Huqoq's ancient past, we will briefly summarize the findings of the 2011-2012 excavation seasons as they relate to the ancient village and synagogue. Fuller preliminary reports of the entire project can be found elsewhere.[31]

The Ancient Village

One of the most important components of the HEP in its first two seasons was the excavation of the ancient village of Huqoq (Area 2000), supervised by Chad Spigel (Trinity University, TX). Initial

31. Jodi Magness, "Huqoq—2011 Preliminary Report," *Excavations and Surveys in Israel* (*Hadashot Arkheologiyot*) 124 (2012); Jodi Magness, Shua Kisilevitz, Matthew Grey, Chad Spigel, and Brian Coussens, "Huqoq—2012 Preliminary Report," *Excavations and Surveys in Israel* (*Hadashot Arkheologiyot*) 125 (2013); for additional and more popularized reports, see Matthew J. Grey, "Excavating an Ancient Jewish Village near the Sea of Galilee," *BYU Religious Education Review* 5/1 (2012): 6-7; and Jodi Magness, "Samson in the Synagogue," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 39/1 (2013): 32-39, 66-67.

surveys of the site suggested that the modern remains of ʻYaquq partially overlapped ancient Huqoq, with its blocks of houses, internal courtyards, and alleyways possibly preserving some of the layout of the ancient village below. It also appeared that the ancient village extended to the south of the modern remains, thus providing an area with more direct access to earlier periods. Therefore, excavations began in the southeast quadrant of the site in hopes of uncovering a portion of the ancient village, understanding the context of the nearby synagogue, providing new data to refine the chronology of the local pottery, and gleaning new insights into ancient Galilean village life.[32]

In 2011 and 2012, village excavations focused on a structure containing rooms around courtyards, separated by well-constructed stone walls. Just below the modern surface, these rooms contained rubble collapse and soil mixed with Byzantine, Mamluk, and Ottoman period pottery.[33] Once these layers were cleared, the floors of the building were revealed; the pottery associated with the floors dates to the Byzantine period (fifth or sixth century CE). Coins, animal bones, glass, and large quantities of restorable pottery (including imported Late Roman red wares) were also found in the rooms. It appears that one of these rooms was eventually converted into a stable and that other rooms were used for agricultural or industrial activity, as attested by numerous grinding stones, loom weights, press weights, crushed olive pits, and a roof roller. Fills of soil below the floors and walls of these rooms contain pottery and other finds dating to the Bronze Age, Iron Age, and Persian and Hellenistic periods, but excavations have not yet uncovered architectural remains from these earlier periods.[34]

The team also explored, examined, and excavated other features of the ancient village in 2011 and 2012. In initial surveys of the site,

32. Magness, "Huqoq—2011."

33. Magness, "Huqoq—2011."

34. The earliest and most intriguing find from these early periods was a white stone mace head likely dating to the Early Bronze Age. For this discovery and other data pertaining to the structure, see Magness et al., "Huqoq—2012," and Magness, "Samson in the Synagogue," 33-34.

cist graves, rock-cut tombs, and agricultural installations—including remains of wine and oil presses—were found scattered around the site and its periphery.[35] These are difficult to date with precision, but they resemble features of other Roman-era sites. One feature studied as part of the HEP is a cistern and underground hiding complex in the center of the village. The cistern is located in Area 3000 near the synagogue (see below) and reaches a depth of 8.5 m. It was explored and mapped by Yinon Shivtiel (Safed College), who discovered three underground hiding tunnels branching off from the subterranean cistern. Shivtiel suggests that these tunnels share characteristics with hiding complexes used by villagers for protection during the Jewish revolts against Rome in 66–70 and 132–35 CE, perhaps indicating Huqoq's involvment in one or both of those wars.[36]

Surveys also revealed the location of two large *miqva'ot* (Jewish ritual baths) hewn into the bedrock on the eastern and southern periphery of the village. The southern *miqveh* was excavated by the HEP in 2011 as Area 4000, supervised by Byron McCane (Wofford College). It contained a passage entering from the east consisting of twelve steps (five made of cut stone blocks and seven hewn into the bedrock, all with traces of wear in the center) and a rock-cut immersion room in a trapezoidal shape. A thin layer of silt that covered the floor contained Late Roman and Byzantine pottery, suggesting that the room ceased to function as a ritual bath in the Byzantine period when it was converted into a cistern.[37] This feature confirms that Huqoq retained its Jewish character through late antiquity and supports recent claims that ritual purity practices continued in some Jewish communities long after the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in 70 CE.[38]

35. Magness, "Huqoq—2011."

36. Magness, "Huqoq—2011." For more of Shivtiel's work on ancient hiding complexes in Galilee, see Yinon Shivtiel, "Cliff Settlements, Shelters and Refuge Caves in the Galilee," in *In the Hill-Country, and in the Shephelah, and in the Arabah (Joshua 12, 8): Studies and Researches Presented to Adam Zertal in the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Manasseh Hill-Country Survey*, ed. Shay Bar (Jerusalem: Ariel Publishing House, 2008), 223–35.

37. Magness, "Huqoq—2011," and "Samson in the Synagogue," 34.

38. David Amit and Yonatan Adler, "The Observance of Ritual Purity after 70 CE: A Reevaluation of the Evidence in Light of Recent Archaeological Discoveries," in

The Ancient Synagogue

One of the features that attracted the attention of explorers, surveyors, and archaeologists from the beginning was the clustering of finely carved architectural fragments and columns on a mound of rubble near the center of the site. The high quality of these pieces and the previous report of a lintel decorated with a menorah (now lost) suggested that a monumental synagogue once stood in the village. The location and excavation of this ancient synagogue became one of the primary objectives of the HEP, with hopes that it would shed needed light on current debates over synagogue typology and chronology in the Galilee region. To accomplish these objectives, excavations of the rubble mound (Area 3000) began in 2011 and continued in 2012 under the supervision of Matthew Grey (Brigham Young University).[39]

Because of the clustering of architectural pieces near the center of the site, the mound of rubble was the natural location to begin searching for the synagogue. An initial clearing of weeds along the west side of the mound revealed six large paving stones, two of which were part of a threshold. These limestone blocks were not *in situ*. However, they presumably did not move far from their original position, and they resembled similar features associated with courtyards and entryways of other known ancient synagogues, suggesting that Huqoq's synagogue was located nearby. Unfortunately, these blocks turned out to be surrounded by modern fill with no traces of the ancient building.[40] However, more successful excavations were conducted on the mound itself (closer to the clustered architectural fragments) and to its east near the cistern, which presumably was located in the synagogue's courtyard.

The mound is in a part of the ancient village covered by modern remains, so initial excavations uncovered portions of the pre-

"Follow the Wise": Studies in Jewish History and Culture in Honor of Lee I. Levine, ed. Zeev Weiss, Oded Irshai, Jodi Magness, and Seth Schwartz (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 121–43.

39. Magness, "Huqoq—2011."

40. Magness, "Huqoq—2011," and "Samson in the Synagogue," 34–35.

1948 village of 'Yaquq.[41] The modern features excavated on the mound included a room that had collapsed and burned (apparently during the village's evacuation in 1948), a courtyard and food production area around the cistern, and numerous small finds from the Ottoman and British Mandate periods, such as keys, bottles, coins, combs, sandals, clay pipes, and a musket barrel with thirty-two lead balls. In addition to modern remains, the rubble collapse and soil fills of the mound also contained material that pointed to a large and affluent ancient structure in the vicinity; these included pottery, tesserae (small mosaic cubes), clay roof tiles, coins, and a decorated rim of an imported marble basin.[42]

In 2011, while excavating the rubble and fill on the east side of the mound, we uncovered a massive limestone block, which at first appeared to be a paving stone for the synagogue's courtyard. Further excavation, however, revealed that it was a large ashlar block in a wall running north-south. This turned out to be a portion of the east wall of the synagogue.[43] Excavations continued on both sides of the wall in 2012 in an effort to learn more about the synagogue's dimensions, layout, and construction date. Outside the wall, we reached a thick and compacted layer of limestone building chips—pieces of stone from the wall's construction and dressing—in the building's foundation trench. The coins found inside and underneath this layer are still being identified, but pottery associated with the trench suggests a late fourth century *terminus post quem* for the synagogue's construction.[44] This dating will be more precisely refined with further excavation and the identification of the coins.[45]

41. The modern village excavations are also in Area 3000, with Brian Coussens (assistant area supervisor) and Tawfiq De'adle (consultant) overseeing its excavation, documentation, and preservation.

42. Magness, "Huqoq—2011"; Magness et al., "Huqoq—2012"; Magness, "Samson in the Synagogue," 36.

43. Magness, "Huqoq—2011," and "Samson in the Synagogue," 35.

44. Magness et al., "Huqoq—2012." Underneath the synagogue's foundation trench is an earlier occupational phase attested by a column base, but excavations have not yet explored this level.

45. Magness, "Samson in the Synagogue," 35-36.

Excavations inside the wall showed that the ancient synagogue building was renovated in some way during the Mamluk period, as attested by a cobblestone floor resting on top of a deep fill high above the original synagogue floor level. This fill contained pottery from the Late Roman, Byzantine, early Islamic, and Medieval periods. It also contained large quantities of fine tesserae, including clusters of colored cubes still bound together by chunks of plaster, indicating that at one point a lavish mosaic floor decorated the building's interior. However, the loose tesserae in the fill suggested that the mosaic below had been severely damaged at some point before the construction of the later Mamluk floor. Excavations also uncovered a layer of white plaster on the inside of the synagogue wall, but it bears no traces of decoration.[46]

By the end of the 2012 season, we reached the synagogue floor and uncovered the most exciting discovery of the HEP to date—a surviving portion of a beautiful mosaic containing figural decoration, geometric patterns, and an inscription.[47] The mosaic is fragmentary in this portion of the building, but the three surviving sections provide valuable insights into the religious activities of the community. The first section to be discovered was a pair of female faces flanking a medallion inscription. The face on the north side of the inscription is well preserved, showing a woman with wavy red hair and a white earring in her left ear. The face on the south side of the inscription is badly damaged, but shows a woman wearing a tiara (containing three green glass stones as its diadem) with her hair tied in a topknot.[48]

Although the identification of these women is uncertain, Karen Britt (the HEP mosaics specialist) has offered two possibilities: (1) the female faces, both with lotus flowers protruding from above

46. Magness et al., "Huqoq—2012"; Orna Cohen—the site's conservator—treated the plaster on the wall's interior as well as the mosaic floor.

47. Magness, "Samson in the Synagogue," 32, 36, points out that the volunteer who first discovered the mosaic was Bryan Bozung, a Brigham Young University alumnus who is currently a graduate student studying Second Temple Judaism at Yale University.

48. Magness et al., "Huqoq—2012," and Magness, "Samson in the Synagogue," 36.

them, could represent two of the four seasons, a motif depicted in other synagogue mosaics in the region; or (2) the faces, both encircled by *nimbi* or haloes, could be depictions of wealthy female donors from the synagogue congregation (a phenomenon known from Byzantine churches in the region). If the latter possibility is correct, the Huqoq mosaic would be the first known depiction of female donors to be found in a synagogue setting.[49] This interpretation is strengthened by the orientation of the female faces toward the medallion inscription, which promises blessings to those (such as donors?) who perform good deeds.[50]

The mosaic inscription is in Hebrew or Aramaic and is written with white letters against a black background. It once contained six lines but is now badly damaged, leaving large gaps in the text and requiring extensive reconstruction. David Amit reconstructed the inscription in Hebrew as follows (restored portions are in brackets):[51]

1. []And blessed	[וברוכין]
2. [are all of the people of the town?] who	[כל בני העיר?] שהן
3. adhere to all	מתח [זקין] בכל
4. commandments. So may be	מצות כן יהא
5. your labor and Ame[n Se]la[h]	עמלכן ואמן ס[לה]
6. [P]eace	[ש]לום

In addition to promising rewards to those who keep the commandments, a portion of the inscription ("so may be your labor") resembles a midrash on Ecclesiastes 6:7 that contrasts the deeds

49. For depictions of female donors in Byzantine church mosaics in Israel and Jordan, see Karen Britt, "Fama et Memoria: Portraits of Female Patrons in Mosaic Pavements of Churches in Byzantine Palestine and Arabia," *Medieval Feminist Forum* 44/2 (2008): 119–43.

50. Magness, "Samson in the Synagogue," 38; Karen Britt, "The Huqoq Synagogue Mosaics," at www.biblicalarchaeology.org/huqoqmosaics (accessed 24 June 2013).

51. Magness, "Samson in the Synagogue," 38. For detailed analysis and interpretation of this inscription, see David Amit, "Mosaic Inscription from a Synagogue Mosaic at Horvat Huqoq," at www.biblicalarchaeology.org/huqoqmosaics (accessed 24 June 2013).

performed by humans with the gifts bestowed by God.[52] If a relationship does exist between this image and text, it might be significant that the midrash tells an illustrative parable of a villager marrying a woman of royal lineage,[53] a scene possibly recalled by the depictions of elite women flanking the inscription.

A second section of the mosaic survives along the wall and likely wraps around the outer edge of the entire synagogue floor. It contains a large white band closest to the wall, with black borders and a colorful three-stand guilloche (braid) pattern. The mosaic is damaged beyond the borders of the guilloche, but remnants of black frames and hints of animal features suggest that figural scenes once existed closer to the hall's interior. One of these scenes contained a feline (indicated by the tip of its ear) and another possibly contained a donkey (indicated by its mane and tail).[54]

Before the end of the 2012 season, a third section of the mosaic was uncovered in close proximity to the others. It depicts the torso of a large male figure dressed in Late Roman military garb, including a white tunic and red cloak. The tunic was adorned with an *orbiculum* (roundel)—an apotropaic symbol worn by soldiers in the Late Roman army to ward off evil—and cinched by a thick decorated belt. Unfortunately, the head of this figure did not survive, and there is no identifying inscription. However, near the soldier's feet there is a depiction of two pairs of foxes tied together by their

52. This observation is made by Amit, "Mosaic Inscription." The possible parallel passage in *Ecclesiastes Rabbah* 6:7 reads, "R. Samuel said: However man toils and accumulates [merit for the performance of] the precepts and good deeds in this world, it is insufficient [to requite the boon granted him by God of] the breath which comes from his mouth." This translation is from Abraham Cohen, *Midrash Rabbah: Ecclesiastes* (London: Soncino, 1983), 161.

53. "R. Hanina b. Isaac said: All that a man toils for precepts and good deeds is FOR HIS MOUTH . . . [but] the soul is aware that whatever it toils for is for itself and therefore never has enough of Torah and good deeds. To what may the matter be likened? To a villager who married a woman of royal lineage. Though he bring her everything in the world, it is not esteemed by her at all. Why? Because she is a king's daughter [and is used to comforts]. So it is with the soul; though you bring it all the luxuries in the world, they are nothing to it. Why? Because it is of heavenly origin" (*Ecclesiastes Rabbah* 6:7).

54. Magness et al., "Huqoq—2012," and Magness, "Samson in the Synagogue," 38.

tails to lighted torches. This identifies the scene as a depiction of Samson exacting retribution against the Philistines by tying three hundred foxes in pairs to torches and releasing them into nearby agricultural fields, a story told in Judges 15:1–5.[55]

The significance of this find is still being researched, but it is clearly a rare and important contribution to the study of ancient synagogue art and liturgy. Because of prohibitions of figural decoration in rabbinic literature during this period, the presence of such motifs in synagogue art has long been a surprising phenomenon. Scholars traditionally thought that ancient Judaism was aniconic on the assumption that most Jews followed the rulings of the rabbis as found in Talmudic texts. However, synagogue excavations from recent decades have shown that many Jewish communities in late antiquity either ignored or violated rabbinic rulings and used human, animal, and cosmic art in their synagogue worship.[56] These mosaics reveal strands of Jewish thought and practice that seem to have existed outside (or at least on the margins) of rabbinic Judaism, showing that this was a time before the legal rulings of the rabbis were normative. Therefore, the Huqoq mosaic appears to reflect a popular (nonrabbinic) expression of religiosity, adds to a growing corpus of figural images depicted in ancient synagogues, and further attests to the diversity of Jewish thought in this period. It is particularly interesting because of the rarity of Samson imagery in ancient Jewish art.

Samson in Byzantine Galilee—A Messianic Prototype?

As exciting as it is to have found such a rare Samson image at Huqoq, this mosaic is not the first depiction of the biblical judge found in a synagogue; it is the second. The first was found a few years earlier in a synagogue at Wadi Hamam, a contemporary Jewish village

55. Magness et al., "Huqoq—2012," and Magness, "Samson in the Synagogue," 38–39.

56. For an overview of scholarship on early Jewish synagogue art, see Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 593–612.

only 5 km south of Huqoq. There, alongside other images of Israel's biblical triumphs—including the drowning of Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea and the building of the Jerusalem temple—the mosaic floor depicts Samson dressed in military garb, killing Philistines with the jawbone of an ass (Judges 15:14-17).[57] This scene, along with the illustration of the foxes at Huqoq, recalls the biblical stories of Samson wreaking havoc among Israel's ancient Philistine enemies. Together, the mosaics at Huqoq and Wadi Hamam are the only known images of Samson to appear in synagogues (or any other Jewish context) in Israel.[58] The discovery of these two rare images—both in synagogues dating to the Late Roman/Byzantine periods and located in close proximity by the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee—raises an important question: Why would Jewish villages in late antique Galilee have had such an interest in the story of Samson?[59]

The answer is not immediately obvious. Samson had no historical ties to the region; his biblical exploits among the Philistines occurred far to the south, and he belonged to the Israelite tribe of Dan, which settled to the north.[60] Furthermore, rabbinic literature

57. Uzi Leibner and Shulamit Miller, "A Figural Mosaic in the Synagogue at Khirbet Wadi Hamam," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 23/1 (2010): 238–64.

58. There is a Byzantine period structure in Mopsuestia (Misis) that had a mosaic floor depicting an entire cycle of Samson scenes from Judges 14–16 in its northern side aisle, including Samson and the foxes (scene III), Samson killing Philistines (scene IV), and accompanying verses from the Septuagint. However, it is unclear if this building was a synagogue or a church. For arguments in favor of the latter, see Ludwig Budde, *Antike Mosaiken in Kilikien, I* (Recklinghausen: Bongers, 1969); and Ernst Kitzinger, "Observations on the Samson Floor at Mopsuestia," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 (1973): 133–44. Arguments for the building being a synagogue can be found in Michael Avi-Yonah, "The Mosaics of Mopsuestia—Church or Synagogue?" in *Ancient Synagogues Revealed*, ed. Lee I. Levine (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1981), 186–90.

59. The following discussion summarizes a more detailed study that will be published in Matthew J. Grey, "'The Redeemer to Arise from the House of Dan': Samson, Apocalypticism, and Messianic Hopes in Late Antique Galilee," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* (forthcoming).

60. Elchanan Reiner and David Amit, "Samson Follows the Sun to Galilee," *Ha'aretz*, 6 October 2012, claim that local Galilean tradition viewed Samson's exploits as occurring in this region, but the evidence they have published so far is thin and unconvincing. Perhaps their future publications will more clearly articulate and strengthen this suggestion.

from this period consistently reflects a negative view of Samson by emphasizing his moral failings, using his sexual transgressions as a warning against marrying Gentiles, and claiming that he was punished by God for his sins.[61] Because of their critical attitude toward Samson, rabbinic texts do not explain his appearance in synagogue mosaics or how he was publicly celebrated in Galilee. Nevertheless, something about the stories of Samson's victories over the Philistines resonated with some Jewish communities in eastern Lower Galilee, thus begging the question of Samson's significance in the region.

Ongoing research into this question suggests that the Samson mosaics at Huqoq and Wadi Hamam may have been intended to serve as apocalyptic or messianic images—biblical stories used by these communities to foster hope in Israel's eschatological redemption. Traditionally, scholars assumed that apocalypticism and messianism—worldviews that flourished in the late Second Temple period (ca. 200 BCE to 70 CE)[62]—ended with the failure of the Jewish revolts against Rome in the late first and early second centuries. However, recent studies have shown that this was not the case.[63] While some Jews (including rabbinic circles) did ignore, downplay, or discourage apocalyptic and messianic thought in the destructive wake of the revolts,[64] others continued to foster these

61. For example, *m. Sotah* 1:8 and *t. Sotah* 1:8 provide examples of how Samson was divinely punished for his attraction to foreign women, including the claim that Samson lost his sight because he followed the lust of his eyes by marrying a Philistine (cf. *Genesis Rabbah* 67:13, 85:6; *Numbers Rabbah* 9:24); *b. Sotah* 10b similarly describes Samson as a cripple who was cursed by God for his transgressions (cf. *b. Sanhedrin* 105a). For more on the negative assessment of Samson in rabbinic literature, see Shimon Fogel, "'Samson's Shoulders Were Sixty Cubits': Three Issues about Samson's Image in the Eyes of the Rabbis" (MA thesis, Ben-Gurion University, 2009) [Hebrew] and Richard G. Marks, "Dangerous Hero: Rabbinic Attitudes toward Legendary Warriors," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 54 (1983): 181–94.

62. For an overview of early Jewish apocalypticism, see John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998).

63. John C. Reeves, *Trajectories in Near Eastern Apocalyptic: A Postrabbinic Jewish Apocalypse Reader* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 1.

64. Rabbinic statements that discourage apocalyptic and messianic speculation include *t. Abodah Zarah* 1:19; *y. Berakhot* 1:1, 2c; *b. Sanhedrin* 97b; *Ecclesiastes Rabbah* 11:5–29. For discussion of early rabbinic resistance to apocalypticism and messianism,

hopes throughout the Late Roman, Byzantine, and early Islamic periods. As in the Second Temple period, a series of historical events from the third to seventh centuries—including the rise of Imperial Christianity, the fall of the Jewish Patriarchate, the Byzantine-Persian wars, and the Muslim conquest of Palestine—kept strands of apocalyptic thought alive and continually prompted Jewish communities to reimagine the eschatological scenario that would bring messianic redemption to Israel.[65]

As it turns out, much of this apocalyptic fervor flourished in eastern Lower Galilee, the region in which the villages of Huqoq and Wadi Hamam are located. There, some Jews imagined apocalyptic scenarios in which key messianic events would occur in the vicinity of Tiberias and Mount Arbel, about 12 km south of Huqoq.[66] These included local traditions that messianic instruments and figures (including Elijah's "staff of salvation" and the Josephite messiah) would emerge from Tiberias to begin the eschatological drama, that Armilos (the Jewish antichrist figure) would wage the battle of Gog and Magog in the Arbel Valley, and that the Davidic messiah would descend upon Mount Arbel to deliver Israel from its enemies, restore Jewish sovereignty, and rebuild the Jerusalem tem-

see Michael Avi-Yonah, *The Jews of Palestine: A Political History from the Bar Kokhba War to the Arab Conquest* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), 69–71; Joseph Dan, "Armilus: The Jewish Antichrist and the Origins and Dating of the Sefer Zerubbavel," in *Toward the Millennium: Messianic Expectations from the Bible to Waco*, ed. Peter Schafer and Mark Cohen (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 73–104, esp. 75; Moshe Idel, *Messianic Mystics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 42–45; Oded Irshai, "Dating the Eschaton: Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic Calculations in Late Antiquity," in *Apocalyptic Time*, ed. Albert I. Baumgarten (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 113–53 (esp. 124, 129, 136).

65. For more on Jewish apocalypticism in late antiquity, see Reeves, *Trajectories in Near Eastern Apocalyptic*; Avraham Grossman, "Jerusalem in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature," in *The History of Jerusalem: The Early Muslim Period, 638–1099*, ed. Joshua Prawer and Haggai Ben-Shammai (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 295–310; Irshai, "Dating the Eschaton," 135, 139–53; Oded Irshai, "The Earthquake in the Valley of Arbel: A Galilean Apocalyptic Tradition, Its Historical Context and Liturgical Commemorative Setting," *Jerusalem Studies in Hebrew Literature and Folklore* 25 (2012): 1–26 [Hebrew].

66. See Robert L. Wilken, *The Land Called Holy: Palestine in Christian History and Thought* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 207–8; Reeves, *Trajectories in Near Eastern Apocalyptic*, 29–39.

ple.[67] This regional apocalypticism made Tiberias and its environs the center of nationalistic and messianic movements that sought to overthrow the Byzantine Christian Empire and to reenthrone the Jewish priesthood.[68]

In this regional atmosphere of nationalism, localized apocalyptic hopes, and messianic speculation, depictions of Samson wreaking havoc among the Philistines easily could have had contemporary social, political, and religious significance; a biblical warrior who was born "to deliver Israel" (Judges 13:5) and who fought against an occupying force may have resonated with Galilean Jews who saw themselves as being under foreign occupation and who anxiously awaited their own deliverance. Such an interpretation of the Samson mosaics at Huqoq and Wadi Hamam—both within view of Tiberias and Mount Arbel—is supported by the fact that liturgical texts used in synagogues during this period refer to Samson in light of apocalyptic expectations and point to him as a biblical prototype of the eschatological messiah.

Synagogue art and liturgy in this period often facilitated popular messianic hopes by using biblical stories of Israel's past triumphs to encourage faith in God's future redemption of the community. These sometimes included depictions of David's victories

67. These traditions are reflected in the *Sefer Zerubbabel*, an apocalyptic text containing material from the third through seventh centuries CE. For its full text and translation, see Martha Himmelfarb, "Sefer Zerubbabel," in *Rabbinic Fantasies: Imaginative Narratives from Classical Hebrew Literature,* ed. David Stern and Mark Jay Mirsky (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1990), 67–90; and Reeves, *Trajectories in Near Eastern Apocalyptic*, 51–66. For historical commentary, see Dan, "Armilus," 73–104.

68. Events reflecting the activities of these movements include the involvement of Tiberian priests in Julian's project to rebuild the Jerusalem temple in 363, an attempt led by priests from Galilee to restore Jewish Jerusalem under the Empress Eudocia in the mid-fifth century, and an attempt by Tiberian priests in the early sixth century to establish an independent state in Yemen. Sources from this period also indicate that these nationalist priestly circles from Tiberias included apocalyptic visionaries who speculated on the timing of the messiah's arrival; see Oded Irshai, "Confronting a Christian Empire: Jewish Culture in the World of Byzantium," in *Cultures of the Jews: A New History*, ed. David Biale (New York: Schocken, 2002), 180–220 (esp. 193, 207–9); and Matthew J. Grey, *Jewish Priests and the Social History of Post-70 Palestine* (PhD diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2011), 291–98.

or Ezekiel's vision of communal restoration on synagogue walls and floors,[69] as well as prayers and poetry recited in synagogue worship services that expressed hope for future messianic redemption by recalling past episodes of God's deliverance.[70] A survey of liturgical texts used in Galilee during this period indicates that some congregations drew upon the story of Samson to foster such hopes in their worship, thus helping to elucidate his appearance in synagogue mosaics in the region.

For example, Samson's triumphs are evoked in the so-called *Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers*, a collection of third-century Jewish prayers from Palestine that were preserved in the Christian *Apostolic Constitutions* (compiled in fourth-century Syria).[71] Prayer 6 of-

69. For these and other similar images on the wall frescoes at Dura Europos, see Carl H. Kraeling, *The Excavations at Dura Europos, VIII Part I: The Synagogue* (New York: KTAV, 1979), 66–239; Erwin R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman World* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953–68), 9:129, 10:74–97; and Kära L. Schenk, "Temple, Community, and Sacred Narrative in the Dura-Europos Synagogue," *Association for Jewish Studies Review* 34/2 (2010): 195–229. For "messianic" images of David in synagogue mosaics at Gaza and Meroth, see Alexei M. Sivertsev, *Judaism and Imperial Ideology in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 172–212; Mosche Barasch, "The David Mosaic of Gaza," in *Assaph: Studies in Art History* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1980), 1:1–42; and Zvi Ilan and Emmanuel Damati, *Meroth: The Ancient Jewish Village* (Tel Aviv: Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, 1987), 53–56 [Hebrew].

70. Many of the hopes fostered by apocalyptic circles found popular expression in the blessings of the *'Amidah*, the central prayer in late antique synagogue worship. These include petitions for the (re)appearance of a Davidic monarch, the restoration of Jewish Jerusalem, and the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple; see Joseph Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1977), 222–24; and Wilken, *Land Called Holy*, 137–38. By the fifth century, the blessings of the *'Amidah* were supplemented or replaced by liturgical poetry (*piyyutim*) that often reflected popular messianic folklore and Galilean apocalyptic traditions; see Joseph Yahalom, "The Temple and the City in Liturgical Hebrew Poetry," in Prawer and Ben-Shammai, *History of Jerusalem*, 270–94 (esp. 275–76), and Joseph Yahalom, *Poetry and Society in Jewish Galilee of Late Antiquity* (Tel Aviv: Hikibbutz Hameuchad, 1999) [Hebrew].

71. The Greek text of the prayers can be found in Marcel Metzger, *Les constitutions apostoliques, Tome III (Livres VII et VIII)*, Sources Chrétiennes 336 (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1987), 86–88. For the standard English translation, see D. A. Fiensy and D. R. Darnell, "Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 2:671–97. Historical and textual analysis of these prayers can be found in David A. Fiensy, *Prayers Alleged to Be Jewish: An Examination of the Constitutiones Apostolorum* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985).

fers petitions for God to restore the Davidic monarchy, Zion, and the temple, and to hear the prayers of the congregation. To encourage hope in the fulfillment of these petitions, the prayer lists many of Israel's biblical heroes (including Moses, David, and Elijah) who were filled with God's power and who stand as evidence that God can perform similar miracles in the future. Along with these legendary figures, the prayer mentions "Sampson, in his thirst before his error," as an example of God's ability to assist Israel in the past and to fulfill eschatological hopes.[72] Similarly, Prayer 7 lists "the days of the Judges" (implicitly including Samson) as an example of God's mercy, compassion, and deliverance "generation after generation."[73]

Samson is not the central figure in these prayers, just as he is not the central figure on the mosaic floors at Huqoq and Wadi Hamam. Rather, he is one of many biblical heroes whose valiant acts epitomize God's intervention on behalf of Israel. Yet, by recalling his divine strength and his success in fighting against the Philistines, the prayers use Samson and "the (other) Judges" as evidence that God can hearken to the requests for national redemption offered by the congregation. These prayers show that some congregations liturgically celebrated the feats Samson accomplished "before his error" (his relationship with Delilah) as an example of God's power to assist the community. The probable origin of these texts in Palestine during the Late Roman period suggests that the synagogue congregations at Huqoq and Wadi Hamam may have uttered such prayers—illustrated by their mosaic floors—as a part of their worship services.[74]

Other liturgical texts go beyond this general use of the Samson story and point to Samson as a biblical type of the coming messiah. This theme is most prominent in the Palestinian targums—Aramaic translations of the Hebrew Bible used in synagogue liturgy in late

72. Fiensy and Darnell, "Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers," 684–85; *Hellenistic Synagogal Prayer* 6.1–2, 7 (*Apostolic Constitutions* 7.37.1–5).

73. Fiensy and Darnell, "Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers," 685–86; *Hellenistic Synagogal Prayer* 7.2–5 (*Apostolic Constitutions* 7.38.1–8).

74. For the dating and provenance of these prayers, see Fiensy, *Prayers Alleged to Be Jewish*, 209–42.

antique Galilee[75]—which present Samson as a divinely empowered deliverer of the past who prefigures the future Davidic messiah. The association between Samson and the messiah is introduced in the targumic expansions of Genesis 49, the biblical account in which Jacob pronounces over each son a symbolic blessing meant to foreshadow the destinies of the twelve tribes. *Targums Neofiti* and *Pseudo-Jonathan* expand the sequence by promising that these blessings would reveal God's plans for Israel's eschatological redemption.[76]

After blessing Judah with the promise that the Davidic messiah would come through his lineage (expanding the text of Genesis 49:8–12), Jacob blesses Dan that his tribe would also produce a national deliverer (פרוקא)[77] whose acts of redemption would be temporary, but who would foreshadow the ultimate messiah from Judah:

> *From those of the house of* Dan *shall redemption arise, and a judge*. Together, *all* the tribes of *the sons of* Israel *shall obey him*. This shall be *the redeemer who is to arise from the house of Dan; he will be strong, exalted above all nations. He will be compared to the* serpent *that lies on the ground*, and to a venomous serpent *that lies in wait at the crossroads*, that bites the horses in the heels and *out of fear of it* the rider *turns around and* falls backward. *He is Samson bar Manoah, the dread of whom is upon his enemies and fear of whom is upon those who hate him. He goes out to war against those that hate him and kills kings together with rulers.* (*Targum Neofiti* Genesis 49:16–18)[78]

75. For a detailed overview of scholarship on the targums, see Paul V. M. Flesher and Bruce Chilton, *The Targums: A Critical Introduction* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2011).

76. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* Genesis 49:1, cited in Michael Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), 157; cf. *Targum Neofiti* Genesis 49:1, cited in Martin McNamara, *Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), 215–16.

77. For uses of the term פרוקא and its variants in reference to redemption or a redeemer figure, see Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York: Judaica Press, 1996), 1148 and 1221.

78. McNamara, *Targum Neofiti*, 221–22; the italicized words and phrases represent targumic expansions of or alterations to the biblical text.

> *From those of the house of* Dan *there shall arise a man who* will judge his people *with true judgments*. As one, the tribes of Israel will *obey him*. There will be *a man who will be chosen and who will arise from those of the house of* Dan. *He will be comparable to the adder that lies at the crossroads and to the heads of the* serpents that *lie in wait* by the path, biting the horses in the heel, and out of fear of it the rider falls, *turning* backwards. *Thus shall Samson, son of Manoah, kill all the warriors of the Philistines, both horsemen and foot soldiers. He will hamstring their horses and throw their riders backwards.* (*Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* Genesis 49:16–18)[79]

According to this tradition, Samson is the venomous snake of Dan who would save Israel by biting the horse's heel and causing its rider (the Philistines) to fall backwards. Although Samson would not be the messiah because his deliverance would only be "the redemption of an hour" (i.e., temporary),[80] he demonstrated that God could save Israel from its oppressive enemies, just as many Jews in Byzantine Galilee hoped the messiah would do in their own lifetime.[81]

Another passage in *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* also highlights Samson in this way and situates his victories in an apocalyptic context. In its expansion of Deuteronomy 34:1–3 (Moses's view of the tribal allotments in the promised land), the targum describes Moses's vision of biblical deliverers who would come from the tribes of Israel and demonstrate God's power to fight Israel's eschatological battles. Among these heroes, Samson is again mentioned

79. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, 160.

80. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* Genesis 49:16–18, cited in Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, 160; cf. *Genesis Rabbah* 98:14.

81. According to some scholars, the targumic expansion of Dan's blessing to refer to Samson was intended to be a "poem of messianic expectation," presenting Samson as a "messiah figure in miniature" who was sent by God at a time when Israel's existence was at stake; see Roger Syren, *The Blessings in the Targums: A Study on the Targumic Interpretations of Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33* (Abo: Abo Akademi, 1986), 76–77, 81, 113–15; Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1967; repr. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998), 305–9.

as a divinely empowered warrior from the tribe of Dan who instills hope in Israel's ultimate redemption:

> And *the Memra of* the Lord showed [Moses] all *the strong ones of* the land . . . *and the victories of Samson, son of Manoah, from the tribe of* Dan . . . *and all the kings of Israel and the kings of the house of* Judah *that ruled until the last Temple was destroyed . . . and the oppression of each successive generation [of Israel], and the punishment of Armalgos, the wicked, and the wars of Gog. But in the time of their great privation, Michael will arise to redeem with his (strong) arm.* (*Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* Deuteronomy 34:1–3)[82]

Once again, the targum encourages the congregation to trust in a messianic future by listing key biblical victories—including those of Samson the Danite—as evidence that God can deliver the congregation out of its current "oppression" just as he had for "each successive generation."

These sources indicate that synagogue congregations in Syria-Palestine during late antiquity liturgically celebrated the exploits of Samson as an example of God's power to deliver Israel in the past and as a demonstration of his ability to do so again. This represents a much different view of the biblical judge than is present in rabbinic literature, which largely focused on Samson's moral transgressions. Whereas many rabbis apparently viewed Samson as a failed messiah whose death was a curse from God,[83] other Jewish circles saw Samson as a successful (if temporary) redeemer of the past who foreshadowed the eschatological messiah. Between these two views, the synagogue congregations at Wadi Hamam and Huqoq clearly showed an affinity with the tradition that viewed Samson as a protomessianic figure by depicting Samson as a military hero and celebrating his victories.

82. Ernest G. Clarke, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Deuteronomy* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998), 104.

83. See Marks, "Dangerous Hero," 181–94, and Shimon Fogel, "Samson as Messiah—Another Look," *Jewish Studies Internet Journal* 11 (2012): 1–25 [Hebrew].

Considered together, the synagogue mosaics and liturgical texts seem to reflect a popular messianic view of Samson that was at odds with the negative assessment of Samson that existed in rabbinic circles. This popular view was particularly at home in the apocalyptic atmosphere of eastern Lower Galilee during the third through seventh centuries, when some Jews in the vicinity of Tiberias eagerly anticipated the overthrow of the Roman/Byzantine Empire and the divine restoration of Jewish sovereignty. Based on this confluence of evidence, it is reasonable to conclude that the congregations at Huqoq and Wadi Hamam viewed Samson as a messianic type whose biblical victories fostered hope in Israel's imminent eschatological redemption. Although Samson is not the central figure in either mosaic (in both synagogues he is depicted in the aisles alongside other scenes), his exploits were part of a larger gallery of biblical stories that celebrated Israel's past triumphs and foreshadowed Israel's future deliverance.

Conclusion

This article has summarized the past and current research relating to the village of Huqoq in the biblical and postbiblical periods. Historical references to the site, the early explorations and surveys of the village's ancient remains, and the work of the Huqoq Excavation Project (HEP) have illuminated our understanding of the site's history and enhanced our understanding of the socioreligious dynamics in ancient Galilee. In particular, recent excavations conducted by the HEP are making valuable contributions to ongoing scholarly debates regarding the dating of monumental synagogues in the region, the establishment of a local pottery typology, and the development of Jewish religious art in antiquity. This third contribution is dramatically represented by the recent discovery of a synagogue mosaic that depicts, among other things, Samson's biblical exploits among the Philistines. Although we do not yet know the full extent of this mosaic, it appears that this rare Samson image fits within the

context of localized apocalyptic traditions and elucidates the messianic hopes that existed in the vicinity of Tiberias.

Much work remains to be done in each of the research goals set by the HEP: the village requires more extensive excavation to continue refining Huqoq's stratigraphy and pottery types; further excavations under the synagogue's foundations and floor are required to clarify the precise date of the building's construction; and the remainder of the synagogue's mosaic floor must be uncovered to obtain a fuller understanding of Huqoq's religious activities. By the time this article is in print, the 2013 excavation season will have concluded and will likely have shed further light on each of these issues, providing more insights into ancient Jewish village life and perhaps additional clarity on the perceptions of Samson in Byzantine Galilee.

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Editors' Note. The HEP's 2013 season enjoyed great success. Among other discoveries, this year's excavation of the synagogue at Huqoq uncovered a second mosaic of Samson near the one discussed in this article. This second mosaic portrayed Samson carrying the gates of Gaza upon his shoulders (see Judges 16:3), with a (Philistine?) horse rider fleeing the scene. This suggests that the synagogue floor was decorated with a Samson cycle, similar to the church or synagogue mosaic floor found at Mopsuestia in Asia Minor (see n58 above), but previously unattested in Israel. Another mosaic discovered in the synagogue depicts warriors, elephants adorned with shields, an elderly man seated on a throne flanked by young men, and additional battle scenes, possibly representing a conflation of stories from the apocryphal books of 1–4 Maccabees. For preliminary notices, see Jason Brown, "Galilee Excavation Unearths Significant Discoveries," *The Universe*, 23 July 2013, 1, 3, and Jodi Magness, "New Mosaics from the Huqoq Synagogue," *Biblical Archeology Review* 39/5 (September–October 2013): 66–68.

"She Hath Wrought a Good Work": The Anointing of Jesus in Mark's Gospel

Julie M. Smith

Without saying a word, a woman—unnamed and unbidden—enters a private home and anoints Jesus's head. Some complain that the oil cost a year's wages and suggest that the money may have been better spent on the poor. Jesus says to leave the woman alone because she has done a good work and that "this [act] . . . shall be spoken of for a memorial of her" (Mark 14:9).

When we call Jesus the Christ, we are using the Greek word meaning "anointed" (Greek *christos*). When we call him the Messiah, we are doing the same with the Hebrew word for "anointed" (Hebrew *meshiakh*). The anointing story can teach us what it means when we say that Jesus is the Christ or the Messiah. This paper considers that story, its immediate and larger contexts, and its Joseph Smith Translation in order to explore what the anointing teaches us about the Anointed One.

An indicator of its importance is that the story of Jesus's anointing is one of only very few incidents from Jesus's life to be included in all four Gospels (Matthew 26:6–13; Mark 14:3–9; Luke 7:36–50; and John 12:1–8). While these four anointing stories have an intriguing combination of shared themes and differing details that invite further reflection (e.g., Was there one anointing, or more than one?

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Which Gospel preserves the most historically accurate account?), this paper will consider only the anointing story found in the Gospel of Mark in order to focus on Mark's unique perspective on the event. Each writer presents the story in a slightly different light in order to emphasize different facets of the event; focusing just on Mark's account will permit us to see how this story explains what it means to be the Anointed One.

The Anointing

Anointing was performed in the ancient world for a variety of reasons, from the sacred to the mundane. In Mark's story, Jesus's anointing has several distinct purposes. We know it is a burial anointing because Jesus says that the woman has "anoint[ed] [his] body to the burying" (Mark 14:8). So one function of this anointing is as a typical burial ritual—premature, but prophetic. This woman recognizes—at a time when the disciples still have a hard time accepting the idea (see Mark 8:31-32)—that Jesus must die.

But the anointing also fits the pattern for a royal anointing, which is the coronation of a king. The story is in a context of profuse royal imagery that begins with Jesus's entry into Jerusalem. Zechariah prophesied of the triumphal entry (see Zechariah 9:9), which we find recounted in Mark 11, and later associated the Mount of Olives with the coming of the Lord (see Zechariah 14:4). The royal imagery reaches its ironic climax in the mockery during Jesus's trial and crucifixion (see Mark 14:61; 15:2, 9, 12, 17-20, 26, 32), where the ignorant unwittingly proclaim Jesus's royal nature through their taunts.

A major textual parallel to the anointing at Bethany, the anointing of Saul by Samuel, is also a kingly anointing. The account in 1 Samuel 10:1 reads: "Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon [Saul's] head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?" Most modern translations add the following to this verse, based on the manuscript evidence: "And you shall reign over the people of the

Lord and you will save them from the hand of their enemies round about. And this shall be the sign to you that the Lord has anointed you to be prince over his heritage" (1 Samuel 10:1 RSV).[1] The sign is a very specific prophecy that is immediately fulfilled (see 1 Samuel 10:2–9). After the anointing at Bethany, Jesus commands the disciples to make arrangements for the Passover, and they find everything to be as he said it would. In both Saul's and Jesus's anointings, the quickly filled prophecy authenticates the anointing, and the similarities between the two accounts suggest that both are royal anointings.

The anointing at Bethany does violate some expectations since royal anointings were normally performed by a prophet. But when Jesus says that the woman "is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying" (Mark 14:8), he implies that she is acting prophetically since she knows of his impending death. The fact that Jesus's head is anointed also supports the idea that this is the anointing of a king; as Ben Witherington notes, "royal figures are anointed from the head down."[2] So there is ample evidence that this anointing fits the pattern for the coronation of a king.

Additionally, the anointing also echoes the priestly anointing as described in the book of Leviticus (see Leviticus 8:12).[3] Again, some expectations are violated: according to the law of Moses, priests are to be anointed in the tabernacle or temple; however, the Bethany anointing occurs in a leper's house. But J. Duncan M. Derrett argues persuasively that Mark has structured the Gospel in such a way as to suggest that the temple has become a leper's house and

1. The additional material is found in the Septuagint but is missing from the Masoretic Text. Because the phrase *hath anointed thee* occurs twice in the verse, it is probably an instance where a scribe's eye skipped from the first instance of the phrase to the second and accidentally omitted the intervening material. See Ralph W. Klein, *1 Samuel*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Nelson, 2008), 83.

2. Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 368.

3. See Eric D. Huntsman, *God So Loved the World: The Final Days of the Savior's Life* (Salt Lake City: Desert Book, 2011), 44–45.

the leper's house has become a temple.[4] The procedure outlined in Leviticus for cleansing a leprous house consists of four steps, and each step finds a thematic parallel in Mark's gospel. Leviticus prescribes, first, a cleansing of the leprous home (Leviticus 14:39–42), which is echoed by Jesus's cleansing of the temple (Mark 11:15–19). Next, the priest will return to inspect the house (Leviticus 14:44); Jesus inspects the temple through his discussions with religious authorities that showcase the corruption of the temple system (Mark 11:27–12:40). The final evidence of corruption comes when the widow donates her mites: as a widow, she has claim upon the religious leadership for her maintenance, but instead she is supporting them in their decadence (Mark 12:41–44). This inversion of responsibility becomes the consummate evidence of corruption and leads to the end of Jesus's discussion with the authorities—that is, the end of his examination of corruption—and his prophecy of the temple's coming destruction. If the house is still leprous, the priest "shall break down the house, the stones of it, . . . and he shall carry them forth out of the city into an unclean place" (Leviticus 14:45). This is echoed in Jesus's pronouncement that "there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Mark 13:2). It is very difficult to understand that statement in any context other than a comparison to a leprous house: while the temple was destroyed, some stones were left one stone upon another, so we cannot take the statement as simply literal.

If Derrett's analysis is correct, the implications are profound. Mark has condemned the temple as hopelessly leprous and therefore incapable of fulfilling its functions. At the same time, it is in the actual house of a real leper that the anointing occurs. Mark has made the temple into a leper's house and the leper's house into a temple. The anointing of one's head in a temple connotes that this is, at least on a symbolic level, a priestly anointing.

Although it might seem that we must select one meaning—a burial or a royal or a priestly purpose—for the anointing, not only

4. J. Duncan M. Derrett, "No Stone upon Another: Leprosy and the Temple," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 30 (1987): 3–20.

can we find all, but we must. We must keep them simultaneously in mind in order to understand Mark's portrait of Jesus. Jesus is not one-dimensional: in his life and mission, he weaves together all the strands of prophetic teachings about the coming Messiah. Austin Farrer wrote: "It is no diminution of its royal significance when Jesus declares the anointing to be for his burial, for it is precisely the paradox of Christ's royalty that he is enthroned through being entombed."[5] When we call Jesus the Christ, the Messiah, or the Anointed One, we should, as this story teaches us, keep in mind that that is not a simple designation but rather a many-layered declaration of Jesus's salvific death, his royal status, and his priestly power because it is only through the combination of those elements that he was able to atone for sins.

The Immediate Context

Next we will consider the details of the anointing story. We are told that the dinner is held in the house of Simon the leper, which would have been quite puzzling to Mark's ancient audiences. So many questions arise from this simple phrase: Was Simon present? Was he healed, or was he still a leper? Was he even still alive?

Some scholars suggest that his leprosy must have been cured since the law of Moses mandated the exclusion of lepers from society. This would have been particularly important since Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, which required him to be ritually clean (see Numbers 9:6–12). But it is also possible that Simon has not, in fact, been healed; much as Jesus allowed an unclean woman to touch him in Mark 5:27, he might have intentionally dined with a leper. But this, too, is speculation, so let us consider what the phrase *in the house of Simon the leper* contributes to the story regardless of Simon's actual condition.

Perhaps the point is to compare Simon the leper and Simon Peter. As the head of the disciples, Peter should be providing hospitality

5. Austin Farrer, *A Study in St. Mark* (Westminster: Dacre, 1951), 129–30.

and comfort to Jesus but instead is nowhere to be found in this story, unless we assume that he is included in the "some" who object. Maybe the reference to the leper prepares the hearer for something unusual to follow, as indeed the anointing is. The preservation of Simon's name—which is not as important to the story as the woman's name—might be ironic. Simon is remembered by his disease (which apparently is not very important since we do not hear anything definitive about it), while the woman is left nameless despite her immortalizing act. The reference to the leper also contributes to the theme of death and burial that Mark develops throughout the anointing story. According to tradition, lepers were equivalent to the dead,[6] so Jesus's statement about his burial garners new meaning if we understand it to have taken place in the realm of the dead. Perhaps Mark is intentionally toying with the audience's inability to determine whether Simon is recovered in order to emphasize the life-and-death themes of the anointing: the infected leper casts the pall of death while the likely conclusion that the leper is healed suggests a return from the dead.

We now turn our attention to the theme of poverty. The poor were likely on the minds of all present that night because they were given special gifts at Passover.[7] Since the cost of the woman's anointing oil was about a year's wages for a common laborer (see Matthew 20:2), her act does seem outrageously extravagant, and we are not surprised when some of the dinner guests ask, "Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor" (Mark 14:4-5). The "some" who object to the anointing are among the most sympathetic of all Jesus's opponents; after all, they merely recommend following Jesus's own suggestion to the wealthy young man that he "sell whatsoever [he] hast, and give to the poor" (Mark 10:21). Yet in this story, Jesus sharply disagrees with them when he replies, "Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought

6. See Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 3.11.3.

7. See William L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 493.

a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always" (Mark 14:6–7).

Unfortunately, Jesus's statement has been used by some people to justify their neglect of the poor. But the real division is not between "Jesus" and "the poor" but between "not always" and "always": Jesus's words suggest that there will be other occasions when the poor can be helped, but this will be the last chance to anoint him. Perhaps Ecclesiastes 7:1 lurks behind his statement: "A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth." This verse is particularly appropriate since the anointing has the function of naming Jesus—of explaining what it means when we call him "the Christ." Also, as Jesus's words indicate, the woman is credited for having actually done her good deed, while her objectors are merely talking about the possibility of giving to the poor.

We might also think of the "poor" and the "waste" as metaphorical. The woman has committed an incredible act of devotion, represented by the fact that her gift cost an entire year's wages. Those who complain that the cost is too great represent those who are willing to sacrifice only up to a point. They see her gift as excessive and wonder if one can be a true follower but give a little less. Jesus answers negatively; her gift is appropriate and necessary, no more extravagant than the death and kingship that it acknowledges. Because of the way the statement is phrased, the anointing oil, at "*more than* three hundred pence" (Mark 14:5, emphasis added), has immeasurable, limitless value. The same could be said of Jesus's death.

Although the objectors seem to be advocating an ethical cause, what they are actually doing is focusing on the economic aspect of the anointing instead of its spiritual implications. This fits a pattern in Mark's gospel where people focus on the wrong thing. For example, when Jesus proposes that they feed the multitude, the disciples wonder if they should spend two hundred pennyworth on bread (Mark 6:37). Instead of seeing the metaphorical meaning

of the "leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod" (Mark 8:15), they contemplate their own lack of bread (Mark 8:16). There are three references in Mark to the monetary unit *denarii* (which the KJV renders as "pence" in Mark 14:5): the anointing, the feeding miracle discussed above, and the controversy over paying taxes to Caesar (Mark 12:13–17). In all three cases, money is the concern of those who do not understand Jesus. It may not matter whether the objectors to the anointing are charitable or greedy; the real issue is that their concern with money blinds them to spiritual realities.

Jesus's statement about the poor has a very close parallel in Deuteronomy 15:11: "For the poor shall never cease out of the land." But note what follows that statement: "Therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land." The context of this verse is the practice of the sabbath year, or seventh-year release, which is designed to alleviate economic inequality in Israel (see Deuteronomy 15:4). This text focuses on one's motivation for lending money—which should not be to gain wealth by accumulating interest but rather to assist someone in need—in light of the knowledge that the sabbath year is impending. The text suggests that one who refuses to lend money because of the coming release of debts is sinful (Deuteronomy 15:9–10). By alluding to this text, Jesus is teaching that the woman, although aware that his death is near and that she will not have her kindness repaid, has still chosen to give to him freely. The motive of the objectors is comparable to those who do not lend money for fear of the impending year of release. Of course, in a reversal typical of Mark's gospel, the woman is compensated by Jesus's praise.

We now turn our attention to the anointing woman herself. All we know about her is that she is female and that she anointed Jesus; we do not know to whom she is related, where she is from, her marital status, or even whether she is a Jew or a Gentile. It is possible that Mark leaves out her name in order to spare her dishonor. But Mark is not particularly concerned with this type of social norm, so it is perhaps ironic that he omits her name (which is usually done to

protect a woman's modesty) in a situation where she is boldly acting and where Jesus proclaims that the entire world will know of her.

Adele Reinhartz's discussion of the use of anonymity in the books of Samuel[8] is insightful here, especially given the links we have seen between 1 Samuel 10 and the anointing. Reinhartz notes that a proper name has two functions: as a unifier to which one can attach all the information known about a person and as a tool for distinguishing that person from others. This suggests that the woman is not strongly differentiated from other characters and emphasizes the parallels between various texts in Mark. This is in line with the function of characterization in ancient novels: the woman is more a type of the ideal follower than she is a distinct character.

Reinhartz discusses the three nameless women in Samuel (1 Samuel 28:7–25; 2 Samuel 14:1–24; and 2 Samuel 20:14–22). They have many parallels to the anointing woman. Significantly, communication is the key function for all the women; the anointing woman communicates Jesus's identity to the audience. Furthermore, the passages in Samuel emphasize the women's professional functions; her namelessness enhances the anointer's prophetic functions by not distracting the audience with other information about her that is less relevant. Finally, the women are crucial to the advancement of the plot.

Likely, the lack of a name makes the woman paradigmatic of a woman completely devoted to Christ and exercising the gift of understanding. As Mary Ann Beavis notes, "Jesus's comment on the woman's prophetic anointing is his lengthiest and most positive pronouncement on the words or deeds of any person preserved by the evangelist Mark."[9] Her anonymity may be a necessary counterpart to her high praise.

8. Adele Reinhartz, "Anonymity and Character in the Books of Samuel," *Semeia* 63 (1993): 117–41.

9. Mary Ann Beavis, "Women as Models of Faith in Mark," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 18/1 (1988): 7.

The Larger Context

The anointing stands out from the rest of Mark's gospel in two significant ways, giving hints as to its importance. First, many scholars have noted that the frequent use of the word *immediately* (Greek *euthys*) tends to give the text a hurried quality; over forty occurrences in just sixteen chapters can definitely leave the audience feeling as if they have been on a whirlwind tour.[10] In the midst of this rushing narrative are only two concrete time references; they come immediately before (Mark 14:1) and immediately after (Mark 14:12) the references to the betrayal of Jesus and therefore bracket the story of the anointing. So the anointing and betrayal are the only precisely timed acts in the Gospel and therefore form a break in the rushing narrative, used much as slow motion might be used to emphasize a particularly important scene in a film.

The anointing story is also the narrative bridge between Jesus's life and death; we might consider it either the last story relating events from his life or the first part of the story of his death. In either case, it is the hinge between the accounts of his life and his death. Its location in the text mirrors its theological function since, as we have seen, the anointing story explores the link between Jesus's life and death.

We now consider the anointing in relation to several other events in Mark's gospel. First, comparing the anointing with the story of the widow's mite presents many intriguing points:[11] both reference the poor twice (Mark 12:42, 43 and 14:5, 7), and both mention wealth (Mark 12:41 and 14:3). Jesus proclaims that each woman has given all that she has (Mark 12:44 and 14:8), and there is a solemn "verily I say unto you" statement in each (Mark 12:43 and 14:9). Note the huge disparity in the value of the anointing oil and the widow's mites: a mite (Greek *lepton*) was the smallest coin in circulation, but three hundred pence (Greek *denarius*) would have been about

10. See Mitchell G. Reddish, *An Introduction to the Gospels* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2011), 77.

11. See Joseph A. Grassi, "The Secret Heroine of Mark's Drama," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 18/1 (1988): 10–15.

a year's wages for a laborer (see Matthew 20:2). While scholars differ in assigning precise conversion values to ancient currency, the value of the anointing oil is between 10,000 and 20,000 times that of the widow's mites. This shows that the actual worth of the gift is not crucial; what really matters is giving all that one has. The widow's gift of all her living parallels Jesus's gift of his life, and the anointing woman's gift defines what it means for Jesus to give his life. However, the widow's act is in accord with the traditions of her society while the anointer violates these norms. We might conclude that the point is not to violate social norms for the sake of violating them—or to follow them for the sake of conforming—but rather to make an appropriate response to Jesus regardless of the expected practices of society. Perhaps the most important parallel between the two women's stories is the irony that the widow's gift is to a doomed temple and the anointer's gift is for a doomed Jesus.

The widow's story and the anointing form a frame around chapter 13:

A evil scribes denounced (Mark 12:38–40)
    B the widow's mite (Mark 12:41–44)
        C Jesus's teachings (Mark 13:1–37)
    B' the anointing (Mark 14:1–9)
A' the plot to kill (Mark 14:10–11)

Since chapter 13 focuses on the task of true followers in the difficult last days, this textual arrangement shows two positive examples of following Jesus—the widow and the anointer—juxtaposed against the negative examples of the corrupt scribes and the death plotters. The stark evil of the men and the vivid goodness of the women are emphasized through their contrast. And much as the particular crime of "devour[ing] widows' houses" (Mark 12:40) is mentioned at the time of the widow's offering, the plot to kill Jesus (Mark 14:10–11) emphasizes the death motifs of the anointing.

The next story with important implications for understanding the anointing is Judas's betrayal of Jesus. Framing the anointing by the treacherous murder plans emphasizes the goodness of the

woman's deed. The terseness of Mark 14:1–2 and 10–11 contrasts sharply with the details of the anointing and, while the anointing is primarily concerned with actions instead of words, the murder plot is merely talk at this point. The furtiveness of the plotters is weighed against the openness of the woman's actions. Jesus's prophecy that the woman's act will be remembered throughout the whole world sharply conflicts with the desire that the plan to kill Jesus be kept from the people (Mark 14:1). Finding out about the anointing is a part of the "good news"; finding out about the death plot would cause a tumult (Mark 14:2).

There is an odd multiple naming of Judas in Mark 14:10, where he is "Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve." (The Greek reads "*the* one of the twelve," with the first *the* being just as awkward in Greek as it would be in English.) Unlike the woman, he is amply named. Additionally, there is a double naming in the first part of the plot, where the festival is given two names: "the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread" (Mark 14:1). The double holiness of the festival contrasts with the double duplicity of Judas. Because he has already been identified as one of the twelve in Mark 3:19, this repetition does not provide the audience with any new information but rather emphasizes his nefarious nature. Judas functions as a foil for the nameless, laudable woman. In the only two instances in the Gospel where money is spent on Jesus, the woman sacrifices for him while Judas profits from his betrayal.

If we assume that Judas is one of the "some" who witnesses the anointing, then we find another contrast between the woman and Judas: she has entered the house to show her devotion to Jesus, but Judas leaves the house to commit his awful task. It may have been the very act of the anointing—with its messianic connotations and flouting of social norms—that pushed Judas to betray Jesus.

On the other hand, it may be that Judas is not with Jesus in the house of Simon the leper; perhaps the anointing and the plot to kill Jesus should be read as occurring simultaneously, similar to the way that Peter's betrayal occurs at the same time as Jesus's trial

(Mark 14:53–72). It might be instructive to compare the trial and the anointing, including their frame stories. In both, Jesus is inside and the issue of his identity is raised, either by the woman who anoints him and therefore proclaims his identity or by the high priest who questions Jesus's identity (v. 61). In the anointing, silent deeds proclaim the truth; while in the council, spoken lies conflict (v. 56). In both cases, a disciple stays outside to betray Jesus by his words in a scene that sandwiches the confession of Jesus's true identity. Interestingly, in this reading there is a parallel drawn between the woman and Jesus.

Our third text to compare with the anointing is the last supper. When preparing for the Passover meal, Jesus tells the disciples to look for "a man bearing a pitcher of water" (Mark 14:13). This would have struck Mark's audience as unusual since carrying water was considered women's work (see, for example, Genesis 24:13). This unexpected situation calls attention to one aspect of the anointing that immediately preceded it: both the anointing woman and the water-carrying man are violating cultural gender roles and also performing an important service for Jesus.

There are also verbal similarities between the two scenes. The woman pours out (Greek *katacheo*) the contents of her broken flask (v. 3), much as Jesus pours out (KJV "shed"; Greek *ekcheo*) his blood from his broken body (v. 24). Jesus explains that the woman has anointed his body for burial (Mark 14:8) and then shares his body with the disciples (v. 22); both incidents are made possible by completely pouring out the valuable liquids blood and nard. The phrase *my body* appears in Mark only in these two contexts (vv. 8 and 22), emphasizing the physicality of Jesus's work and foreshadowing his impending death. Also, both incidents include a "verily" saying (vv. 9, 25), the former concerning the future of the gospel and the latter concerning Jesus's own future. In the anointing, the woman's act is prophetic; in the last supper, Jesus's act is prophetic. Death looms over both stories as Jesus's identity is physically established through breaking and pouring for those perceptive enough to understand. Surprisingly, Mark's version of the last supper does

not include a command from Jesus to institute a similar meal as a memorial, such as is found in Luke's gospel (Luke 22:19) and the ensuing Christian tradition. In Mark, the only memorial that Jesus mentions is the anointing: his followers are to remember the woman's deed. In fact, the same Greek word for *memorial* is used in the Septuagint of Exodus 12:14 and 13:9 for the institution of the Passover as is used for the memorial of the anointing.

The Joseph Smith Translation

The Joseph Smith Translation for Mark 14:8 is, upon first reading, rather puzzling. Unlike most JST revisions or expansions, this one does not correct false doctrine, add information, harmonize the text with other passages, or clarify the text. In fact, it just seems to repeat words that are already in the passage. But what it achieves is the creation of a chiasmus that is not in the KJV text:

A she has done what she could . . . had in remembrance
  B in generations to come
    C wheresoever my gospel shall be preached
      D for verily she has come beforehand
        E to anoint my body to the burying
      D' verily I say unto you
    C' wheresoever this gospel shall be preached
  B' through out the whole world
A' what she hath done . . . for a memorial of her

This structure adds depth to the anointing story by first clarifying that the main point of the story, the E line, is the anointing, not the objection and response. It is easy to get sidetracked into a debate regarding whether the woman exercised wise stewardship over some very expensive oil, but the real point of the story is the anointing of Jesus's body. Second, note the phrase *verily I say unto you* in the D and D' lines. This saying, used to emphasize not only the importance of the words that follow but also the central point of the chiasmus by literally surrounding it, also encourages us to

compare Jesus's words with the woman's actions. The theological implications of comparing her actions and his words are profound. Third, the B and B' lines are also noteworthy in that they explain that "wheresoever my gospel is preached" means not just geographically but also through time. While we often think of chiasmus as part of the apologetics toolkit—and it certainly can be—it can also yield rich literary insights; in this case, it ensures that we don't miss the key ideas that this story *is* about the anointing—not the objection—and that the woman's deeds parallel Jesus's words. The mere fact that a JST version exists also tells us that this story was a focus of attention for Joseph Smith.

Conclusion

Christology, the study of the nature of Jesus and his identity, has traditionally involved examination of the titles applied to Jesus, such as Son of God, Son of David, and the like. But in Mark's gospel, titles applied to Jesus are often untrustworthy. For example, Peter states, "thou art the Christ" (Mark 8:29), but then he rebukes Jesus (v. 32), and Jesus's response makes the characterization of Peter clear: "Get thee behind me, Satan" (v. 33). Peter might have used the right words to describe Jesus, but at that point he does not understand who Jesus is, or he would not have rebuked him. In Mark's gospel, the devils also have the ability to use the correct titles to identify Jesus (see Mark 1:34), but that does not mean that they are to be emulated! The perverse proliferation of abused and abusive titles during Jesus's trial also shows the unreliability of titles and names in Mark (14:61; 15:2, 9, 12, 18, 26, 32, and possibly 39).

Even though the anointing story does not mention any titles for Jesus, we need not dismiss it as a source for Mark's Christology. Jesus is named not with a title, but through the silent action of a faithful follower. This type of naming is most appropriate to the Gospel of Mark where more traditional methods of naming fail. And the layered truth that Jesus must be simultaneously understood

as a dying and a royal and a priestly Messiah simply cannot be expressed in one small word.

What of Jesus's statement that the woman's story will be told wherever the gospel is preached? The gospel cannot be preached if the multifaceted nature of Jesus's life—his humility, his priesthood, his royal lineage—is not conveyed, whether through this story or another. If the listener does not understand that only through complete devotion does one really follow Jesus—that only complete devotion gives one the knowledge to truly understand who Jesus is—then the teacher has not truly preached the gospel.

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"Thou Shalt Be Silent": Literary Allusions to Isaiah 6:1-8 in Luke 1:5-25

Kimberly M. Berkey

Scholars have long recognized the importance of Isaiah for the theological and christological agenda of Luke-Acts.[1] In all of this scholarship, however, at least one major Lucan allusion to Isaiah has been overlooked, in part because it is not a direct

1. James Flamming, "The New Testament Use of Isaiah," *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 11 (1968): 89-103; Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke* (New York: Doubleday, 1976), 426, 454, 458-59; David Seccombe, "Luke and Isaiah," *New Testament Studies* 27 (1981): 252-59; Geoffrey W. Grogan, "The Light and the Stone: A Christological Study in Luke and Isaiah," in *Christ the Lord: Studies in Christology Presented to Donald Guthrie*, ed. Harold H. Rowdon (Illinois: Inter-Varsity, 1982), 151-67; C. K. Barrett, "Luke/Acts," in *It Is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture*, ed. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 235-36; James A. Sanders, "From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4," in *Luke and Scripture: The Function of Sacred Tradition in Luke-Acts*, ed. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 46-69; Charles A. Kimball, *Jesus' Exposition of the Old Testament in Luke's Gospel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 97; Rebecca I. Denova, *The Things Accomplished among Us: Prophetic Tradition in the Structural Pattern of Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997); Thomas S. Moore, "The Lucan Great Commission and the Isaianic Servant," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 154 (1997): 47-60; Christopher Tuckett, "Isaiah in Q," in *Isaiah in the New Testament*, ed. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken (London: Clark, 2005), 51-61; Bart J. Koet, "Isaiah in Luke-Acts," in Moyise and Menken, *Isaiah in the New Testament*, 79-100; Peter Mallen, *The Reading and Transformation of Isaiah in Luke-Acts* (London: Clark, 2008). For a broader Christological survey of Luke's use of the entire Hebrew Bible, including several references to Isaiah passages, see Darrell L. Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern: Lucan Old Testament Christology* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1987).

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quotation or verbal parallel. It is my contention that Luke 1:5–25 contains intentional allusions to Isaiah 6:1–8,[2] particularly in its cultic setting, angelic encounter, and theme of silence. This paper will commence a rhetorical analysis of the relationship between Luke 1:5–25 and Isaiah 6:1–8 and explore various functions of such an allusion.

Textual Summary

Luke's narrative opens with two elements central to Jewish devotion: a pious Jewish family and the Jerusalem temple.[3] We meet Zechariah (KJV Zacharias) and Elisabeth, an elderly, childless couple from the tribe of Levi. At the time of the narrative, it is Zechariah's priestly privilege to offer incense at the temple. Interrupting the priest's ministrations, the angel Gabriel appears and promises Zechariah a son who will "make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:17).[4] Openly skeptical of the ability of his postmenopausal wife to bear a child, Zechariah asks for a sign and is struck dumb until the birth of the promised infant. It is only some nine months later when he confirms the angelically appointed name of the child (John) that his speech returns.

Luke 1:5–25 clearly shares a number of themes in common with other biblical narratives.[5] Like Abraham and Sarah, John's parents are elderly and barren, granted a miraculous child despite one parent's disbelief (Genesis 18:12–14). As in the case of Hannah, also bar-

2. This connection has never before been noted, with the possible exception of a single sentence in François Bovon, *Luke 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1–9:50*, trans. Christine M. Thomas (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 32. Unfortunately, the brevity and ambiguity of Bovon's reference to the relationship between Luke 1:5–25 and Isaiah 6 renders it useless for the purpose of this paper.

3. See R. Alan Culpepper and Gail R. O'Day, *Luke–John* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 55; Barrett, "Luke/Acts," 235.

4. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version (KJV).

5. For an analysis of Luke's hermeneutical methods regarding these allusions, see Joel B. Green, "The Problem of a Beginning: Israel's Scriptures in Luke 1–2," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 4 (1994): 61–86; Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern,* 57–58, 88.

ren, the promise of a son is given in the temple (1 Samuel 1:7, 10).[6] Like both Samuel and Samson, John will not drink alcohol, hinting at his prophetic calling (Luke 1:15; 1 Samuel 1:11; Judges 13:4-5).[7] In these and several other parallels, Luke demonstrates an obvious interest in and familiarity with the Hebrew Bible and deems it necessary to connect his gospel with some of Israel's most cherished myths. Luke wants to connect the Christian movement with its Jewish heritage and does so by connecting his narrative with the Hebrew Bible.[8] Another of these echoes, to which we now turn, is Isaiah's commission in Isaiah 6.

Much like Zechariah, Isaiah is startled to find himself the unexpected recipient of a heavenly epiphany. He stumbles into the

6. Parallels with the mother of Samuel continue throughout the infancy narrative. Indeed, it is widely agreed that the Magnificat is based primarily on the Song of Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1-10). See Walter R. Bowie, *The Gospel according to St. Luke* (New York: Abingdon, 1952), 41-42; Helmer Ringgren, "Luke's Use of the Old Testament," *Harvard Theological Review* 79 (1986): 227-35; Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern*, 69; Raymond E. Brown, "The Annunciation to Zechariah, the Birth of the Baptist, and the Benedictus (Luke 1:5-25; 57-80)," *Worship* 62 (1988): 484-85; James A. Sanders, "Isaiah in Luke," in Evans and Sanders, *Luke and Scripture*, 17; Denova, *Things Accomplished among Us,* 97.

7. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke I-IX* (New York: Doubleday, 1970), 326. Although Fitzmyer claims that John will be subject to a Nazarite vow, I believe that, lacking a reference to uncut hair, the nature of his privation remains ambiguous. See also Culpepper and O'Day, *Luke-John*, 46, for whom abstinence from alcohol is appropriate for Levites (Leviticus 10:9) and prophets as well as Nazarites.

8. Luke's application of the Hebrew Bible serves several purposes. He is particularly interested in showing continuity with past prophecy; see Nils A. Dahl, "The Story of Abraham in Luke-Acts," in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, ed. Leander E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn (New York: Abingdon, 1966), 139-58; D. Moody Smith Jr., "The Use of the Old Testament in the New," in *The Use of the Old Testament in the New and Other Essays*, ed. James M. Efird (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1972), 51; Jacob Jervell, "The Center of Scripture in Luke," in *The Unknown Paul: Essays on Luke-Acts and Early Christian History*, ed. Jacob Jervell (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984), 122-37; Jack T. Sanders, "The Prophetic Use of the Scriptures in Luke-Acts," in *Early Jewish and Christian Exegesis*, ed. Craig A. Evans and William F. Stinespring (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 191-98; Brigid C. Frein, "Narrative Predictions, Old Testament Prophecies and Luke's Sense of Fulfilment," *New Testament Studies* 40 (1994): 22-37. For an example of how Luke uses the Hebrew Bible to illuminate the relationship between Jews and Gentiles, see Larrimore C. Crockett, "Luke 4:25-27 and Jewish-Gentile Relations in Luke-Acts," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88 (1969): 177-83.

divine council at the exact moment YHWH pronounces judgment on Israel.[9] Isaiah sees the Lord and his attendant angels and, fearing destruction, bemoans the impurity of both himself and Israel. A seraph approaches and ritually cleanses Isaiah's mouth with a hot coal from the altar, after which the prophet volunteers to bear YHWH's message to Israel, to "make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed" (Isaiah 6:10).

This Isaianic task already has a strong and much-studied presence in the New Testament. To begin with, scholars have noted an interesting shift in verb moods from the Masoretic Text to the LXX. In the Hebrew, the verbs are imperative, commanding Isaiah to make the minds of the people dull. Finding this problematic, the LXX translators changed the verbs to the indicative mood, thus reading "for the heart of this people *has become* fattened, and *they* hear heavily with their ears and *they* shut their eyes" (my translation). The LXX translators, anxious about the theological difficulties of a god who actively renders his people rebellious, changed the Hebrew imperatives into Greek indicatives, thus shifting the blame for YHWH's rejection. It is this Septuagintal translation, with its emphasis on Israel's obstinacy, that found its way into New Testament quotations of Isaiah 6:9-10 (Matthew 13:14; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10; Acts 28:26-27).

There is a general consensus that Isaiah's writings were crucial to the structure and content of Luke's gospel. Luke contains four direct Isaiah quotations (i.e., quotations in which he explicitly identifies Isaiah as the source or plainly asserts that he is quoting scripture), two of which he shares with Matthew and Mark (Isaiah 40:3-5 in Luke 3:4-5; Isaiah 56:7 in Luke 19:46) and two of which are uniquely his (Isaiah 61:1-2 in Luke 4:17-19; Isaiah 53:12 in Luke

9. John D. Watts, *Isaiah 1-33* (Nashville: Nelson Reference & Electronic, 2005), 108.

22:37). Acts includes five further quotations (Isaiah 66:1-2a; 53:7-8; 55:3; 49:6; 6:9-10).[10]

Luke's careful placement of quotations from and allusions to Isaiah signals the importance he affords the prophet. Bart J. Koet has noted that Luke quotes Isaiah when introducing leading characters (e.g., Jesus, John the Baptist, and Stephen) and sometimes merely alludes to an Isaiah text in one passage in preparation for a more direct quotation later.[11]

Peter Mallen analyzes Luke's use of Isaiah in the context of Second Temple Judaism, concluding that the evangelist employs Isaiah to several ends: to explain and interpret events; to demonstrate that history is unfolding according to God's plan, however unconventional; to lend credibility to his narrative; to show that salvation extends to the Gentiles; to explain Israel's mixed response to the Christian message; and to provide traditional salvation imagery without specifically referencing Mosaic law.[12]

Rhetorical Parallels

Although both Isaiah 6 and Luke 1 contain elements connecting them with numerous other biblical call narratives,[13] three elements

10. Koet, "Isaiah in Luke-Acts," 79-80.

11. Koet, "Isaiah in Luke-Acts," 79-80. As instances of Isaianic allusions that are later quoted, Koet provides the pairing of Isaiah 49:6/Luke 2:28-32, later quoted in Acts 13:47; Isaiah 6:9/Luke 8:10, later quoted in Acts 28:26-27; and Isaiah 53:2/Luke 22:37, later quoted in Acts 8:32-33. It may be of interest to note that all the allusions Koet identifies are in the Gospel of Luke, while the later direct quotations are all found in the book of Acts.

12. Mallen, *Reading and Transformation,* 100, 133, 157, 201-3.

13. There is some disagreement over whether or not Luke 1:5-25 and Isaiah 6 can actually be called "call narratives." In the case of Isaiah 6, Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39* (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 223, 226, argues that since it doesn't come at the beginning of the book and Isaiah is never reassured by God, it doesn't qualify as an official call, while Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, 104, 108, notes that Isaiah is not commissioned so much as he volunteers for the prophetic task. Several others, however, do term Isaiah 6 a call narrative. See W. J. Dumbrell, "Worship and Isaiah 6," *Reformed Theological Review* 43 (1984): 1, 4, who still notes the atypical lack of feeling unworthy; G. K. Beale, "Isaiah VI 9-13: A Retributive Taunt against Idolatry," *Vetus Testamentum* 41 (1991): 260; Gene M. Tucker, *The Book of Isaiah 1-39* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001), 101-4. In the case of Luke

in particular link them specifically with each other: their temple setting, dynamic interaction with the altar, and theme of silence.

The first of these elements is their shared setting, which is striking given that temple epiphanies are so uncommon. Moses encounters YHWH in a burning bush on Mt. Horeb (Exodus 3:1–2), Gideon meets an angel on a threshing-floor (Judges 6:11), and Ezekiel is on the banks of a river when he sees the Lord's chariot approaching (Ezekiel 1:1). Although Jeremiah's exact location at the time of his commission is not specified, we learn from Jeremiah 1:1 that he lives in the Levitical town of Anathoth, not Jerusalem. Despite being steeped in a priestly tradition, not even Jeremiah opens his narrative with a temple epiphany. Even the case of Micaiah is ambiguous on this point.[14] He never gives the setting for his vision but simply recounts that he "saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him" (1 Kings 22:19). Although the natural location of YHWH's throne and attendants is in the temple, this is not an adequate parallel to Isaiah 6 because no temple accoutrements play any role in his vision and because the temple is not specifically mentioned.

A possible exception to the rarity of call narratives in the temple is the case of Samuel. The prophet is described as lying "in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was" (1 Samuel 3:3), when he hears the voice of God and mistakes it to be Eli. I would argue

1:5–25, John Nolland, *Luke 1–9:20* (Dallas: Word Books, 1989), 24, feels that any similarities with biblical commission narratives are incidental to Luke's use of Old Testament motifs and that it is more properly called a birth oracle. Fearghus O. Fearghail, "The Literary Forms of Lk 1,5–25 and 1,26–38," *Marianum* 43 (1981): 321–44, similarly advocates caution but disagrees that Luke 1:5–25 is a birth annunciation, preferring the term "miracle story." He does admit, however, that the annunciation of Jesus's birth in 1:26–38 has more in common with call narratives, and given that the two scenes are meant to be parallel (see Brown, *Birth of the Messiah,* 250–51), I don't think we can be too rigid in our limitations on Luke 1:5–25. For examples of those who share my view of Luke 1:5–25 as a commissioning scene, see Terence Y. Mullins, "New Testament Commission Forms, Especially in Luke-Acts," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 95 (1976): 603–14; Benjamin J. Hubbard, "Commissioning Stories in Luke-Acts: A Study of their Antecedents, Form and Content," *Semeia* 8 (1977): 103–26.

14. Which is perhaps of some importance, given the fact that this story forms the closest parallel to Isaiah 6:9–10 in the Hebrew Bible. See Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 224.

that the temple setting ought to be considered less important for this narrative since, again unlike Isaiah and Zechariah, Samuel does not interact in any significant way with the features of the sanctuary. Given Luke's obvious fascination with the Jerusalem temple,[15] it would be very odd for him not to engage one of the most potent temple scenes available in the Hebrew Bible.

The second element linking Luke 1:5–25 with Isaiah 6 is the dynamic interaction with the altar. In both texts, the temple setting forms more than a mere backdrop. First, both stories include an element of smoke. It was Zechariah's duty to offer the evening incense (Luke 1:9; cf. Revelation 8:4),[16] while Isaiah also witnesses incense smoke filling the temple following the trisagion of the seraphim: "The posts of the door moved . . . and the house was filled with smoke" (Isaiah 6:4).[17] Second, the altar becomes an important focal point for angelic[18] encounters in both narratives. Luke describes Gabriel "standing on the right side of the altar of incense" (Luke 1:11),[19] while Isaiah is ritually cleansed by a seraph holding "a live coal . . . which he had taken . . . from off the altar" (Isaiah 6:6). In

15. Not only does his infancy narrative begin and end in the temple (Luke 1:9; 2:46), but so does the entire gospel (24:53). See Brown, *Birth of the Messiah*, 237, 351–54, 451, 485; J. Bradley Chance, *Jerusalem, the Temple, and the New Age in Luke-Acts* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1988); James M. Dawsey, "The Origin of Luke's Positive Perception of the Temple," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 18 (1991): 5–22.

16. Although Bowie maintains that we cannot be sure whether this was the morning or evening offering (*Gospel according to St. Luke*, 32), Fitzmyer believes that parallels with Daniel 9 suggest that Zechariah was performing the evening ritual at the time he saw Gabriel (*Gospel according to Luke I–IX,* 318, 324). At any rate, in both cases Zechariah is interacting with smoke.

17. Given the temple setting, it seems unnecessary to attempt to identify this smoke with the transient *shekinah* and more logical to point to a connection with regular cult sacrifices or incense, according, at least, to Tucker, *Book of Isaiah 1–39*, 102; Watts, *Isaiah 1–33,* 108; G. G. D. Kilpatrick, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39* (New York: Abingdon, 1956), 207.

18. Interestingly, each angel is also identified in relation to YHWH's presence. Isaiah's seraph is "one of the seraphs" he "saw in attendance above [YHWH]," (Isaiah 6:2, 6), while Gabriel explicitly reports his authority to Zechariah by saying "I am Gabriel who stands before God" (Luke 1:19).

19. Fitzmyer identifies Gabriel's position on the right side of the altar as a sign of divine favor, though he gives no parallels to justify his claim (*Gospel according to Luke I–IX*, 324–25).

other words, not only is the altar *present* and *smoking* in both narratives, but the main character interacts with an angel related to that altar, as well.

The third connecting element—the most subtle, unique, and literarily rich connection between the two narratives—is the theme of silence.[20] Here we take a step back from the temple settings of each narrative to look at the literary elements of each pericope as a whole.

Regarding the theme of silence, Luke 1 seems fairly straightforward on the surface. Doubting the veracity of Gabriel's words, Zechariah asks, "Whereby shall I know this?" to which Gabriel responds, "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; . . . thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words" (Luke 1:18–20). Because Zechariah dared to venture unfaithful speech, all speaking ability is taken away from him for the next nine months.[21] So far, the role of silence in the text is fairly clear: Zechariah is struck dumb.

Paradoxically, this very cessation of communication serves to communicate something: Zechariah's silence informs the people of his angelic encounter (Luke 1:22). To add to the complexity of the role silence plays in Luke 1, the crowd waiting outside the temple is described responding to Zechariah in the third person, thus silencing their collective voice. In other words, it is as if Luke hit the "mute" button on his scene once Zechariah left the sanctuary. Instead of Luke singling out a handful of characters from the crowd to say "Look! Zechariah cannot speak!" he simply reports "he could

20. The theme of silence has been severely neglected in biblical scholarship. Besides Paolo Torresan, "Silence in the Bible," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 31 (2003): 153–60, the vast majority of studies on silence have focused on the repression of female characters. See, for example, Esther Fuchs, "'For I Have the Way of Women': Deception, Gender, and Ideology in Biblical Narrative," *Semeia* 42 (1988): 68–83.

21. Commentators find it likely that Zechariah's punishment also involves being unable to hear. Bowie points to the fact that it is Elisabeth who must protest the relatives' assumption about the child's name in Luke 1:60 (*Gospel according to St. Luke,* 44), while Fitzmyer relies on the silent gestures of verse 62 and the word *kōphos* in the original punitive declaration of verse 20 (*Gospel according to Luke I–IX*, 328–29).

not speak to them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple."

Not only is the public response narrated in the third person, thus silencing the voice of the crowd who just prior had been engaged in the very verbal act of prayer (Luke 1:10), but the crowd also mistakes the essential character of Zechariah's experience: "they perceived that he had *seen* (*heōraken*) *a vision*" (Luke 1:22). While the reader experiences a primarily verbal dialogue between Zechariah and Gabriel that involves few visual elements, the people perceive in purely visual terms and leave little room for the fact that an angel *spoke* to Zechariah. The crowd's response essentially silences Zechariah's encounter by interpreting it primarily as a vision.

Pervasive silence continues to mute the scene and emphasize its visual elements as Zechariah is reduced to gestures to convey his new handicap. Luke closes the pericope on the same muted note. Still in the narrative third person, Luke simply concludes with "as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house" (Luke 1:23).

Isaiah 6 is, if anything, even more occupied with the theme of silence. The most striking feature in this chapter is the *visual* immediacy of the Lord. Before describing the throne, the temple, or the seraphim, Isaiah simply reports, "I saw . . . the Lord" (Isaiah 6:1). The object of Isaiah's perception is first and foremost YHWH. This divine transcendence is marked only in the language of sight, in contrast to other biblical commissions, where God's *verbal* immediacy is the point of emphasis. Even in the commissions of two of the most important figures for the biblical prophetic tradition, Moses and Samuel,[22] neither is privileged with a *primarily* visual experience. God first *spoke* to Moses out of the burning bush (Exodus 3:4), and 1 Samuel 3 emphasizes the Lord's verbal summon by repeating

22. Moses's prominence is due to his role in the exodus and establishment of Israel, while Samuel assumes importance in the Deuteronomic tradition as the prophet who inaugurated the era of kings and the United Monarchy. On Samuel's role in the Hebrew Bible as well as the importance of the Deuteronomist for Luke, see John Drury, *Tradition and Design in Luke's Gospel: A Study in Early Christian Historiography* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1976), 58, 82–87, 139–41.

it three times (1 Samuel 3:4-8). Although a visual element cannot be denied in either case, each narrative wishes primarily to emphasize the Lord's words. Jeremiah doesn't report any visionary element to his commission but simply explains that "the word of the Lord came unto me, saying . . ." (Jeremiah 1:4). Even Micaiah in 1 Kings 22 doesn't give any description of "the host of heaven" but jumps straight to the Lord's direct question, "who shall persuade Ahab?" (1 Kings 22:19-20). Thus, Isaiah 6 is unique in the Hebrew Bible for God's failure to immediately address his prophet.[23] Isaiah is left with nothing to encounter but YHWH's direct gaze.

The prophet's visual encounter with the Lord is even more striking if we remember that there is reportedly nothing filling the space between them—rather, the seraphs were in attendance *"above"* the Lord (Isaiah 6:2). In addition, the only sound in the room is their worshipful trisagion. The realm of language is relegated to the air above the Lord and Isaiah. Across this empty space between them, Isaiah can only *see* God; he cannot hear or address him.

Isaiah himself recognizes this difficulty when he hears the seraphic praise. Distraught at his inability to join the angelic song,[24] he blames his mouth: "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips" (Isaiah 6:5). Even more dramatically, since *nidmêtî* may be a niphal verb from *damah* ("to be silent"), an alternate translation of Isaiah's terrified statement reads "Woe is me! I must be silent!"[25] Ironically, even as he expresses the necessity of reserve, he speaks. He is speaking at the very moment he is expressing the need for silence and thus renders his statement devoid of meaning. Isaiah's

23. The case is obviously different for Ezekiel. The first chapter of his book is entirely taken up with describing the appearance of God and his attendants. In fact, Ezekiel is even more delayed than Isaiah 6 in introducing the direct voice of God. Yet a distinction can be drawn on the basis that the narrative silence in Ezekiel 1 is an extended description of God's throne.

24. Kilpatrick, *Book of Isaiah,* 209; Watts, *Isaiah 1-33,* 108.

25. There is no need to tie this verb down to just one meaning. The ambiguity of "I am silent" versus "I am destroyed" only enriches the interpretive possibilities. See also H. D. Preuss, "דמה," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 3:250-60; A. Baumann, "דמה II," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 3:260-65.

language, as well as the language of Israel, may not be uttered here, and in expressing that impossibility, language collapses.

Isaiah's lament apparently does not go unnoticed. Isaiah writes,

> Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. **Also I heard the voice of the Lord.** (Isaiah 6:6-8, emphasis added)

Now ritually cleansed,[26] Isaiah is admitted immediately back into the realm of language. The entire encounter with the seraph takes place in silence until the stone has touched Isaiah's lips. Only *then* does he hear the angel's (verbal) pronouncement, and only *then* does he hear the actual voice of God.[27]

Isaiah's curious relationship with language does not end there, however. In verses 9-10 he is commissioned to preach in such a way that purposely confuses his audience. Isaiah's mission is to reverse the typical function of speech; instead of communicating accurately, he is to "make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they . . . understand with their heart."[28] Isaiah's language, having been influenced by the divine council, has been rendered foreign to the language of Israel.[29]

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26. See Victor A. Hurowitz, "Isaiah's Impure Lips and Their Purification in Light of Akkadian Sources," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 60 (1989): 39-89.

27. There may be a sense in which, by hearing the seraph's voice first, the seraphim fulfill their traditional role as guardians of YHWH's throne by mediating Isaiah's encounter with God.

28. For an analysis of the theme of deafness/blindness in Isaiah 6 and other Isaiah passages, see Geoffrey D. Robinson, "The Motif of Deafness and Blindness in Isaiah 6:9-10: A Contextual, Literary, and Theological Analysis," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 8 (1998): 167-86; and Rolf Rendtorff, *Canon and Theology: Overtures to an Old Testament Theology*, ed. and trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 172-79. Robinson believes that Israel's deafness/blindness is punitive, which has interesting implications for Zechariah's response to Gabriel and subsequent punishment.

29. Andrew F. Key, "The Magical Background of Isaiah 6:9-13," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 86 (1967): 198-204, raises the possibility, based on parallels between

Returning to the connection with Luke 1, two phenomena bear attention. First, Zechariah and Isaiah are each characterized by speech that is *opposite* of the angel they encounter. Gabriel comes to Zechariah and does nothing but discourse for eight verses; at the end of the scene, Zechariah is made silent. In contrast, Isaiah's seraph comes in complete silence, but afterward Isaiah is commissioned to speak. A second, related point is that the final speech of these characters also stands opposite their initial reaction. Zechariah speaks inappropriately by expressing disbelief and is punished by having his speech removed. Isaiah, meanwhile, volunteers his silence ("I must be silent") and is given to speak at much greater length, bearing the council's divine message back to Israel.

Thus, although the Jerusalem temple and its altars have a rich cultic heritage with several individual parallels elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, no other two texts in the Bible share the convergences of a temple setting, active contact (both human and angelic) with the altar, *and* a fascination with the theme of silence.

Function

We turn, finally, to the question of how this Isaiah 6 allusion functions in Luke's gospel and why it may have been included.[30]

prophecy and magic in ancient religions, that Isaiah's message actually consists of ecstatic babbling!

30. I need here to address the redactional question of the sources behind Luke 1–2. Scholars have long been aware that Luke's first chapter contains strong "Semitic Greek" in comparison with the Greek in the rest of Luke-Acts, but it is still unclear whether this is evidence of an isolable Hebrew source document behind Luke's narrative or whether Luke chose to adopt the Semiticized style of LXX Greek for rhetorical purposes. If a specific source document is primarily responsible for the strongly Semitic flavor of Luke's infancy narrative, it is possible that the Isaiah 6 allusion was incorporated along with the other material. While recognizing this as a distinct possibility, I am more sympathetic with those who see in Luke a highly aware editor capable of consciously imitating the linguistic style of the LXX at the same time as he incorporates biblical motifs and type-scenes. On this debate, see H. F. D. Sparks, "The Semitisms of St. Luke's Gospel," *Journal of Theological Studies* 44 (1943): 129–38; Bowie, *Gospel according to St. Luke,* 30; Paul Winter, "The Proto-Source of Luke I," *Novum Testamentum* 1 (1956): 184–99; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "Peace upon Earth among Men of His Good Will (Lk 2:14)," *Theological Studies* 19 (1958): 225–27; H. H. Oliver, "The Lucan Birth Stories

The rhetorical function of this allusion has implications for how one reads the rest of Luke-Acts and how its original audience would have understood the person and mission of John the Baptist. What follows, then, are three (not necessarily exclusive) interpretive possibilities for reading Isaiah 6:1-8 within Luke 1:5-25.

Introduction to Jewish Theology

As we noted above, Luke opens his narrative with a case study of Jewish piety.[31] He shows Zechariah ministering in the Jerusalem temple and will soon introduce Zechariah/Elisabeth's and Joseph/Mary's strict observance of Mosaic law. Eight days after John's birth, family and friends gather to witness his circumcision and naming (Luke 1:59). Jesus, too, is circumcised and named at eight days of

and the Purpose of Luke-Acts," *New Testament Studies* 10 (1963): 202-26; Matthew Black, "Second Thoughts IX. The Semitic Element in the New Testament," *Expository Times* 77 (1965): 20-23; Fitzmyer, *Gospel according to Luke I-IX*, 308-9; Drury, *Tradition and Design*, 7, 49, 66; Nigel Turner, "The Quality of the Greek of Luke-Acts," in *Studies in New Testament Language and Text*, ed. J. K. Elliott (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 387-400; Brown, *Birth of the Messiah,* 244-47, 266; Fred L. Horton, "Reflections on the Semitisms of Luke-Acts," in *Perspectives on Luke-Acts*, ed. Charles H. Talbert (Edinburgh: Clark, 1978), 1-23; S. C. Farris, "On Discerning Semitic Sources in Luke 1-2," in *Gospel Perspectives: Studies of History and Tradition in the Four Gospels*, ed. R. T. France and D. Wenham (Sheffield: JSOT, 1981), 2:201-37; William G. Most, "Did St. Luke Imitate the Septuagint?" *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 15 (1982): 30-41; Frederic Raurell, "Influence of Is-LXX in the New Testament," *Revista Catalana de Teologia* 8 (1983): 263-64; Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern*, 17-19, 26; Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20*, 21-22. On the importance of the infancy narratives for understanding the broader themes at work in Luke-Acts, see Paul S. Minear, "Luke's Use of the Birth Stories," in Keck and Martyn, *Studies in Luke-Acts*, 111-30.

31. A Gentile audience may be partly responsible for this. See Brady S. Billings, "'At the Age of 12': The Boy Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41-52), the Emperor Augustus, and the Social Setting of the Third Gospel," *Journal of Theological Studies* 60 (2009): 70-89; Joseph B. Tyson, *Images of Judaism in Luke-Acts* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1992), 18-39; and C. H. Talbert, "Prophecies of Future Greatness: The Contributions of Greco-Roman Biographies to an Understanding of Luke 1:5-4:15," in *The Divine Helmsman: Studies on God's Control of Human Events*, ed. James L. Crenshaw and Samuel Sandmel (New York: KTAV, 1980), 129-41. On Jewish piety in Luke, see John H. Elliott, "Household and Meals vs. Temple Purity Replication Patterns in Luke-Acts," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 21 (1991): 102-8, and Tyson, *Images of Judaism*, 42-53. For a balanced discussion of Luke's attitude toward Judaism generally, see J. L. Houlden, "The Purpose of Luke," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 21 (1984): 53-65.

age (2:21). Mary accomplishes the necessary purification rites after giving birth (2:22), and Mary and Joseph take the infant to the temple and offer sacrifice (2:22–24). At the temple they encounter Simeon and Anna, two other embodiments of piety, who spend all day worshipping in the sanctuary and awaiting God's promised redemption of Israel (2:25, 36–38). Later, we learn that Mary and Joseph journey to Jerusalem every year to observe Passover (2:41).

Instead of merely adding another element of what Jews *do*, Isaiah 6 contributes to an idea of what Jews *believe*—theology, in other words. Their god counsels in heaven, administers justice, and demands reverence, even silence (cf. Habbakuk 2:20). He sends prophets and directs the affairs of Israel, even when his method seems counterintuitive (Isaiah 6:9–10). The allusion to Isaiah 6 provides a theological backdrop against which this panoply of Jewish rituals acquires meaning and significance.

John as the Last of the Prophets

Luke seems to characterize John the Baptist as a kind of "last prophet" inaugurating the Messianic era.[32] Jesus clearly places him at the end of the prophetic tradition when he explicitly calls him "a prophet" (Luke 7:26) and says "the law and the prophets were *until John*" (16:16, emphasis added). Several allusions throughout Luke connect the Baptist with various prophetic figures from Israel's history. As noted above, the conditions of his birth connect him with Samuel, while Gabriel announced that John would go "in the spirit and power of Elias" (1:17). Just six chapters later, Jesus clarifies, "this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee" (7:27). By quoting Malachi, Jesus draws a direct identification between the Baptist and Elijah who, by this time, had already been associated with the preparatory messenger of Malachi 3.[33] Furthermore, when Luke associates John with the Holy Spirit, he may be announcing

32. See also Oliver, "Lucan Birth Stories," 216–18.

33. Fitzmyer, *Gospel according to Luke I–IX*, 320; John H. Hughes, "John the Baptist: The Forerunner of God Himself," *Novum Testamentum* 14 (1972): 191–218.

his prophetic career by way of connections with 1 Samuel 10:10, 2 Samuel 23:2, and 2 Kings 2:9-16.[34]

In this context, an allusion to Isaiah 6 would bolster the assertion that John is a legitimate prophet by making him a participant in a traditional call narrative and would further elevate his importance by highlighting the fact that he was called from before birth. The fact that Zechariah is silenced in the scene portrayed in Luke 1:5-25 (opposite Isaiah, who was told to speak) may be a method of eliminating confusion about exactly who is being commissioned in this scene. Zechariah's punitive muteness reminds the audience that his role is not to preach, but to be a sign of the true orator to follow, namely John.

Introduction to Isaiah 6:9-10

Perhaps the most significant role Isaiah 6:1-8 may play in Luke 1 is related to later quotations of Isaiah 6:9-10 within Luke-Acts. Isaiah 6:9-10 is quoted in all three synoptics (Matthew 13:14; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10) and becomes an important mainstay in early Christian theology. Craig Evans discusses each of these uses to determine how they contribute to the overall message of the authors. Matthew, he says, uses Isaiah 6:9-10 to explain *why* people cannot recognize God's plan, but places the responsibility for this "obduracy" on Jesus's enemies, not on his own enigmatic teachings. Mark uses the passage to demonstrate that Jesus's mission was misunderstood by his disciples as well as by his enemies, thus contributing to Mark's theme of secrecy, and shows Jesus quoting Isaiah 6:9-10 to explain the violent opposition against him. Luke, however, employs the passage to explain why the Jews reject Christianity and to justify the gospel's extension to the Gentiles.[35]

Luke-Acts further emphasizes this passage by quoting it in its most extended form within the entire New Testament in Acts

34. Brown, *Birth of the Messiah,* 274.

35. Craig A. Evans, *To See and Not Perceive: Isaiah 6.9-10 in Early Jewish and Christian Interpretation* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989), 106, 113, 127. See also Harold S. Songer, "Isaiah and the New Testament," *Review Expositor* 65 (1968): 469.

28:26-27, a mere four verses before the very end of this two-part work. It would certainly be a very poetic move on Luke's part to open his narrative with an allusion to verses 1-8 of Isaiah 6 and to conclude it with an extended quotation of verses 9-10.

Conclusion

Isaiah 6:1-8—in its temple setting, dynamic interaction with the altar, and theme of silence—has convinced us not only of its place among the rhetorical parallels Luke employs in 1:5-25 but that it serves a very real function by aiding in the conveyance of Luke's message. Luke appears to be even more interested in Isaiah than many scholars have previously supposed, and Luke's specifically theological interest in the role of the temple deserves more attention in light of what has been laid out here. Although Christianity's early appropriation of Isaiah has received a great deal of attention, we stand to gain much by continuing to pursue more nuanced theological allusions within Christian texts.

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"They Came and Held Him by the Feet and Worshipped Him": Proskynesis before Jesus in Its Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Context

Matthew L. Bowen

We may gain insight into the earliest Christian understanding of Jesus by examining how the evangelists describe suppliants of Christ, both Jewish and Gentile, and how the book of Revelation depicts his heavenly worship.[1] These accounts commonly mention a reverential gesture, actual or implied, called proskynesis, which stems from a Greek word meaning literally "kissing in the presence of." The Greek historian Herodotus first used the word *proskynesis* to describe the ancient Persian rite of "prostrating oneself before persons and kissing their feet or the hem of their garment, the ground, etc."[2] But proskynesis can be broadly understood as "the hierarchical prostration of inferior to

1. This paper presents research either not included or only briefly treated in my paper "'They Came Forth and Fell Down and Partook of the Fruit of the Tree': Proskynesis in 3 Nephi 11:12–19 and 17:9–10 and Its Significance," in *Third Nephi: An Incomparable Scripture*, ed. Andrew C. Skinner and Gaye Strathearn (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute and Deseret Book, 2012), 107–29. Special thanks go to Andrew Skinner, Gaye Strathearn, Brian Hauglid, Carl Griffin, and Shirley Ricks. I would also like to thank my father, Lon Bowen, who has taught me by example the meaning of *worship*. All biblical citations herein are from the King James Version, unless otherwise indicated.

2. Walter Bauer et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, rev. and ed. Fredrick W. Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 882. See Herodotus, *Histories* 1.134.

superior"[3] or, in a narrower cultic sense, as "formal submission in the presence of a being from the divine realm."[4] In other words, through this act human beings "are to be recognized as belonging to the divine realm."[5] The New Testament writers have several different ways of expressing this concept, but most often they just directly employ the verb *proskyneō* (sixty times).

Proskynesis before Jesus in the New Testament follows a practice attested throughout the ancient Near East. Prostration formulas are found throughout the Hebrew Bible, especially in the psalms: "the hymns of the [Jerusalem] temple"[6] urge the Israelites to bow down before Yahweh. As I will show, these earlier precedents inform our understanding of what Jesus's disciples and other suppliants signified in approaching Jesus with this gesture. It is evident that they acknowledge Jesus not only as belonging to the divine realm, but as divine in the fullest sense. Following his resurrection he was, in their view, fully God and King of Israel (cf. Matthew 28:18).

Proskynesis as Worship

When the word *worship* occurs in English translations of scripture, a word denoting the act of proskynesis almost always underlies it. Although the word *worship* itself has acquired increasing semantic breadth,[7] it fundamentally denotes the act of proskynesis. *Worship* derives from Old English *weorðscipe* (lit. *worth*[*y*] + *ship*), which for-

3. Albert B. Bosworth, "Alexander (3) III ('the Great') of Macedon," in *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, ed. Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 59.

4. Kenneth Grayston, "The Translation of Matthew 28.17," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 21 (1984): 107. Scholars often use *proskynesis* as an umbrella term for hierarchical and cultic prostrations of various kinds. I also will use *proskynesis* in this extended sense throughout this paper.

5. Bauer, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 882.

6. Margaret Barker, *The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple in Jerusalem* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2008), 45.

7. Today *worship* is used more often in an abstract sense. This can be seen in the phrase *worship services*, a description that offers only the vaguest idea of the actual contents of such services.

merly meant not only to "regard or approach [a deity] with veneration," but also "to adore with appropriate acts, rites, or ceremonies."[8]

Early translators of the Bible into English used *worship* to represent the Hebrew verb *hištaḥăwâ* and the Greek verb *proskyneō*, especially where God is the object of the obeisance.[9] Some modern translations continue to use *worship* to represent these terms. The Septuagint (LXX), a translation of the Hebrew Bible made by and for Greek-speaking Jews (and used by the New Testament writers), renders *hištaḥăwâ* with *proskyneō* almost uniformly.[10] All these translators identified Israelite *hištaḥăwâ* with Greek *proskynesis* and Latin *adoratio* ("adoration").[11]

In placing oneself on the earth or ground in worship, there is also an anthropological dimension to proskynesis. The idea that a human being is formed from the ground or earth is found in the book of Genesis, where the man, or Adam, is created from the ground or soil and is "dust" that shall return to "dust" (see Genesis 3:19, 23). The word *humility* has a similar derivation, and indeed, proskynesis may be seen as the ritualization of humility, to "get down there [in

8. *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., s.v. "worship." As a noun, *weorðscipe* originally meant "the condition (in a person) of deserving, or being held in, esteem or repute; honour, distinction, renown; good name, credit." J. R. Clark Hall renders *weorðscipe* as "worth, respect, honor, dignity, glory." See John R. Clark Hall, *A Concise Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, 4th ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), s.v. "weorðscipe."

9. John Wycliffe used the verb *worschipe* to render the verb *adorare* in his translation from the Vulgate. William Tyndale retained *worship* when translating *hištaḥăwâ* from the original Hebrew.

10. See Edwin Hatch and Henry A. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint and the Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament (Including the Apocryphal Books)*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 1217–18. In the LXX's translation of the Aramaic material in the book of Daniel, the verb *proskyneō* is used to render the verb *sĕgid* into Greek (on the latter, see below).

11. As with the term *worship*, the English word *adoration* has undergone considerable semantic shift over time. *Adoration* comes from the Latin noun *adoratio*, which denotes an act of worship or obeisance. It derives from *ad ora* (lit. "to the mouth," possibly originating with a gesture involving placing the right hand to the mouth and kissing) and is verbalized as *adorare*. The Latin Vulgate uses *adorare* to render both Hebrew *hištaḥăwâ* and Greek *proskyneō* into Latin.

the dust] and realize what you are."[12] In humbling oneself to the dust, one ascribes honor and glory, and therefore worth, to God, who shaped creation from it.[13]

"Even So Do I Embrace" God: Proskynesis in Ancient Egypt

The liturgy, literature, and iconography of Egypt attest the importance of proskynesis throughout its long history. A passage from the daily temple liturgy of Karnak shows how this practice constituted an essential part of the daily worship there. A part of the ritual superscripted as "the incantation for kissing the ground [*sn t3*]," which immediately follows "the incantation for seeing God [*m33 nṯr*]," directs the prophet[14] to say, "As I kiss the ground, even so do I embrace Geb."[15] Geb is a metonym for, or a divine personification of, the ground or the earth. Hence the liturgy prescribes proskynesis, including a ritual embrace of a god (Geb, the earth), as part of a ritualized theophany in a temple setting. The parallelism of kiss/embrace and ground/Geb (i.e., the earth) creates a sublime and poetic metaphor for proskynesis—in the most self-abnegating of acts, one embraces God.

The Egyptian story of the Shipwrecked Sailor, a fictive tale laden with cultic imagery and allusions, uses proskynesis as a *Leitmotif*. Throughout the story, the sailor piously emphasizes and reemphasizes that he was "on [his] belly in [the] presence" of a giant gilded snake, an almost unmistakable cipher for a god.[16] The sailor's prosky-

12. Hugh W. Nibley, "The Faith of an Observer: Conversations with Hugh Nibley," in *Eloquent Witness: Nibley on Himself, Others, and the Temple* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 2008), 167.

13. See Psalms 29:2; 96:8; cf. D&C 84:102.

14. Lit. *ḥm-nṯr,* "god's servant." See John Gee, "Prophets, Initiation, and the Egyptian Temple," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 31 (2004): 97–107.

15. *sn=i t3 ḥpt gb,* translation mine. *Rituale für den Kultus des Amon und für den Kultus der Mut* (Leipzig: Heinrichs, 1901), plate 3005, IV, 6–7.

16. Compare the image of the brazen serpent in Numbers 21:4–9. He describes the posture of proskynesis several times in the same language with only a little stylistic variation: *iw=i ḥr ḫt=i m-b3ḥ=f* "while I was on my belly in his presence" (lines 82–83; translations here mine); *dm3.kw(i) ḥr ḫt=i dmi.n=i s3tw m-b3ḥ=f* "I was splayed out on

nesis emphasizes the grandeur of the serpent-deity's physical presence and thus the theophanic character of his experiences.

"Bowing" and "Scraping": Proskynesis in Mesopotamia

The sheer number of Akkadian terms used to express this idea suggests its importance in Mesopotamian literature and liturgy: the verbs *kanāšum*,[17] *kamāsum*,[18] and *šukênum*[19] all denote the act of proskynesis. The phrase *našāqum qaqqaram*, "to kiss the ground"—an idiom identical in meaning to Egyptian *sn t3*—is also abundantly attested.[20] Additional terms occur in an epistolary context (see below). The phrase *našāqum šēpī*, "to kiss the feet," represents a more vivid kind of proskynesis than a simple flat prostration on the earth. As in the Egyptian story of the Shipwrecked Sailor, proskynesis also serves as a theme in the Gilgamesh epic, which uses the dramatic idiom *našāqum šēpī* at key moments to emphasize the divine nature and theophanic majesty of its heroes, Gilgamesh and Enkidu.[21]

Sumerian, a very ancient non-Semitic language, also has several idioms that describe proskynesis. These expressions often name the body part involved in the change of posture. For example, *gú . . . lal* meant to "extend the neck" and thus "to bow down; to kneel; to

my belly and I touched the ground in his presence" (lines 137–38); *ḥḥ.n rdi.n=i wi ḥr ḫt=i ʿwy=i ḫ3m.w m-b3ḥ=f* "Then I cast myself upon my belly, my arms bent up in his presence" (line 161); *ḫpr.n rdi.tw=i wi ḫt=i r dw3 n=f nṯr* "And it came to pass that I cast myself on my belly to thank god" (line 166). Text in Aylward M. Blackman, *Middle-Egyptian Stories. Part I* (Brussels: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1932), 41–48.

17. *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*, ed. John A. Brinkman et al. (Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1980), K, 144–48: "to submit to an overlord, a deity"; "to bend down, to bow down" (hereafter CAD).

18. CAD K, 117–20: "to squat, to kneel, to kneel in prayer or submission."

19. CAD Š 3:214–18: "to prostrate oneself" (i.e., before gods), "to submit, to do obeisance."

20. CAD XI N 2:58–59. See also the entry for *nuššuqūm qaqqaram*.

21. See OB Tablet II col. I, lines 10–11, 20–21; Tablet VI, lines 12–16; Tablet VII, line 143, in Andrew George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic: Introduction, Critical Edition, and Cuneiform Texts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1:172, 616, 640.

embrace."[22] Similarly, *gú ki-šè . . . ĝar*[23] denotes placing one's neck on the earth, that is, prostrating oneself. Perhaps the most evocative of the Sumerian prostration idioms means "to scrape the earth (with one's nose)."[24] The Hittites used the expression *kattan ḫaliya-*[ari] to signify "bow[ing] down" or "prostrat[ing] oneself" before someone.[25]

I Am the (Virtual) "Dust at Your Feet": Proskynesis in an Epistolary Context

As the Amarna letters particularly illustrate, when it came to submitting oneself to an overlord in the politico-diplomatic realm of the ancient Near East, it was possible to "mail it in." In the letters the vassal flatters his overlord, the Pharaoh Akhenaten, with declarations like "[I am] your slave" and "the dust at your feet,"[26] together with a so-called prostration or obeisance formula such as "at the feet of my king, my lord, my son, my god, seven times and seven times I prostrate; at the feet of my king, my lord I fall."[27] Anson F. Rainey writes, "The intention is to express the act of obeisance required of subordinates visiting the Egyptian court: prostration seven times on the belly and seven times on the back, an aerobic feat of no small consequence."[28] The rhetoric emphasizes that vassals view themselves as "even less than the dust of the earth" vis-à-vis their overlord.[29]

22. Or *gú . . . lá*. Compare John A. Halloran, *Sumerian Lexicon: A Dictionary Guide to the Ancient Sumerian Language* (Los Angeles: Logogram, 2006), 86.

23. Or *gú ki-šè . . . lal/lá*. Halloran, *Sumerian Lexicon*, 86.

24. (*Kiri*$_3$) *ki su ub*. Compare Egyptian *sn t3*, "kiss the earth" (lit. "*nose* the earth"), discussed above.

25. See Harry A. Hoffner Jr. and H. Craig Melchert, *A Grammar of the Hittite Language. Part 2: Tutorial* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 56.

26. El-Amarna Letters (=EA) 195, 233, 235, 297, 299, 331, 378 (*inter alia*) contain this phrase. This expression, or variations on it, are abundantly attested, e.g., "I am the dust under the sandals of the king" (EA 147), "I am the dust under the feet and sandals of the king" (EA 149), etc. See William L. Moran, *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), passim.

27. EA 235:5–11.

28. Anson F. Rainey, *Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets: References and Index of Texts Cited* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 193.

29. See Mosiah 4:2; Moses 1:9–10.

"Causing Oneself to Live"? Israelite *hištaḥăwâ*

The Hebrew verb *hištaḥăwâ*, occurring some 170 times in the Hebrew Bible,[30] is frequently rendered "worship" in our scriptures, but the concrete act of proskynesis is always denoted (see above). The Aramaic verb *sĕgid*[31] and the Arabic verb *sajada*[32] express comparable meanings in those languages.[33] H. D. Preuss believes that *hištaḥăwâ* "probably expresses a stage beyond *sāghadh*,"[34] and Othmar Keel suggests that it expresses an "interior attitude."[35]

Hištaḥăwâ has been traditionally analyzed as a hithpael form of the root **šḥy/šḥh*. Taking into account its clear similarity to Ugaritic *yštḥwy*, "to prostrate oneself,"[36] more recent studies have argued for a different origin.[37] Martin Hartmann first made the suggestion that *hištaḥăwâ* derives from a Semitic root **ḥwy* rather than **šḥy* (or **šḥh*).[38] After evidence from Ugarit became available,

30. See Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 295–96; see also Bruce K. Waltke and Michael O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 360.

31. The verb *sĕgid* is the verb used in the Aramaic material in Daniel (2:46; 3:5–28 passim) and to translate *hištaḥăwâ* in the Aramaic Targums.

32. The term *mosque* (< French *mosquée* < Latin *mosquea* < Greek *masgidion* < Arabic *masjid*) is a cognate noun derived from *sajada*, i.e., "place of worship," "place of prostration."

33. Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, ed. J. Milton Cowan, 4th ed. (Urbana, IL: Spoken Language Services, 1994), 462–63: "to bow down, bow in worship; to throw o.s. down, prostrate o.s. . . . to worship." See also the derived noun *sujūd*, "prostration, adoration, worship."

34. H. D. Preuss, "חוה *ḥwh*, השתחוה *histhach^{a}vāh*," in *The Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), 4:249.

35. Othmar Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms*, trans. Timothy J. Hallett (1978; repr., Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 308.

36. Gregorio Del Olmo Lete and Joaquín Sanmartín, *A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 381. They note that it is used in parallel with "the prostration formula" = *hbr w ql*, "bow and fall down" (KTU 1.3 III 10). See also Del Olmo Lete and Sanmartín, *Dictionary*, 333.

37. A few scholars, like John A. Emerton, still favor the traditional view. See J. A. Emerton, "The Etymology of *Hištaḥ^{a}wāh*," *Oudtestamentische Studien* 20 (1977): 41–55.

38. Martin Hartmann, "Die Pluriliteralbildungen in den semitischen Sprachen mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des Hebräischen, Chaldäischen, und Neusyrischen.

William F. Albright revisited this idea, suggesting that *hištaḥăwâ* was derived from a **ḥwy* (or **ḥwh*) root cognate with the Arabic root *ḥawā*, meaning "to coil up or constrict like a snake."[39] More interesting, perhaps, is Siegfried Kruezer's more recent suggestion (revisiting Hartmann) that it derives from **ḥwy/ḥyy* ("to live") and means to cheer, celebrate, and hence worship, referencing ancient worship or fealty formulas like the familiar, "Long live the king!"[40] or even, as Bruce K. Waltke and Michael P. O'Connor phrase it, "to cause oneself to live (through worship),"[41] that is, through proskynesis.[42] This would compare to the Arabic form *istaḥyā*, "to spare [someone's] life, let live, keep alive,"[43] and may find some support in Keel's observation that such "falling down is equivalent to the death-feigning reflex well-known to behavioral research."[44]

Erster Theil: Bildung durch Weiderholung des letzten Radicales am Schluss und des ersten nach dem zweiten" (inaugural dissertation, Halle, 1875), 17.

39. William F. Albright, "The North-Canaanite Epic of *ʾAlʾeyan Baʿal and Mot*," *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society* 12 (1932): 197n41. See also G. I. Davies, "A Note on the Etymology of *hištaḥawāh*," *Vetus Testamentum* 29/4 (1979): 493–95. This meaning of *ḥawā* is still preserved in modern Arabic. Compare the entries listed under form V in Wehr, *Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, 255: "to curl (up), coil (up)."

40. Siegfried Kreuzer, "Zur Bedeutung und Etymologie von *hištaḥawah/yštḥwy*," *Vetus Testamentum* 35/1 (1985): 39–60; supported by Josef Tropper, *Der ugaritische Kausativstamm und die Kausativbildungen des Semitischen* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1990), 72–75. See also Wilfred G. E. Watson, "An Egyptian Cognate for Ugaritic *ḤWY* (II)?" in *Egyptian and Semito-Hamitic (Afro-Asiatic) Studies: In Memoriam W. Vycichl*, ed. Gábor Takács (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 155–59.

41. Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 360.

42. Here, then, we may also have a philological solution to the paradox "there shall no man see me and live" (Exodus 33:20), although some have done just that (see Exodus 24:11). "To cause oneself to live" through proskynesis accords with D&C 67:11: "For no man has seen God at any time in the flesh, except *quickened* [made to live] by the Spirit of God." Keel, *Symbolism of the Biblical World*, 310, says, "Should a man live nonetheless, it is only due to the grace of God." See especially 2 Nephi 25:29; D&C 84:18–22.

43. Wehr, *Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, 256. According to Wilfred Watson, the cognate Arabic noun *taḥīya* or *taḥāyā*, "greeting; salutation; salute; cheer (= wish that God may give s.o. long life)," also would seem to support Kreuzer's conclusion. See Watson, "Egyptian Cognate," 155n2; Wehr, *Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, 257.

44. Keel, *Symbolism of the Biblical World*, 310.

Another suggestion is that *hištaḥăwâ* derives from the Egyptian *ḥwi*, "beat, strike, smite,"[45] attested in Ugaritic as **ḥwy*, meaning "to throw oneself down and strike the earth."[46] While possible,[47] this is less likely since this root is otherwise unattested in Hebrew in any other verbal or nominal form.[48] Whatever can be said for the scientific etymology of *hištaḥăwâ*, it is certain, as Waltke and O'Connor note, that "the unusual shape of the word hints at its extraordinary cultural significance."[49]

"Kissing" the Feet of Yahweh

That Israelite worship was to involve proskynesis in Yahweh's presence is clear from texts like Psalm 95:6: "O come, *let us worship* and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker." The so-called worship injunctions of Psalm 95, and other enthronement psalms, suggested the proper gesture for approach.

Like Psalm 95, Psalm 2 is an enthronement psalm that was connected with coronation in ancient Israel. We know how the earliest Christians interpreted the divine rebirth (or adoption) formula of Psalm 2:7 because they applied it to Jesus.[50] But it is more difficult to say what ancient Israelites and early Aramaic-speaking Christians would have made of later portions of this psalm, especially the phrase in verse 11 rendered in the King James Version (KJV) as "kiss the Son." This may be a corrupted text, and a widely accepted

45. Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1999), 165. See also Adolf Erman and Hermann Grapow, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1971), 3:46–48.

46. See discussion in Watson, "Egyptian Cognate," 155–59.

47. Cyrus H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1965), §847. Watson, "Egyptian Cognate," 155, notes that Gordon's explanation "has been rejected by Ugaritic scholars in favor of the explanation by Kreuzer."

48. See Emerton, "Etymology of *Hištaḥ^{a}wāh*," 46. The root **ḥwy/ḥyy*, on the other hand, is productive and well-attested in several verbal stems, as well as in nominal/adjectival forms.

49. Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 361.

50. See Acts 13:33; Hebrews 1:5; 5:5.

alternative reading is "with trembling kiss his feet" (RSV, NRSV).[51] Barnabas Lindars suggests that "the picture given by [this] most probable restoration . . . is certainly the homage of vassal kings to their overlord" but also notes that "these words could be used at any coronation ceremony during the whole period of the monarchy."[52] Carsten Vang has more recently mounted a defense of "kiss the Son,"[53] but in either case, the problematic readings preserved in other ancient biblical versions may have arisen as attempts to resolve the theological difficulties presented by the verb *kiss* in a temple ritual context.[54]

Another important question is how closely the dynastic son of 2 Samuel 7 (Solomon), who became Yahweh's own "son" (v. 4), was identified with Yahweh himself. Margaret Barker has observed how in the Chronicler's account of Solomon's enthronement the people "worship Yahweh and the king" (1 Chronicles 29:20) and how Solomon "was enthroned upon the throne of Yahweh" (1 Chronicles 29:23; translations mine). Barker proposes that on this occasion the king *was* Yahweh (the Lord).[55] Conceptual support for this can be seen in Psalms 45 and 72 and the royal, theophanic appearance of

51. Alfred Bertholet, "Eine crux interpretum," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 28 (1908): 58–59. See also D. Winton Thomas, *The Text of the Revised Psalter* (London: SPCK, 1963), 1; Barnabas Lindars, "Is Psalm II an Acrostic Poem?" *Vetus Testamentum* 17/1 (1967): 61.

52. Lindars, "Is Psalm II an Acrostic Poem?" 61.

53. Carsten Vang, "Ps 2,11–12: A New Look at an Old Crux Interpretum," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 9 (1995): 163–85.

54. Yahweh is clearly the one to be "served" in Psalm 2:11a, but some biblical texts (e.g., Deuteronomy 4:12) do not present him as a being that could be "kissed," although his "feet" are sometimes mentioned in theophanic texts (e.g., Exodus 24:10; Psalm 18:9 [2 Samuel 22:10]; Zechariah 14:4; cf. Ezekiel 43:7). In the Hebrew Bible, "kissing" is mentioned as an act of obeisance in two infamous instances: almost all of Israel kisses Baal (1 Kings 19:18) and the "calves" (Hosea 13:2). Even if "son" is taken to mean a royal son, as Yahweh's earthly surrogate, the earthly "King of Zion" (Psalm 2:6), kissing him in obeisance would have been nonetheless problematic for strict adherents of Deuteronomism (see Deuteronomy 17:14–20).

55. The scene in 1 Chronicles 29:20–23, with its cultic meal eaten "before the Lord," or "in the presence of the Lord" (i.e., the temple), is reminiscent of the events of 3 Nephi 11–18. See Margaret Barker, *The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy* (London: Clark, 2003), esp. 46, 61, 68, 81, 96, 126, 189, 217, and 231.

Simon the High Priest in Ben Sira 50:1–21.[56] This would explain how the earliest Christians were prepared to think of Jesus as being both Yahweh their God and the Davidic king.

"Thou Shalt Worship the Lord Thy God": Proskynesis in Matthew

Matthew sees Jesus as both Yahweh the God of Israel and as the Davidic king, who in both the temple and royal monarchic tradition was due reverence and *hištaḥăwâ*. He adopts the LXX's use of *proskyneō* for *hištaḥăwâ*, which he employs thirteen times in his gospel as a *Leitwort* ("key word").[57]

Matthew makes clear at the beginning of his gospel that he sees Jesus as fully divine. His narrative about Jesus's birth and infancy cites Isaiah's prophecy that Jesus will be Immanuel, a Hebrew name meaning "with us is God."[58] He sustains the image of "God with us" throughout his gospel by his use of the proskynesis motif. When the wise men come from the east to Jerusalem, they ask: "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to *worship him*" (Matthew 2:2).

Recognizing that the birth of the Messiah constitutes a threat to his client kingship, Herod ascertains from the Jewish religious leaders that Jesus will be born in Bethlehem (cf. Micah 5:2). He then dissimulates: "And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and *worship him* also" (Matthew 2:8). The truth, however, is that Herod himself wishes to be so reverenced and thus attempts to eliminate the child.

In spite of this potential threat, the wise men are divinely guided via the star to where Mary and Joseph reside with Jesus. Upon seeing the baby Jesus, the actions of the wise men are cultically appropriate: "And when they were *come* into the house, they saw the

56. See 3 Nephi 11:1–19; 17:9–10; Hebrews 1:5; 5:1–10; 7:1–28; 9:1–28.

57. On *Leitworte* as a literary device, see Martin Buber, *Darko shel Mikra: 'iyunim bi-defuse-signon ba-Tanakh* (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1964), 284.

58. See Matthew 1:23; Isaiah 7:14; 8:8, 10.

young child with Mary his mother, and *fell down,* and *worshipped him*: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh" (Matthew 2:11). Their "coming," "falling down," and "worshipping" constitutes a prostration formula similar to those found in the Hebrew Bible.

Proskynesis, and to whom it is properly due, is the concluding and summative issue in the devil's temptation of Jesus (Matthew 4). The devil comes to Jesus near the end of his wilderness fast, "cit[ing] scripture for his purpose."[59] Jesus responds to each temptation and scriptural citation (Exodus 34:28; Psalm 91:11) with scriptural citations of his own, all of them from Deuteronomy (8:3; 6:16; and 6:13). In the last temptation, the devil offers Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them," if "thou wilt fall down and *worship me*" (Matthew 4:8–9). Jesus responds again with a reference to Deuteronomy: "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, *Thou shalt worship* the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Matthew 4:10).[60]

Jesus's response is more than a pious creedal recitation. For Matthew, Jesus *is* the Lord of whom Deuteronomy speaks, the Lord to whom proskynesis is due, just as he is the Lord who is not to be tempted (Deuteronomy 6:16) and the Lord by whose every word humans are to live (Deuteronomy 8:3). The devil's demand for proskynesis is ironic and preposterous, based on the false premise that "the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them" are his to give. Jesus, as Yahweh, is creator and ruler of the world. The devil, like Herod and Caesar, is a ranting, raving pretender to his throne (see Moses 1:19).

Matthew uses the proskynesis motif not only to identify Jesus as Yahweh, but to stress his superiority over Moses. As W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison have noted, the phrase *when he was come down from the mountain* (Matthew 8:1) is "almost identical" to the LXX A

59. Thus Shakespeare alludes to this incident: "The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose / An evil soul producing holy witness" (*Merchant of Venice* 1.3.98–99).

60. A paraphrase of Deuteronomy 5:9, 6:13, and 10:20. The numerous verbal parallels between this incident and the temptation of Moses are striking—Satan also demands proskynesis from Moses to no avail (see Moses 1:11–22).

version of Exodus 34:29, thus "send[ing] the reader's thoughts back to Moses and Sinai."[61] Matthew then reports: "And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean" (Matthew 8:2). The prostration formula has a cultic resonance,[62] but this language also recalls Moses's actions on Sinai: "And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and *worshipped*" (Exodus 34:8). Jesus was the law-giving Lord worshipped on that occasion. Jesus does cleanse the leper but commands him to go and show himself to the priest and to "offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto [i.e, against] them" (Matthew 8:4). Moses intercedes on behalf of Miriam's leprosy (Numbers 12:10–15), and Elisha gives instruction for the healing of Naaman's leprosy (2 Kings 5:1–14), but the power to heal was, and is, in Jesus.[63]

Matthew uses proskynesis to stress Jesus's preeminence over past prophets, but also over gods. Just as he contrasted Jesus (as Yahweh) with both worldly and otherworldly pretenders to divine kingship (Herod and the devil), he also uses the motif to emphasize Jesus's superiority over Israel's other enemies,[64] namely, Death (Mot) and Hell (Sheol). Death and Hell were traditionally personified as deities or quasi-deities.[65] Therefore, when the daughter of a Jewish religious leader dies, her father calls upon Jesus to exercise his authority over death: "Behold, there came a certain ruler, and *worshipped him*, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live" (Matthew 9:18). This

61. W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew, Volume 2: Matthew 8–18* (London: Clark, 2004), 9. The text "is drawing a parallel between Jesus and Moses and between Sinai and the mount of Jesus' sermon."

62. Davies and Allison, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 10.

63. The events in Numbers 12 and 2 Kings 5 are important affirmations of Moses's and Elisha's prophetic offices. Matthew 8:1–4 emphasizes that Jesus too is a prophet but also divine.

64. See 1 Corinthians 15:25–26: "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

65. See, e.g., Isaiah 5:14; 28:15, 18; Habakkuk 2:5; Proverbs 1:12; 27:20; 30:15–16; Psalms 49:15 [Masoretic Text 14]; 141:7. Compare John Day, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 185–225.

religious leader[66] recognizes that Jesus has Yahweh's authority over death and has power to restore his daughter to life (cf. Isaiah 25:8), and his observance of the Israelite temple-proskynesis emphasizes his identification of Jesus with Yahweh. His faith in Jesus is representative of the faith that Israel *should* have had in Yahweh's power over death (cf. Isaiah 28:18) and thus secures the desired blessing.

The next proskynesis scene emphasizes the disciples' acknowledgment of Jesus's power over the elements, reflecting the various presentations of Yahweh's superiority to Yamm,[67] Baal,[68] Dagan,[69] Mot, and other deities throughout the Hebrew Bible. The disciples enter a ship to cross over to the other side of the lake (Matthew 14:22), which places them out on the sea (Gk. *thalassa* = Heb. *yām*; cf. 14:25). This is the domain of the old Canaanite water-deity Yamm, yet Jesus not only walks on the water (i.e., treads on Yamm) but enables Peter to do so too (Matthew 14:28–30). He rebukes the storm-wind, a hallmark of Baal as Canaanite storm-god. Jesus's power over the elements here not only bespeaks his divinity, but demonstrates that he is Yahweh, the God of Israel. Recognizing this, "they that were in the ship . . . *worshipped him*, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God" (Matthew 14:33).

When Jesus passes over to Tyre and Sidon, he passes further into old Baalist country. He is met by a Syro-Phoenician woman, called here "a woman of Canaan" (Matthew 15:22). She is, however—unlike many Israelites in Israel's history—no Baal worshipper:

> But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and *worshipped him*, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it *to [the]*

66. Identified as Jairus in Mark 5:22 and Luke 8:41.

67. See John P. Heil, *Jesus Walking on the Sea: Meaning and Gospel Functions of Matt. 14:22–33, Mark 6:45–52 and John 6:15b-21* (Rome: Biblical Institute, 1981).

68. Fred E. Woods, *Water and Storm Polemics against Baalism in the Deuteronomic History* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), passim; Fred E. Woods, "Who Controls the Water? Yahweh vs. Baal," *FARMS Occasional Papers* 4 (2003): 1–12.

69. See the afflictions which the ark brought upon Dagon and the Philistines in 1 Samuel 5–6.

> *dogs*. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet *the dogs* [*ta kynaria*] eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour. (Matthew 15:24–28)

The Syro-Phoenician woman's proskynesis before Jesus reflected her surpassing faith. At first he tests that faith, including her among the little dogs to whom it was not fitting to cast the blessings reserved for the children (i.e., the "children of Israel," the "children of the covenant"). The term *dog* was used as an ethnic pejorative for Gentiles among some religious Jews during Jesus's time.[70] Jesus uses the slur ironically here. The Greek text puns on the *-kyn-* in *prosekynei* and *kynaria* ("little dogs") apparently with reference to her posture—she is prostrate, doglike, at the table of her "master" or "lord."

Her response indicates to Jesus that this non-Israelite has great faith in Israel's covenant blessings—blessings that the children of Israel were themselves neglecting. She recognizes that those blessings have their source in the Lord himself and that she wants to be a partaker of them. She passes Jesus's test and Jesus makes her daughter whole. She becomes a partaker in Israel's blessings through faith, and her proskynesis before Jesus is offered up as evidence of that faith.

Jesus is also the divine king in his parable of the ungrateful servant. A certain king "took account" of his servants, and one of them was found to have a 10,000-talent debt, a hyperbolic figure for a debt so large it could not realistically be repaid. "But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore *fell down*, and *worshipped him*, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all" (Matthew 18:25–26). His lord "was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt" (18:27), not because of the servant's proskynesis or his

70. See Deuteronomy 23:18, which excludes Canaanite cult functionaries as "dogs."

desperate (and impossible) promise that he would repay the whole debt, but by his plea for patience.

This proskynesis before his lord was an appropriate acknowledgment of his lord's identity, but immediately the servant is exposed as halfhearted. For after being forgiven his irreparable debt, he then chokes a fellow-servant over a negligible debt to himself. Though the wretch pleads at his feet for forgiveness, the servant throws the fellow-servant into debtors' prison, from which he cannot repay even his modest debt (Matthew 18:28–30).[71] In spite of his lord's patience toward him, the ungrateful servant fails to show his fellow the least forbearance.

This story suggests that love for God and love for others are not unconnected acts (cf. Matthew 22:35–40). The ungrateful servant rendered his own proskynesis and avowals meaningless when he received his lord's love and forgiveness but refused the least mercy to his fellow-servant. His graciousness thus spurned, the king is left with little choice but to "[deliver] him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him" (Matthew 18:34); the servant thus joins his abused fellow-servant in debtors' prison where he would "by no means come out thence, [until he had] paid the uttermost farthing" (Matthew 5:26).

As Jesus prepares to go up to Jerusalem to accomplish the atonement, Matthew records that the mother of James and John approached and supplicated him. Her manner of approach and words of entreaty indicate that she recognized Jesus's divinity: "Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, *worshipping* [*proskynousa*] him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom" (Matthew 20:20–21). The feminine participle *proskynousa* indicates that it was the mother, not her sons, who worshipped Jesus, and she likewise acknowledged his divinity in requesting the enthronement of her sons with Jesus in his kingdom.

71. On the paradox of debtors' prison, see 3 Nephi 12:26; cf. D&C 19:10–20.

Matthew arrives at the summation of his proskynesis theme in his postresurrection narrative, where Jesus's disciples directly and physically experience the resurrected Jesus and bear witness to the reality of his atonement through proskynesis. When Jesus meets them in Galilee, Matthew reports: "And they came and *held him by the feet* [or, embraced his feet] and *worshipped him*" (Matthew 28:9). They found themselves at "the place of the soles of [the Lord's] feet" (Ezekiel 43:7), the place of at-one-ment,[72] just as Moses and the elders of Israel found themselves at Yahweh's feet in Exodus 24:10.[73]

Matthew closes his gospel with the account of another postresurrection theophany (or Christophany), evoking the mountain theophanies from Exodus (3:1–4:17; 19:3–14; 24:9–11), Deuteronomy (5; cf. 1 Kings 19:7–8), and elsewhere:[74] "Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they *worshipped* him: but some doubted" (Matthew 28:16–17). Kenneth Grayston suggests that this means "when they saw him, they threw themselves down in submission, though they doubted its effect."[75] We are not told that they physically touched Jesus or held him by the feet, as when they rendered proskynesis to Jesus at his earlier appearance. It may be that some of the disciples were still struggling to fully understand or accept the reality of resurrection.

72. Manfred Görg, "Die Lade als Thronsockel," *Biblische Notizen* 1 (1976): 29–30, has made the interesting (though not incontrovertible) suggestion that "mercy-seat," Heb. *kappōret*, may have an Egyptian origin: *kp (n) rdwy* = "[place of] the sole of the foot." In texts such as 3 Nephi 17 and Matthew 28, the feet of the Savior are the place of at-one-ment.

73. Exodus 24:10: "And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness." Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery record their vision in similar language: "We saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, before us; and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber" (D&C 110:2). This "paved work" would have appeared much like the *kappōret* atop the ark of the covenant. See Exodus 26:34; 30:6; 31:7; 35:12; 37:6–9; 39:35; 40:20, Leviticus 16:2, 13–15; Numbers 7:89. The posture of the cherubim atop the ark may also suggest proskynesis.

74. See also Ezekiel 40; 1 Nephi 11–14.

75. Grayston, "Translation of Matthew 28.17," 108.

Jesus's few reported words on this occasion are very significant: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:16-20). Jesus now has a fulness of divinity—he is *teleios*, meaning "perfected" or "fully initiated."[76] Jesus here commissions his disciples, authorizing them to perform the rites that will enable others to become likewise fully initiated. Matthew fittingly closes with Jesus's promise, "and, lo, I am with you alway[s]" (28:20), and creates a framing *inclusio* when Jesus is again named Emmanuel ("God with us"; see Matthew 1:23).[77] Unquestionably, in Matthew's theology Jesus is the God of Israel who condescends to be with humanity on his footstool and is worthy in every sense of the proskynesis accorded him in the Israelite temple and royal tradition.

Loving Much: Proskynesis in Luke

Where Matthew uses the LXX term *proskyneō*, the other evangelists regularly describe the same events using other language.[78] Luke uses *proskyneō* three times: twice when citing LXX Deuteronomy 6:13 in his version of the temptation narrative (Luke 4:7-8) and once in the closing words of his gospel (Luke 24:52). Otherwise, Luke prefers to use various phrases of similar meaning.[79]

76. See Matthew 5:48; 3 Nephi 12:48. Note also how in Hebrews *teleios* and its cognates describe Christ being "fully initiated," and his "initiating" God's sons and daughters (including the dead) and the present creation into celestial glory (Hebrews 2:10; 5:9, 14; 6:1; 7:19, 28; 9:9, 11; 10:1, 14; 11:40; 12:23).

77. See W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew, Volume 1: Matthew 1-7* (London: Clark, 2004), 213.

78. For example, Matthew 8:2 says the leper "worshipped" (*prosekynei*) Jesus, while Luke 5:12 says the leper "fell on his face" and some versions of Mark 1:40 have "kneeling down." Similarly, Matthew's version of the story of Jairus's daughter says that Jairus "worshipped" Jesus (Matthew 8:19), where Mark and Luke record that he "fell at his feet" (Mark 5:22; Luke 8:41).

79. By comparison, John uses *proskyneō* eleven times, but in every case with reference to different events than in Matthew's account. Nine of those instances occur in span of a mere five verses (John 4:20-24). These usages (and that of John 12:20) all relate to Jerusalem as the place in which Jews worship God—the place of proskynesis. In John 9:38, however, Jesus is explicitly the object of *proskyneō*, when the man born

Luke reports that on one occasion Jesus was invited to dine at the house of one of the Pharisees. While he was reclining at dinner there, a woman, described by the Pharisee host as a sinner, "stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with her tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and *kissed his feet* and anointed them with the ointment" (Luke 7:37–38, emphasis added). Where Matthew puts tremendous emphasis on the cultic nature of the act, Luke repeatedly focuses on Jesus's feet and thus on the theophanic nature of the experience. The Pharisee grumbles and tells himself that if Jesus had been a prophet he would have known she was a sinner, a reaction that occasions a parable from Jesus:

> There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. (Luke 7:41–45)

Simon's gratitude is not unlike the servant in the parable of the 10,000-talent debt: perhaps his debt is smaller, but his ingratitude is greater (see Matthew 18:21–34). Simon neglects to perform basic

blind worships him. Mark uses the term twice, but ironically: Mark 5:6 describes a demoniac who worships Jesus, the unclean spirits within the demoniac essaying not to be cast out, and Mark 15:19 describes the mock worship (mocking proskynesis) of the Roman soldiers who abused Jesus in the Praetorium. For Luke's usage, see, for example, *pesōn epi prosōpon* ("fall[ing] down upon [one's] face") (Luke 5:12); *pesōn para tous podas* ("fall[ing] down at [someone's] feet") (Luke 8:41); and a combination of these two, *epesen epi prosōpon para tous podas* ("[he] fell down on his face at his feet") (Luke 17:16).

acts of hospitality, such as providing water for his guest's feet and giving a kiss of greeting. The woman, whom Simon calls a sinner, however, elevates these simple acts of hospitality to acts of worship, washing his feet with her own tears, using her own hair to wipe them, and repeatedly kissing, not merely his face, but his feet.

Thus Luke poignantly illustrates the love of God—Jesus's love for the woman as manifest in his forgiveness of her sins, and her reciprocal love for Jesus as manifest in worship. However, to conclude that Jesus forgives her sins *because* she kisses his feet is to misread the story. In the phrase *for she loved much* (Luke 7:47), the Greek conjunction *hoti*, translated "for" in the KJV, would be better translated "therefore" or "considering that."[80] Thus the woman places herself at Jesus's feet, "weeping" and "wash[ing] his feet with tears," and so forth (7:38) *because* he "frankly forgave" her in his infinite love and compassion (7:42). She showed her gratitude and reciprocated the Savior's love for her in the most direct way possible. Her physical proskynesis in kissing the feet of Jesus was a profound demonstration of the love of God and literally fulfilled the injunction of Psalm 2 to "kiss the Son" or even (in an emended reading) to "kiss his [Yahweh's] feet" (Psalm 2:12).

Like Matthew, Luke closes his gospel account with a proskynesis scene. Immediately following the experience of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, at a time when the eleven were gathered together with some of the other disciples (cf. Luke 24:33), Jesus appeared in resurrected form. Nothing like this had *ever* happened, and Luke reports that the disciples "were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit" (Luke 24:37). Jesus then invites them to witness the "infallible proofs" ("sure signs," Acts 1:3) of his resurrection: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Luke 24:39). Because "they yet believed not for

80. See Max Zerwick and Mary Grosvenor, *Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament*, 5th rev. ed. (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 2007), 203. Perhaps the use of *hoti* here reflects an underlying Semitic idiom.

joy," he ate "a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb" as a final proof (Luke 24:41–42).

Since his disciples are now witnesses of his resurrection (Luke 24:48), Jesus seals the "promise of [the] Father" upon them, which will include their being (literally) "endued [clothed] with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).[81] Before separating from them, Jesus "led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them" (Luke 24:50), reminiscent of the priestly blessing in Numbers 6:24–27 (cf. Ben Sira 50:20–21). They experience Jesus in all of his divinity. When he is finally "carried up into heaven," Luke reports that "they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy" (Luke 24:51–52). They acknowledged the resurrected Jesus's divinity and reverenced him, just as they would the God of Israel in the temple. In fact, Luke's concluding notice is that they "were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God"—clearly they wanted to remain in the Lord's presence (Luke 24:53; cf. 3 Nephi 17:5).

"Worthy Is the Lamb": Proskynesis in Revelation

As in Matthew's gospel, *proskyneō* is also a *Leitwort* in the Apocalypse of John, occurring twenty-four times. Unlike Matthew, however, the focus here is not on Jesus's earthly ministry but on what will occur at the end of time and in the eternities. Proskynesis in Revelation is rendered to the Lord, enthroned in celestial glory. Like Matthew, John uses the verb *proskyneō* to emphasize that Jesus is Yahweh, the Lord God, and to draw a sharp distinction between the worthy lamb to whom proskynesis is due, angels to whom proskynesis is not due, and the beast that threatens the damnation and destruction of those who render proskynesis to it.

In the book of Revelation, John enters heaven "in the spirit" (Revelation 4:2) and "finds himself in the throne-room of God,"[82] the heavenly holy of holies. Here he sees "things which must be

81. Compare the expression *clothed with power* in D&C 45:44; 138:30.

82. Frank J. Matera, *New Testament Theology: Exploring Diversity and Unity* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 404.

hereafter" (Revelation 4:1), including twenty-four elders sitting upon twenty-four thrones. Evoking Isaiah's throne vision, the four "beasts" or "living ones" are described as being like the seraphim ("burning ones") of Isaiah 6:2, who burn with theophanic fire. Like the seraphim, they proclaim the *trishagion*—"Holy! Holy! Holy!" (Revelation 4:8; cf. Isaiah 6:3). But then John details a scene of proskynesis that is much more elaborate than Isaiah describes:

> And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders *fall down* before him that sat on the throne, and *worship* him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. (Revelation 4:9–11, emphasis added)

John describes what the cherubim atop the mercy-seat, and the mercy-seat itself, symbolize: angels and other beings in the heavenly realm "in the attitude of singing and praising their God" on his throne.[83] The difference between John's vision and previous throne visions is that John sees other beings also enthroned. The enthroned elders are among those who "came out of great tribulation" in mortality (Revelation 7:14). They are enthroned and yet never cease to fall down in proskynesis before the Lord Jesus Christ, who is worthy of this reverence.

John then witnesses a similar scene of proskynesis in connection with the opening of the seven seals. He sees "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" (Revelation 5:11; cf. Daniel 7:10)—in other words, "an innumerable company"[84] or "numberless concourses"[85] who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ as a sacrificial lamb. The Lamb is hailed as worthy be-

83. See 1 Nephi 1:8; Alma 36:22; cf. 1 Kings 22:19.

84. Hebrews 12:22; see also D&C 76:67; 138:12.

85. Again, borrowing the language of 1 Nephi 1:8 (Alma 36:22). Lehi also uses the phrase *numberless concourses* to describe the hosts of those who pass through mortality according to his vision (see 1 Nephi 8:21).

cause his redeeming blood has enabled this innumerable company to become "kings and priests" to God and "to reign on earth" (Revelation 5:9–10, 12). They too will be enthroned. Temple imagery again abounds in this chapter: the divine throne that evokes the ark of the covenant, the sacrificial lamb, the harps, incense and incense bowls, the prayers, and so forth.

John also notes that the beasts and the elders "fell down before the lamb" with their harps and the "prayers of the saints" in the form of incense (Revelation 5:8). The acclamation becomes universal: "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them" ascribe "blessing, and honour, and glory, and power" to God and the Lamb, whereupon "the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders *fell down and worshipped him* that liveth for ever and ever" (Revelation 5:13–14). John emphasizes that it is God and the Lamb, not Caesar[86] or any other earthly ruler, who is worthy to be reverenced in this way, because the Lamb has redeemed numberless concourses out of every nation with his blood. It is this worthy lamb who will ultimately rule over all things. Christ's rule will be universal and will be duly acknowledged with proskynesis.

In Revelation 7, even before Christ's final victory, John again sees numberless concourses ("a great multitude, which no man could number") assembled about God's throne out of "all nations, and kindreds [i.e., races], and people, and tongues" who are "clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands" (Revelation 7:9) in celebration of Christ's imminent victory (cf. John 12:13; Mark 11:8–10). They ascribe salvation (i.e., victory) to God and Christ: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb" (Revelation 7:10). In other words, "Hosanna to God and the Lamb."[87] He then sees again the angels themselves "[*falling*] *on their faces*" and "*worship*[*ping*] *God*" (Revelation 7:11).

86. See Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Apocalypse (Revelation)," in *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed. Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1990), 1004.

87. See 3 Nephi 4:32; 11:17; John 12:13; Mark 11:9–10.

Ezekiel and Zechariah saw in vision the measuring of the temple and Jerusalem (see Ezekiel 40–42; 47:1–12; Zechariah 2:5–6). In Revelation 11:1, John is given the opportunity to participate as if he himself were a member of the divine council. He is given a measuring reed and instructed to "measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein." After yet other woes, John at last witnesses the final victory:

> And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their [thrones], *fell upon their faces*, and *worshipped God*, Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. (Revelation 11:15–17)

Again John sees that the twenty-four elders are themselves enthroned (cf. Revelation 3:21) and yet still give due reverence to Christ even as he gives due reverence (worship) to God the Father. They leave their thrones to fall down in proskynesis before the Father and the Son, presumably upon the new, celestialized earth.[88] For John, the proskynesis of the elders is the sure sign that Christ has fully taken power over the earth and that the devil and Israel's other enemies (Death/Mot, Hell/Sheol, etc.) no longer have dominion at all. Christ is now fully divine and has put all enemies under foot.

When John sees an "angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Revelation 14:6), he hears the angel "with a loud voice" command proskynesis before God to the world: "Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and *worship* him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Revelation 14:7).

88. See Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; and Revelation 21:1.

In Revelation 15 John incorporates allusions to the exodus, such as to plagues, to the Song of Moses, and to the paschal lamb. In addition to singing their own Song of Moses (Exodus 15), John foresees that those who overcome will sing the song of the lamb: "All nations shall come and *worship* before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest" (Revelation 15:3–4). This song of the lamb quotes Psalm 86:9: "All nations whom thou hast made shall come and *worship* before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name."[89] The emphasis here is on the universality of the proskynesis wherewith Christ's sovereignty over creation and the justice of his final judgment will be acknowledged.[90]

The final major proskynesis scene in Revelation takes place after the Lord executes judgment upon "the great whore, [who] did corrupt the earth with her fornication" and "[did] avenge the blood of his servants" who were martyred: "And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and *worshipped God* that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia" (Revelation 19:2, 4). This proskynesis is a prelude to "the marriage supper of the Lamb," where all the saints are united with Jesus, never again to be divided (19:9).

The other occurrences of *proskyneō* in Revelation contrast this licit proskynesis with illicit acts of worship. Revelation 13 describes proskynesis before "the beast" in antithesis to proskynesis before God and the Lamb (Revelation 13:4, 12, 15). Revelation 14:9–11, 16:2, and 19:20 describe the punishments in store for those who prostrate themselves before the beast or receive his mark. In contrast, John sees a glorious resurrection and enthronement as the reward for those who "had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark"—"they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Revelation 20:4). He also learns firsthand that

89. It may also allude to Isaiah 2:2 ("all nations shall flow unto it," i.e., to the latter-day temple) and Jeremiah 16:19 ("the Gentiles [nations] shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth").

90. See Isaiah 45:23; Philippians 2:9–11.

proskynesis before anyone or anything other than God and the Lamb, even before angels, is forbidden (Revelation 19:10; 22:8–9).[91]

There is scarcely a more prominent theme in Revelation than proskynesis. One might even argue that the angel's command to John, "Worship God" (Revelation 19:10), sums up the message of the entire work. Whatever befalls the saints in mortality—persecution, suffering, temptation, war, or even martyrdom—if they will truly worship God and the Lamb, they will inherit thrones in God's kingdom. John reveals to his readers the glories reserved for the sanctified, inspiring them not just to endure, but to overcome,[92] so that they might one day come forth and fall down and partake of the fruit of the tree of life (1 Nephi 8:30).[93]

Conclusion

The New Testament writers bear witness that a few special disciples, with great faith and insight, recognized divinity in the "man of sorrows" (Isaiah 53:3) during his earthly ministry. They recognized him as the incarnate Yahweh, and approached him in proskynesis, as the hymns of the temple stipulated. They witnessed

91. Near the end of his vision, John indicates that he "fell at [the] feet" of his angelic guide "to *worship* him." The angel sharply admonishes him for this act: "See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God" (Revelation 19:10). John apparently had to learn the lesson twice: "And when I had heard and seen*, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel* which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God" (Revelation 22:8–9). Nephi reports that he had to teach his brothers this lesson: "And now, they said: We know of a surety that the Lord is with thee, for we know that it is the power of the Lord that has shaken us. And they fell down before me, and were about to worship me, but I would not suffer them, saying: I am thy brother, yea, even thy younger brother; wherefore, worship the Lord thy God, and honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God shall give thee" (1 Nephi 17:55).

92. The verb *nikaō* ("overcome," "conquer," "prevail," "be victorious") occurs sixteen times in Revelation. It is, like *proskyneō*, a *Leitwort* in this work. Just as one must "worship" God and the Lamb rather than "the beast," one must "overcome" the devil "by the blood of the lamb" and by "testimony," and not to be overcome by him.

93. See Revelation 2:7; 22:2, 14.

that the risen Christ was the divine king and high priest, whose coming the scriptures anticipated, when "they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him" (Matthew 28:9) and also "worshipped him" when he ascended into heaven (Luke 24:52). The New Testament writers—particularly Matthew, Luke, and John the Revelator—have given us a vivid picture of not only "what we worship" (John 4:22), but "how to worship," that we "may come unto the Father . . . and in due time receive of his fulness" (D&C 93:19).

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Angels among Us: The Use of Old Testament Passages as Inspiration for Temple Themes in the Dead Sea Scrolls

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The Dead Sea Scrolls have long been popular with Latter-day Saints. Among the scrolls from Qumran are the oldest biblical manuscripts ever found, some of which differ from the texts that became a part of our Old Testament. The Dead Sea Scrolls also provide insight into the religious beliefs and practices of a community of Jews that lived in the intertestamental period. Many of the manuscripts discovered were not biblical texts but were compositions that dealt with the community's beliefs and standards of conduct, as well as their interpretation of scripture and their expectations for the fulfillment of biblical prophecy.

The Dead Sea Scrolls composition known as *Rule of the Congregation* (1Q28a/1QSa) declares that all who desire membership in the elect community need to be sufficiently worthy to be admitted, "for the holy angels are [a part of] their [congrega]tion" (1QSa II, 8–9).[1]

1. Translation by Michael O. Wise, Martin Abegg, and Edward M. Cook with Nehemia Gordon, "Rule of the Congregation," in *Texts Concerned with Religious Law, The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader, Part 1*, ed. Donald W. Parry and Emanuel Tov (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 197. Bracketed words in Qumran texts indicate places where the original text on the scroll was severely damaged or missing. Scholars have, in these cases, attempted to reconstruct the plausible original text, but the reader cannot assume that these reconstructions are always accurate.

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Other Qumran texts such as the *Hodayot* (*Thanksgiving Psalms*), the related *Self-Glorification Hymn*, the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, and many other liturgical and poetical texts imply a belief in liturgical communion with angelic beings and human access to the divine council in the celestial temple of God.[2] My research on these texts has revealed a pattern that, when pieced together, can be outlined as follows:

- an individual, often the speaker of the hymn/psalm or a leader of the community/congregation, speaks as if he has been taken up into heaven to stand in the divine council of God;
- in that setting, he is instructed in the praise of God and is taught the heavenly "mysteries," often by God himself in a theophanic experience;
- the individual is appointed to be a teacher, often with the implication that he will teach the mysteries that he learned from God to others;
- those who follow his teachings are similarly enabled to participate in the heavenly vision and praise God together with the angels, often singing or shouting for joy; some texts suggest that they may have been subsequently clothed with heavenly robes in imitation of the heavenly beings.

I will analyze each of these points in turn, emphasizing how each is dependent on biblical passages and other traditions.

Ascension of the Individual to the Divine Council

One of the best-known texts from Qumran that describes a human ascending to heaven to participate in the divine council is the so-called *Self-Glorification Hymn*, which is found in four manu-

2. For a summary of recent research on this topic, see Angela Kim Harkins, "A New Proposal for Thinking about 1QH^a Sixty Years after Its Discovery," in *Qumran Cave 1 Revisited: Texts from Cave 1 Sixty Years after Their Discovery: Proceedings of the Sixth Meeting of the IOQS in Ljubljana*, ed. Daniel K. Falk, Sarianna Metso, Donald W. Parry, and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 101–34.

scripts from Cave 4. The speaker claims to dwell in heaven and to have incomparable glory among the heavenly beings; he occupies a "throne of power in the congregation of the gods." The language of the text, however, arguably belongs to a human voice, not to an angelic or deific one.

James Davila calls this text "an unambiguous case of ascent and enthronement mysticism, in which a human being ascends to heaven and is transformed into a glorious heavenly being who takes a seat on high."[3] This remarkable composition is not entirely unique in the Qumran library. A fragmentary copy of the text is found among the *Hodayot*, and a number of the hymns in this collection describe a similar situation for the protagonist—the speaker of the hymn/psalm—albeit generally in less glorified language.

For example, in numerous places of 1QHodayot[a] the speaker thanks God for having delivered him from suffering and for having "raised" him "to the eternal height," or heavenly realm. The speaker expresses gratitude to God.

> I thank you, Lord, that you have redeemed my life from the pit, and that from Sheol-Abaddon You have lifted me up to an eternal height, so that I walk about on a limitless plain. I know that there is hope for one whom you have formed from the dust for an eternal council . . . that he might take his place with the host of the holy ones and enter into community with the congregation of the children of heaven (1QH[a] XI, 20–23).[4]

Similarly, the speaker praises God for having purified him from sin "that he might be united with the children of your truth and in the lot with your holy ones," that he "might be raised up from the dust to the council of [your] t[ruth] . . . so that he may take (his)

3. James R. Davila, "Exploring the Mystical Background of the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Timothy H. Lim and John J. Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 438.

4. Based on the translation by Carol Newsom in Hartmut Stegemann and Eileen Schuller, *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XL: 1QHodayot[a]* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2009), 155.

place before you with the everlasting host and the [eternal] spirit[s]" (1QH[a] XIX, 14–16).[5]

The parallel collection from Cave 4 contains many similar expressions. 4QHodayot[a] 7 ii, 8–9 reads, "(God) lifts up the poor from the dust to [the eternal height,] and to the clouds he magnifies him in stature, and (he is) with the heavenly beings in the assembly of the community."[6] The repeated suggestion that the individual has been lifted "from the dust" recalls the biblical story of the creation of Adam in Genesis 2:7, where the first man is formed from the dust of the ground and is subsequently placed in the Garden of Eden. Crispin Fletcher-Louis notes that "much of the *Hodayot* is a sustained and extended meditation on the anthropology of Genesis 2:7." As some texts indicate, only after he is formed from the lowly dust is he elevated to a higher, more glorious state when God places him in the garden. Fletcher-Louis observes that Eden parallels the Jewish temple in some texts and asserts that "the movement of Adam (and Eve) into Eden becomes a paradigm for entry and full inclusion of the Israelite in the Temple and in the holiness that it gives God's people."[7]

The Qumran authors are demonstrably dependent on other biblical passages aside from Genesis, particularly on those having to do with kingship motifs, including the biblical psalms. An expression very similar to the line from 4QH[a] 7 quoted above appears in 1 Samuel 2:8 ASV (which some scholars refer to as a royal psalm): "[God] raises up the poor from the dust . . . to make them sit with princes, and inherit [a] throne of glory" (cf. Psalm 113:7). The raising-from-the-dust motif signifies the election of a ruler from among the common people, as we see in the words of God to King Baasha of Israel: "I exalted you out of the dust and made you leader over my people Israel" (1 Kings 16:2 ESV). According to Walter Brueggemann,

5. Translation by Newsom in *DJD XL*, 248.

6. Based on the translation in Esther Chazon et al., eds., *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XXIX: Qumran Cave 4 XX, Poetical and Liturgical Texts, Part 2* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 100.

7. Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam: Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 108.

"To be taken 'from the dust' means to be elevated from obscurity to royal office. . . . Since the royal office depends upon covenant with the appropriate god, to be taken from the dust means to be accepted as a covenant-partner."[8] In the Qumran scrolls, therefore, the speaker of these hymns, who is likely the leader of his congregation or community, places himself in the position of the ancient Israelite king from the biblical texts.

Psalm 89 closely, albeit not explicitly, associates the covenant made with the king and the activity of the angels in the divine assembly. In verses 3–4, the Lord makes a covenant with David, "the one I have chosen." The verses that follow describe the angelic praises sung in heaven. Although the psalm does not state that David has been lifted up to heaven to witness this angelic worship, other so-called royal psalms do suggest that he is elevated to the heavens.

God declares in Psalm 2:6 that he has "set (his) king upon (his) holy hill of Zion," and Psalm 110:1 envisions the royal figure being invited to sit at God's right hand, presumably in the heavenly temple. Psalm 18 is evidently the inspiration for many such "exalted heights" passages in the *Hodayot*. In language comparable to the text of 1QH[a] XI, 20–23, Psalm 18:4–6 (REB) records the recollections of the languishing king:

> The bonds of death encompassed me and destructive torrents overtook me, the bonds of Sheol tightened about me, the snares of death were set to catch me. When in anguish of heart I cried to the Lord and called for help to my God, he heard me from his temple, and my cry reached his ears.

This psalm indicates that the Lord was in his temple and that from that sanctuary God came to rescue his servant from his suffering. The psalmist says that God "reached down from on high and took

8. Walter Brueggemann, "From Dust to Kingship," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 84/1 (1972): 2–3. Stephen Ricks discusses this motif in detail as it relates to the coronation of King Benjamin in the Book of Mormon; see Stephen D. Ricks, "Kingship, Coronation, and Covenant in Mosiah 1–6," in *King Benjamin's Speech Made Simple*, ed. John W. Welch and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1999), 175–200.

me; he drew me out of mighty waters," and he set "me secure on the heights" (Psalm 18:16, 33 NRSV). The Qumran authors readily associate God's temple and the servant being lifted up and set in the secure place on high (in the heavenly temple). In their own writings they made this connection even more explicit.

Instruction in the Heavenly Mysteries

As noted above, elevating the individual to the divine council is often associated with making a covenant between God and the individual, just as God covenanted with King David and his posterity. The authors of the texts we are examining often link making a covenant with being instructed in the heavenly mysteries. The mysteries are taught or revealed, in many cases, as part of a divine theophany—the individual claims that he has seen God, or God's glory, and that God himself has taught him these things. In column XII of 1QH[a], the speaker declares: "You have illumined my face for your covenant . . . I seek you, and as sure as dawn, you appear to me" (lines 6-7).[9] Later in the hymn he says, "For you have made me understand your wonderful mysteries" (lines 28-29).[10] In column XV, the speaker praises the Lord, saying, "I thank yo[u, O Lor]d, that you have instructed me in your truth, and made known to me your wondrous mysteries" (lines 29-30).[11]

In 1QH[a] V, 17-20 the speaker (apparently the "Instructor" from line 12) claims that he has been instructed in the "mysteries of the plan and the beginning." These mysteries of wonder seem to include things that God has planned and carried out from before the foundation of the earth. In his rigorous study *The "Mysteries" of Qumran*, Samuel Thomas concluded that the mysteries of wonder, among other meanings, seem to signify God's great deeds in creating the world and in delivering his people. Mortals do not readily understand these wonders, which are hidden and require special

9. Translation by Newsom in *DJD XL*, 165.
10. Translation by Newsom in *DJD XL*, 166.
11. Translation by Newsom in *DJD XL*, 214.

revelation from God to be accessible.[12] While risking oversimplification of a complex theme, we might say that the mysteries revealed to the exalted individual often include God's overarching plan that has been established from the beginning, including the creation of the world and God's salvific deeds on behalf of mankind. Some Qumran texts mention "the mystery that is to be," suggesting that part of the heavenly vision may also include insights into future events. The text of 1QS XI, 3–4 reads, "For from the fount of [God's] knowledge my light has gone forth; upon his wonders my eye has gazed—the light of my heart upon the mystery of what shall be."[13]

A passage in 1QH[a] XVIII relates the revelatory event to the experience of gazing not only on the vision of the wonders, but on God's glory: "And as for me, according to my knowledge of [your] truth [I will sing of your kindness] and when I gaze upon your glory, I recount your wonders, and when I understand [your wondrous] sec[ret counsel, I will wait expectantly] for your [ov]erflowing compassion" (lines 22–23).[14] Elliot Wolfson argues that in some of the Qumran writings "knowledge of divine truth is equated with visually gazing at the glory, which occasions the recitation of God's mysteries."[15]

The vision of God within the holy sanctuary is, of course, not uncommon in the Bible. We read in Psalm 24 that the "company" that goes up to the temple does so to "seek the face of the God of Jacob" (Psalm 24:6 NRSV). Isaiah sees the Lord on his throne in the temple and witnesses the seraphim praising his holiness (Isaiah 6:1–3). The psalmist similarly witnesses: "So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory . . . my lips will praise you. So I will bless you as long as I live; I will lift up my

12. Samuel I. Thomas, *The "Mysteries" of Qumran: Mystery, Secrecy, and Esotericism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 144–45.

13. Based on the translation in Parry and Tov, *Texts Concerned*, 41.

14. Translation by Newsom in *DJD XL*, 239.

15. Elliot R. Wolfson, "Seven Mysteries of Knowledge: Qumran E/Sotericism Recovered," in *The Idea of Biblical Interpretation: Essays in Honor of James L. Kugel*, ed. Hindy Najman and Judith H. Newman (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 208, as cited in Thomas, *"Mysteries" of Qumran,* 166.

hands and call on your name" (Psalm 63:2–4 NRSV). The vision of the Lord thus elicits the singing of God's praises.

The recitation of God's mysteries also appears in Psalm 89, which I believe serves as inspiration for many of the poetical/liturgical Qumran texts we are examining. Although this element is not explicit in the psalm, the psalmist does announce in the first verse that he is singing of the "loving deeds of the Lord" (Psalm 89:1 REB) and that he will proclaim his faithfulness throughout all generations. After the Lord's speech regarding the covenant with David, the psalmist then recounts the wonders of God, his greatness, his primordial victory over the mythical dragon Rahab and the raging sea, and his creation of the world (see vv. 6–14). Apparently some of the Qumran authors identified this sequence in Psalm 89 with the appearance of God associated with covenant making, which elicited the psalmist's recitation of God's wonders.

Appointment as a Teacher

After God instructs the exalted individual in the heavenly mysteries, God then apparently appoints him to teach others. Samuel Thomas explains that in some of the *Hodayot* "the protagonist is called upon to translate or interpret his own experience to those under his tutelage."[16] The speaker in 1QH[a] XII, 28–29 declares that after God had helped him understand the "wondrous mysteries" and "shown" Himself to him, God then "illumined the faces of many" through him. In column X, 15 we read: "But you have made me a banner for the elect of righteousness and an expert interpreter [or mediator of knowledge] of wonderful mysteries."[17]

The motif of the heavenly apprentice who becomes the teacher is found in the noncanonical psalms of the 4Q381 collection as well. In fragment 1, the speaker proclaims that he will tell of God's marvels, that his words will be "fitting instruction" given "to the simple that they may understand; and to those without understanding,

16. Thomas, *"Mysteries" of Qumran,* 209.
17. Translation by Newsom in *DJD XL*, 142.

(that) they may know" (4Q381 1, 1–2).[18] Subsequent lines (2–11) reveal the content of the wonders that he is teaching, including a detailed account of God's creation of the earth and its creatures, of Adam and Eve, of the angels, and so on—the substance of the vision of the heavenly mysteries.

Another text that uses Edenic imagery is 1QH[a] XVI, but here the speaker depicts himself as the keeper of the garden, an Adamic figure elected to care for the tender plants—his community—through his teachings.[19] Drawing on biblical passages such as Ezekiel 47 and Isaiah 5, the gardener lays out the garden (using a measuring line and plumb line, lines 22–23) and irrigates it. The author's followers, which he describes as "trees of life at a secret spring" (lines 6–7), are watered by the words that God has given to the gardener. He uses the metaphors of "early rain," "a spring of living water" and "a flowing river" to describe his teachings (lines 17–18). His efficacious message causes the little "plantation of fruit trees" to become a "glorious Eden" (line 21). Given the combination of Edenic imagery (including allusions to cherubim and the flaming sword), references to measuring and plumb lines, and allusions to Ezekiel 47:1–12, in all probability the author intends to place himself and his community in a temple setting, most likely the expected eschatological temple that Ezekiel envisioned. The speaker of the psalm is an agent of God sent to share the "secret waters" of God's mysteries, which will allow his followers to dwell in the holy place.[20]

Praising God with the Angels

Returning to the teacher motif in 1QH[a] XII, the speaker refers to a group of people that follow him, proclaiming to the Lord that

18. Translation by Eileen Schuller in Esther Eschel et al., eds., *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XI: Qumran Cave 4 VI, Poetical and Liturgical Texts, Part 1* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 94.

19. See James R. Davila, "The Hodayot Hymnist and the Four Who Entered Paradise," *Revue de Qumran* 17 (1996): 465.

20. See discussion in Julie A. Hughes, *Scriptural Allusions and Exegesis in the Hodayot* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 168–71.

they have "gathered together for your covenant" and that he has "examined" them (line 25). He then explains that "those who walk in the way of your heart listen to me; they are drawing themselves up before you in the council of the holy ones."[21] The individuals whom the speaker teaches listen to him and, as a result, are also permitted access to the heavenly realm.

Similar language in 1QH[a] XIV describes how God will "raise up" a "remnant" that he will refine and purify through his teachings (lines 11-14). As with the exalted individual, when they are taught and "[medi]tate on (God's) mighty acts," this remnant will then "recite for everlasting generations (God's) wonderful deeds" (line 14). The text declares that this faithful group, "all the people of your council," have been brought by God into his "secret counsel" and "in a common lot with the angels of the presence" (lines 15-16). They become "princes in the [eternal] lo[t]" and are compared to a great tree watered by the "rivers of Eden" (lines 17-19).[22] Again, the author draws on the creation account in Genesis and the temple motifs of Ezekiel 47. He envisions his community becoming princes in the divine council together with the angels of God's presence.

The authors of these texts may again be drawing on Psalm 89 or at least on traditions alluded to in that psalm. After the psalmist reveals God's wonders and describes the qualities of God's throne, the text then features a group of people—those who are followers of the protagonist of the psalm—"walking" in God's presence (see v. 18). Verses 15-16 (NRSV) read: "Happy are the people who know the festal shout, who walk, O Lord, in the light of your countenance; they exult in your name all day long, and extol your righteousness." These happy people have arguably just received the mysteries of God and now respond to that revelation by giving the "festal shout" (Heb. *teru'ah*), which they evidently have been taught to give in response to this divine experience. This festal shout is not random shouting for joy but is something that select people *know*, or have learned.

21. Based on the translation by Newsom in *DJD XL*, 166.
22. Based on the translation by Newsom in *DJD XL*, 196.

In the biblical texts, the *teru'ah* is a shout or a trumpet blast, usually given in the context of a temple ritual on a festival day, such as the Feast of Trumpets or the Day of Atonement.[23] When the foundation for the Second Temple was laid, the people sang in choruses (antiphonally) and gave a "great shout" as they praised the Lord in that liturgical setting (Ezra 3:11–13). The festal shout should probably be understood as a known part of the ceremony, much as the shofar blast was prescribed by divine directive for specific feast days.

In the apocryphal book of Sirach, chapter 50, the shout is specifically mentioned as part of the ritual. This text provides a more detailed description of the liturgy associated with the laying of the foundations of the temple when Simon ben Onias, the high priest, repairs and rebuilds the temple from the foundation up. As part of the accompanying ceremony, the text says that "the sons of Aaron shouted; they blew their trumpets of hammered metal; they sounded a mighty fanfare as a reminder before the Most High" (Sirach 50:16 NRSV).

In ancient Israel, laying the foundations of the temple was symbolically equivalent to God's laying the foundations of the earth at creation. Taking this into account, a noncanonical psalm from Qumran provides some interesting insights into the theme of the exalted group singing praises with the angels. A noncanonical psalm labeled *Hymn to the Creator* (column XXVI on the great *Psalms Scroll*, 11QPs[a]) praises God for his greatness and holiness and describes his wondrous works in the creation of the world. The text is similar to the creation texts mentioned above, including Psalm 89. One element featured in this hymn that is less evident in the other texts is the reaction of the angels to the revelation of God's deeds: "When all His angels saw, they sang for joy—for He had shown them what they knew not" (line 12). This imagery appears to draw on Job 38:7, where, after a description of God laying the foundations of the earth, including its cornerstone (using temple-building language), we are told that "the morning stars sang together, and

23. Trumpet blast: Leviticus 23:24; 25:9; Numbers 10:5–6; 29:1. Shout: Joshua 6:5, 20; 1 Samuel 4:5; Ezra 3:11, 13; Job 8:21; Psalms 27:6; 89:15; 150:5.

all the sons of God shouted for joy" (KJV).[24] The Job version of this theme specifically equates the angels' song with the shout for joy.

Furthermore, the *Hymn to the Creator* plausibly draws on Psalm 89 as well. In lines 10-11 of the *Hymn*, the author describes God and his throne in language that appears to be inspired by Psalm 89:14. Then in line 12 the angels rejoice in song after witnessing the creation. The author could be equating the angels singing with the people giving the shout in Psalm 89:15, perhaps because he is familiar with temple traditions and the idea of human communion with the angelic hosts.

The Ascension Liturgy of the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*

Perhaps the most striking, albeit highly debated, example from the Dead Sea Scrolls of the theme of communion with the angels is the collection of songs known as the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*.[25] These compositions, found at both Qumran and Masada, are a series of thirteen liturgical pieces that, according to the texts themselves, are to be recited on each of the first thirteen Sabbaths of the year. The texts are highly fragmentary, which makes their full content and purpose difficult to interpret. They appear to take worshippers on a tour of the celestial realms, describing the angels and the praises they sing to God, the structures and furniture of the heavenly temple, the vision of the throne of God, and descriptions of the glorious apparel of the angelic priests.

Although the songs were meant to be recited in a worship setting, scholars are uncertain of their specific function and of the relationship of the earthly worshippers to the heavenly beings they describe. Carol Newsom, in her critical edition of *Songs*, suggests

24. It is also possible that the *Hymn to the Creator* does not borrow directly from Job but that both the *Hymn* and Job are drawing on the same source or a common tradition.

25. Because of the highly fragmentary nature of the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, conclusions drawn from these texts are necessarily speculative. Scholars debate the original content and function of these compositions.

that "the recitation of these Sabbath songs was a major vehicle for the experience of communion with the angels as it is alluded to in the Hodayot."[26] According to this line of thought, these songs, being more than a literary theme, present an actual ritual/liturgy that somehow provides the worshippers with a sense of being in communion with heavenly beings. Newsom describes how the liturgy may have functioned:

> Its purpose . . . is better described as the praxis of something like a communal mysticism. During the course of this thirteen week cycle, the community which recites the compositions is led through a lengthy preparation. The mysteries of the angelic priesthood are recounted . . . and the community is then gradually led through the spiritually animate heavenly temple until the worshippers experience the holiness of the merkabah (throne of God) and of the Sabbath sacrifice as it is conducted by the high priests of the angels.[27]

Esther Chazon views the songs as "an earthly liturgy recited by a congregation of human worshippers who invite the angels to praise God," implying "that the human congregation is joining them in prayer."[28] James Davila argues that "these songs were meant for liturgical use" and that "the participants in this weekly cultic drama must necessarily have taken on the roles of these angelic priests and so have undergone a process of temporary transformation or angelification on some level."[29] Crispin Fletcher-Louis sees *Songs* as a "conductor's score" for a more concrete ritualized heavenly ascent rather than merely a descriptive heavenly tour. For Fletcher-Louis,

26. Carol Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), 17–18.

27. Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 18–19.

28. Esther G. Chazon, "Liturgical Communion with the Angels at Qumran," in *Sapiential, Liturgical and Poetical Texts from Qumran: Proceedings of the Third Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies, Published in Memory of Maurice Baillet*, ed. Daniel K. Falk, F. García Martínez, and Eileen M. Schuller (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 99.

29. Davila, "Exploring the Mystical Background," 443.

the main focus of *Songs* is not so much on suprahuman angelic beings, but on "the Qumran community members who now have a heavenly, angelic and divine identity." These texts portray the ritual exaltation of the human community to heaven where its members experience a vision of God's throne and are transformed into an angelic state.[30]

Håkan Ulfgard, in his study comparing *Songs* to the biblical book of Revelation, describes his view of their function and how they relate to other Qumran texts:

> They may have been intended to convey to the earthly worshippers the experience of being present at the continuous heavenly liturgy before the throne of God, which means an attitude found also e.g. in the Thanksgiving Hymns and the Rule of the Community (cf. 1QH III, 21–23; XI, 13, 25; 1QS XI, 7–8).[31]

My research supports Ulfgard's assertion that the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* contain themes parallel to concepts in the *Hodayot*, including those that I have outlined in this paper. The pattern that I suggest can be pieced together from the *Hodayot* and is laid out in these liturgical compositions as a concrete ritual drama. An in-depth analysis of all thirteen of the Sabbath songs is not within the scope of this paper, but I will summarize here the most relevant themes that compare to the pattern I have outlined.

The first song of the series describes the establishment, by God, of the heavenly priests who serve in the celestial temple and the call for them to praise God. The title of the song declares that it is "for the *Maskil*," the "Enlightener" or "Instructor," whose job it was to teach the members of the community and direct them in wor-

30. Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "Heavenly Ascent or Incarnational Presence? A Revisionist Reading of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice," in *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1998), 367–99, emphasis omitted.

31. Håkan Ulfgard, "The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice and the Heavenly Scene of the Book of Revelation," in *Northern Lights on the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proceedings of the Nordic Qumran Network 2003–2006*, ed. Anders K. Petersen et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 255–56.

ship. According to 1QS IX, 18–19 the Instructor was to "lead them in knowledge, thereby instructing them in the mysteries of wonder; if then the secret Way is perfected among the men of the community, each will walk blamelessly with his fellow, guided by what has been revealed to them."[32] This role is very similar to the role of the speaker of the *Hodayot* hymns previously examined. The speaker in 1QH[a] X, 15 declares that God had "made me a banner for the elect of righteousness and an expert interpreter of wonderful mysteries."[33] It appears that the *Maskil* in *Songs* fits the role of the individual in the first three points of the pattern outlined in the beginning of this paper: he would previously have been lifted up to the divine council himself, learned the mysteries, and consequently been appointed (as the *Maskil*) to teach these mysteries to others.

At first glance, song 1 seems to be an anomaly in describing the mortal *Maskil* calling angelic beings to worship. But Fletcher-Louis points out that this language would be more appropriate for the "conductor of a mortal choir, much less for a purely angelic one," and notes that in other Qumran texts "the Instructor teaches, directs and leads the community members in worship; never the angels."[34] His conclusion is that "much of the language within the Songs, though not all, refers to the Qumran community members who now have a heavenly, angelic and divine identity."[35] In other words, in most instances when the songs refer to the angelic priests, Fletcher-Louis believes that the mortal priests are being described and that as part of this Sabbath liturgy these mortals have undergone a transformation from human to angelic beings.

Davila, however, argues that Fletcher-Louis's hypothesis ignores the need for angelic priests in the heavenly realm to correspond to the human ones. He suggests the songs must be referring

32. Based on the translation in Parry and Tov, *Texts Concerned*, 37.

33. Translation by Newsom in *DJD XL*, 142. See discussion in Thomas, *"Mysteries" of Qumran*, 146–47; see also Fletcher-Louis, "Heavenly Ascent," 2, and Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 3. Other helpful Qumran texts that describe the role of the *Maskil* include 1QS III, 13–15 and IX, 12–14.

34. Fletcher-Louis, "Heavenly Ascent," 2.

35. Fletcher-Louis, "Heavenly Ascent," 3, emphasis omitted.

not only to the human priests, but to the angelic priests that have subsumed their mortal counterparts:

> The macrocosmic cult was understood to be staffed by angels, but the participants in this weekly cultic drama must necessarily have taken on the roles of these angelic priests and so have undergone a process of temporary transformation or angelification on some level.[36]

The correspondence of the human and angelic priests in this text becomes apparent if we take into account Judith Newman's suggestion that, according to the calendar of the *Temple Scroll*, "the song for the first Sabbath coincides with the week in which new priests are ordained (11Q19 XV, 3)."[37] Newman brings this to bear on song 1, arguing that the establishment of the hosts of angelic priests in that song corresponds to the initiation of new priests in the human community.

In 4Q401 14 ii, 1-8, a fragment that has been designated as part of song 2, God apparently strengthens the angelic priests (or newly ordained mortal priests)—also called princes here—that they may realize the mysteries of God's wondrous acts and proclaim the "hidden things" they learn from the "utterance of (his) lips." My reconstruction of this fragmentary text is somewhat speculative, but it suggests that God possesses the mysteries, that the angels/mortal priests must receive help from God, and that God teaches them "hidden things." Davila notes that in a number of Qumran texts, "the 'secret things' are the hidden teachings revealed to the members of the sect (e.g., 1QS V, 11; CD III, 13-14)."[38]

Songs 3-6 mention a procession into, or perhaps out of, heaven (song 4), an account of a war in heaven (songs 4-5), and the blessings and praises of the heavenly beings (song 6). In song 7 the par-

36. Davila, "Exploring the Mystical Background," 443.

37. Judith H. Newman, "Priestly Prophets at Qumran: Summoning Sinai through the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*," in *The Significance of Sinai: Traditions about Sinai and Divine Revelation in Judaism and Christianity*, ed. George J. Brooke, Hinday Najman, and Loren T. Stuckenbruck (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 46.

38. James R. Davila, *Liturgical Works* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 110.

ticipants enter the holy of holies of the celestial temple, in which, Newman asserts, "the divine King and Creator is made manifest in the throne room of the Temple."[39] She describes the seventh song as "an expanded depiction of Isaiah's temple throne vision in Isaiah 6," with an allusion to Ezekiel 3:12-13—both prophetic call narratives.[40]

I suggest that song 7 is comparable to the previously described theme of exalted individuals gazing upon God (or God's glory) in conjunction with the revelation of the mysteries. In God's throne room, the participants in this liturgy receive information regarding God's actions at creation—part of the mysteries described in other Qumran texts. Newman observes that this revelation comes "at the center of the seventh song, which is thus the center of the liturgical cycle," indicating that this revelation is especially significant to the worshippers' experience.[41]

Following the established pattern, the angelic/mortal participants sing or chant with joy and recount the wonders that have been revealed to them: "Sing (or chant) with joy, you who rejoice with rejoicing among the wondrous godlike beings. And chant (or recount) His glory with the tongue of all who chant with knowledge; and [recount] his wonderful songs of joy" (4Q403 1 i, 36).[42] Again, this is the expected ritual reaction to the revelation of the mysteries of creation. As Newman puts it, the seventh song is a "perceptual experience that stimulates the witnessing angels to 'proclaim,'" including "a recounting of the divine mysteries on the part of the holy ones, understood in the song to be the angels and Qumran priests."[43]

Songs 8 through 10 describe not only the angels' continued praises, but also the details regarding the veil of "the inner chamber of the King" (song 10). Songs 11 and 12 take us through the veil into the dwelling place of God. Those present worship God on his

39. Newman, "Priestly Prophets," 48.
40. Newman, "Priestly Prophets," 49.
41. Newman, "Priestly Prophets," 50.
42. Based on the translation in *DJD XI*, 271.
43. Newman, "Priestly Prophets," 56-57.

chariot-throne. Song 11 mentions multiple chariot-thrones, specifically a seat that is "like" God's throne.

Davila mentions that these two songs draw heavily on Ezekiel's chariot-throne vision in Ezekiel 1 and also on Psalm 68:17–20. Davila notes that these two scriptural passages were used at the time in the Jewish Festival of Weeks (Shavuot), which celebrates the divine theophany and giving the covenant, or Torah, at Sinai. He explains that songs 11 and 12 would have been performed before and after this celebration, which marked the Qumran community's annual covenant-renewal ceremony.[44] Newman observes that this ceremony "included the yearly evaluation of members and initiation of new members into the *Yaḥad* (community)." "The initiate," she says, "was required to swear an oath . . . to turn toward the torah of Moses."[45] The initiates, or individuals exalted to participate in the angelic liturgy, are thus examined and covenant that they will obey God's revealed teachings. This concept is very similar to the passage in 1QH[a] XII in which the speaker refers to a group of followers. He proclaims to the Lord that they have "gathered together for your covenant" and that he has "examined" them (line 25). This sequence is also reminiscent of Exodus 24, in which Moses delivers the words of God to the people of Israel, they covenant to be obedient, and the elders of Israel are permitted to see God.

The thirteenth and last song of the series describes the participants, apparently still in the celestial holy of holies, as they perform their priesthood duties while wearing their priestly vestments. These priestly garments are described using the language of Exodus 28, including the ephod (apron) and breastplate (apparently containing the engraved stones of the Urim and Thummim). Davila notes that the text "seems to indicate that multiple angels wore the high-priestly uniform."[46] Fletcher-Louis cites evidence "that the Qumran community believed the garments of Exodus 28 should be worn si-

44. Davila, *Liturgical Works*, 90.
45. Newman, "Priestly Prophets," 61.
46. Davila, *Liturgical Works*, 159.

multaneously by more than one priest."[47] This follows his hypothesis that the angels mentioned in the text are to be understood as exalted human priests.

Similarly, Newman cites a Qumran interpretation (4QpIsa^{d} 1, 3–5) that understands Isaiah 54:11–12 as alluding to "the twelve chiefs of the priests who enlighten through their use of the Urim and Thummim [considered part of the high priestly vestments]." Newman adds, "A liturgical cycle whose calendrical beginning can be correlated with a ceremony consecrating new priests thus rightly closes as a group of priestly figures are elevated to their proper role and prepared for service."[48] This highlights the significance of the vestment of these priests in heavenly garments. Just as Moses came down from Mount Sinai clothed in glory after having spoken with the Lord and having received his law, the Qumran priests have been vested in their garments of glory in imitation of the heavenly beings and have been instructed and authorized to "reveal the mysteries of the divine purpose in creation and history, past, present, and future."[49]

Conclusion

The pattern outlined in the beginning of this paper describes a belief in the ability of individuals and groups to ascend to the heavenly council to be taught the divine mysteries. This pattern can be traced in a number of Qumran documents, especially in the more liturgical and poetical works such as the *Hodayot* and other collections of noncanonical psalms. The revelation of these mysteries inspires the witnesses to shout or sing for joy upon learning of God's wondrous deeds at creation. The worshippers are clothed in heavenly garments and divinely commissioned to share this revealed knowledge with others.

47. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam*, 358.

48. Newman, "Priestly Prophets," 67. In other words, each priest would wear his own set of priestly vestments.

49. Newman, "Priestly Prophets," 71–72.

The Qumran authors apparently found inspiration in the biblical texts and possibly also in known temple traditions for these concepts. The authors allude to, or draw upon, passages from the prophets as well as from royal and temple texts such as the psalms and the Garden of Eden narrative. They saw themselves as priests anointed to carry on the prophetic tradition of Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and others.

The essential features of this pattern are seen not only in some texts of the Qumran sectarians, but also in their ritual. This patterned ritual is implied in the series of liturgical songs known as the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*. Most scholars believe these songs were performed as a weekly drama that led its practitioners through a heavenly experience comparable to my proposed model. The climax of the weekly Sabbath liturgy coincided with the Festival of Weeks, in which the community remembered the giving of the law on Sinai and entered into, or renewed, their covenants with God. As Moses and the elders of Israel ascended Sinai into the Lord's presence, and as festival pilgrims ascended the holy mountain to the Jerusalem temple for the same purpose, the Qumran community similarly saw themselves as being permitted to ascend on high into the celestial temple of God.

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